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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Multinationals' profits decline for lower sales

B1

Taskin on red-ball track, Shakib available

P11

Ukraine downs 89 Russian drones

P7

New Khulna jail: construction works drag on for 12 years

P5

Police block 'March for Justice'

Use teargas, stun grenades, charge batons; at least 100 hurt; 83 held

STAR REPORT

The law enforcers yesterday foiled the quota protesters' March for Justice by using teargas and stun grenades and charging batons in different districts.

At least 100 people were injured and 83 detained during the protests.

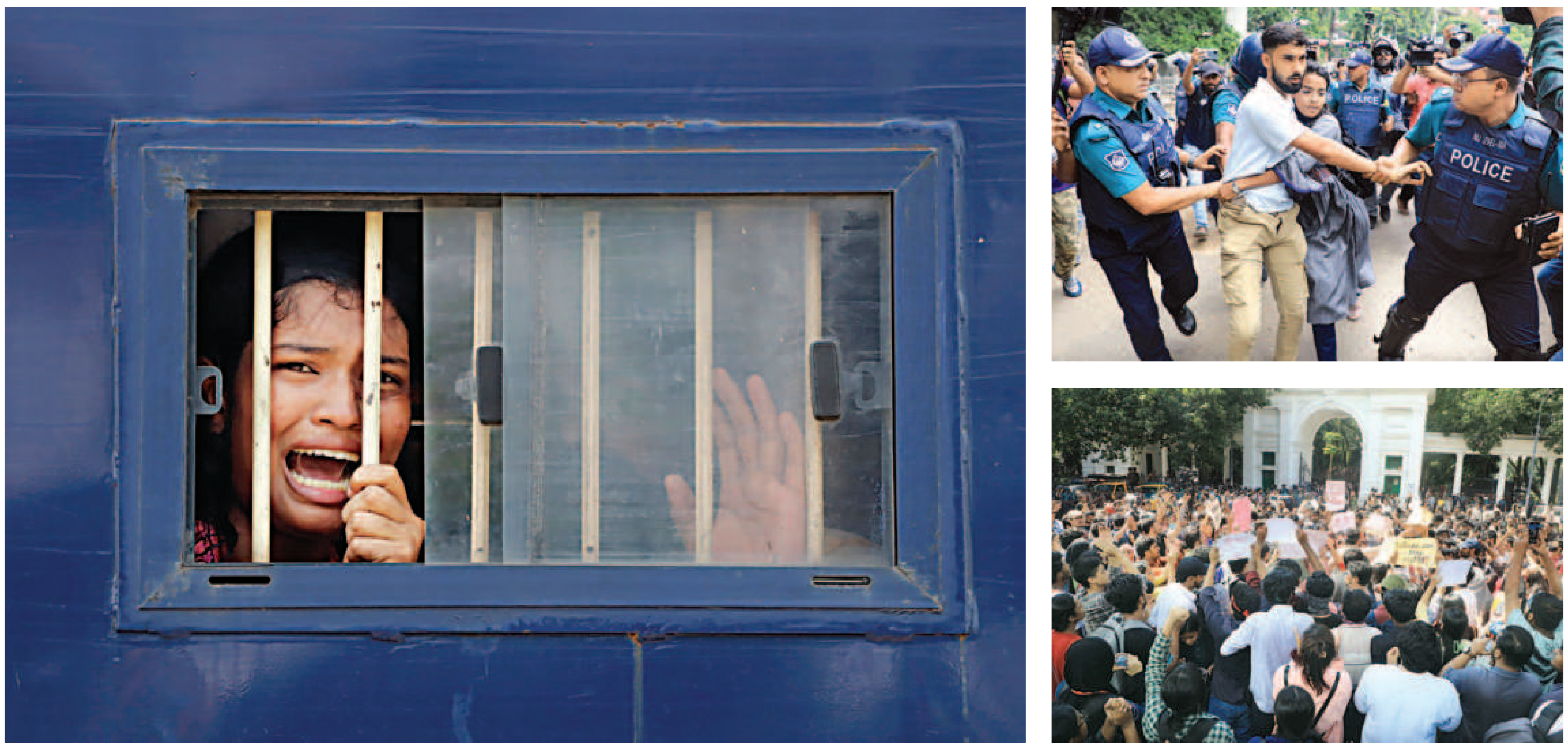
Teachers, parents, and people from various walks of life joined the programme called by the Students against Discrimination in protest of the killings and arrests of students and people, filing of cases, and abductions.

In Barishal, at least 11 people, including five journalists, were injured when police hit them with batons.

The injured journalists, The Daily Star photographer Titu Das, Jugantar photographer Shamim Ahmed, Jamuna TV videographer Hridoy Chandra Shil, NTV videographer Gobinda Saha, and barta24.net reporter Tuhin, took primary treatment at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Witnesses said some students were marching on

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



A female student, who said she was just 17, being carried away in a prison van after police obstructed the "March for Justice" near the BMA Bhaban in Khulna city yesterday. *Right top,* Noor Hasan, a law student of Stamford University being dragged away by cops while Nusrat Noor, a student of the same university, refuses to let him be taken away during the protests near the High Court. *Right bottom,* students from different universities gathered near the HC gate. PHOTOS: HABIBUR RAHMAN, AMRAN HOSSAIN

ABU SAYED MURDER CASE

16-yr-old in Rangpur jail for 12 days

Father says he was shot in his leg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Mahim

A 16-year-old is in Rangpur jail for 12 days after his arrest in the case filed over Abu Sayed's killing.

Begum Rokeya University student Sayed was shot and killed during the quota reform protest near his university on July 16.

Video footage shows police shooting Sayed, who posed no threat to the law enforcers. He died soon afterwards.

But contradicting what is clear as daylight, the First Information Report filed by police says Sayed was not a victim of police firing. "The protesters fired weapons and threw chunks of bricks from different directions, and at one stage, a student [Sayed] was seen falling to the ground," read the FIR.

"Police have shown my son Mahim arrested in the Abu Sayed murder case," said Md Shahjalal, who owns a photo studio in Rangpur city.

Alfi Shahriar Mahim, a first-year HSC student of Rangpur Police Lines School and College, is 16 years and 10 months old, said his father, citing his birth certificate.

Public Prosecutor Rafiq Hasnain at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Rangpur said Mahim was not a named accused in the Abu Sayed murder case,

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Process underway to ban Jamaat and Shibir

Home boss says it may happen any time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The banning of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student front Chhatra Shibir is under process, said the home minister, despite expectation that it was going to happen yesterday.

Yesterday, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan mentioned no date for issuing a notification in this regard but said it could be issued any time.

"I have not received the file yet. We are waiting. We had meetings in the morning and in the afternoon ... A few issues were discussed with the prime minister, including the ban on Jamaat," he said.

"We will announce whenever the decision comes."

Asaduzzaman said Jamaat was going to be banned as per Section 18 of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

EU postpones negotiations with Dhaka

Cites 'prevailing situation' as reason

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

PREMIER cemeNT
চালাইয়ের রাজা

The European Union has postponed its first round of negotiation with Bangladesh on a new agreement meant to elevate its partnership with the South Asian country.

"In light of the prevailing situation, the first round of negotiations on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement envisaged for September has been postponed with no later date fixed as yet," Nabila Massrali, EU spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, told The Daily Star in a message yesterday.

The decision comes a day after EU High Representative and Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell on Tuesday issued a statement condemning the "shoot-on-sight policy" announced by the authorities in Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Harun transferred from DB

5 other top DMP officials also transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Additional Deputy Commissioner Harun or Rashid has been removed from the Detective Branch.

In a major reshuffle, six top officials of DMP including Harun were transferred yesterday.

Harun has been transferred to the crime and operations division of DMP, said a notification signed by DMP Commissioner Habibur Rahman. He will be replaced by DMP Additional Commissioner Ashrafuzzaman, it added.

Harun's transfer came two days after a meeting of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance, where some alliance leaders expressed their discontent about Harun.

On Monday, the High Court also expressed its displeasure over a photo of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

'Structures can be rebuilt, lives lost will never return'

PM says about violence centring quota protests

UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the destroyed structures can be rebuilt but the lives lost during the recent violence in the country can never be returned.

She was speaking at a programme marking the inauguration of the National Fisheries Week 2024 at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday.

Hasina said there was no issue for waging a movement as she fulfilled all the demands of the students and the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court ordered status quo on the High Court judgment, restoring the effectiveness of the government's 2018 notification that abolished the quota system in government jobs.

Despite that, such incidents happened and destructive activities were carried out, leading to loss of so many lives, she said.

"I never thought such a situation would arise and so many lives would be lost."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Quader booed off a meeting with ex-BCL leaders

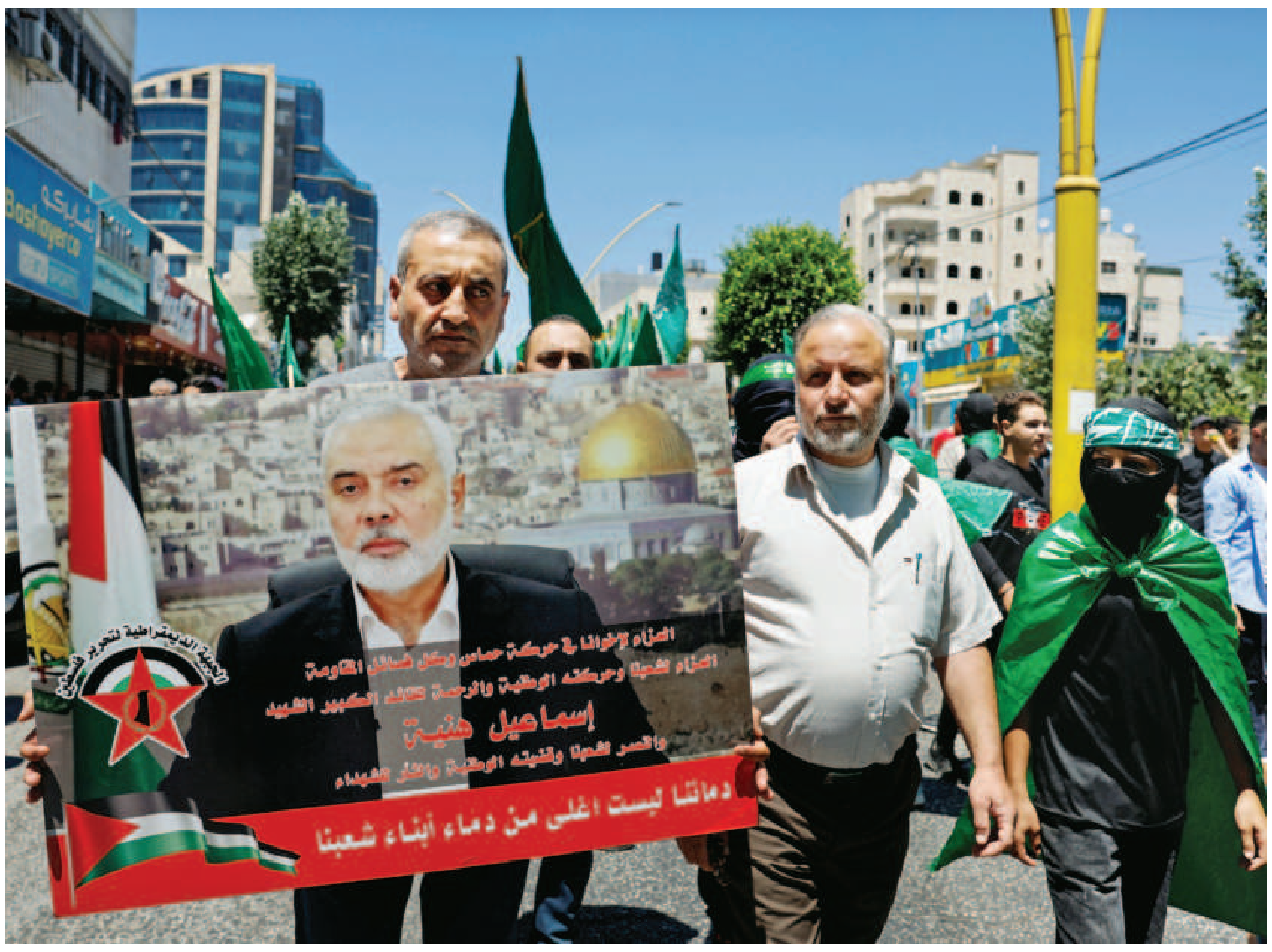
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader faced the wrath of former Chhatra League leaders yesterday as he began speaking to the media instead of having discussions with them at a views-exchange meeting.

The AL organised the meeting at the party's Bangabandhu Avenue head office at 11:00am and according to the invitation letter, Quader was supposed to exchange views with the former Chhatra League leaders.

However, Quader reached the venue around 11:20am and immediately started talking to the media without having any

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1


إسماعيل هنية
دماؤنا ليست أغلى من دماء أبناء شعبنا

Palestinians attend a protest in Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday, after the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran. PHOTO: REUTERS

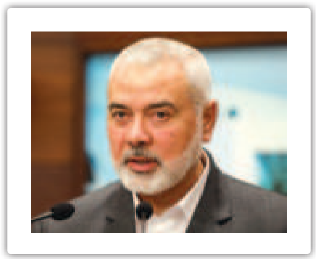
Hamas leader killed in Iran by Israeli air strike

Says the Palestinian group, warns assassination takes war to 'new levels'

AGENCIES

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in Iran yesterday morning, the Palestinian group and Tehran said, drawing threats of revenge on Israel in a region already shaken by the offensive in Gaza and a deepening conflict in Lebanon.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards confirmed the death of Haniyeh, hours after he attended a swearing in ceremony for the country's new president, and said it was investigating. Haniyeh has been killed in an Israeli air strike in the Iranian capital, Hamas said.

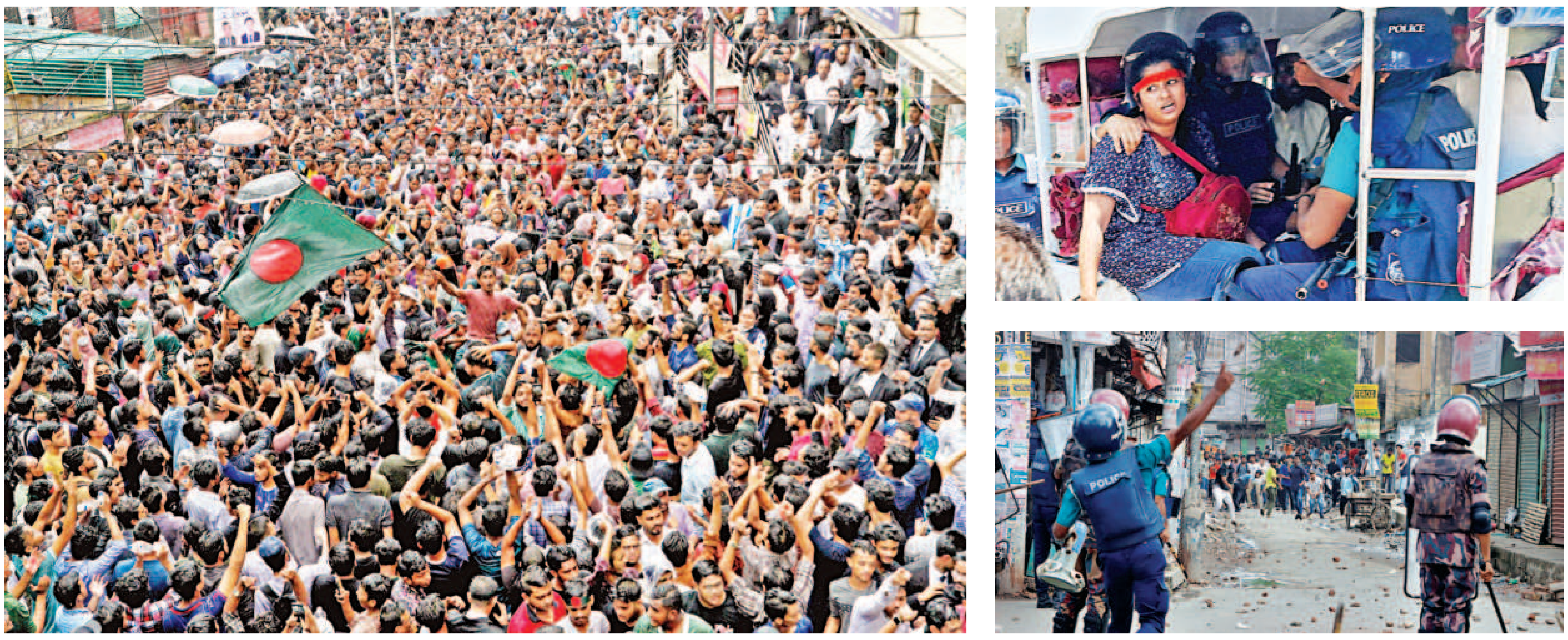


Ismail Haniyeh

Haniyeh, normally based in Qatar, has been the face of Hamas's international diplomacy as the Israel's offensive in Gaza began on October 7. The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 39,445 people have been killed in the offensive. The toll includes 45 deaths in 24 hours, according to the ministry figures.

Hamas' armed wing said in a statement Haniyeh's killing would "take the battle to new levels and have major repercussions", while Iran also vowed to retaliate.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Students stage a demonstration at Doyel Chattar near the Chattogram court as part of their "March for Justice" programme yesterday. *Top right,* police take away protesters after detaining them near the entrance to the Barishal District and Sessions Judge's Court on Fazlul Haque Avenue in Barishal city. *Bottom right,* students clash with police and BGB personnel after law enforcers broke up a protest at Khulna city's Satrasta intersection.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN, TITU DAS, HABIBUR RAHMAN**

POST-COUP MYANMAR

Junta extends emergency rule amid conflict

REUTERS

Myanmar's embattled military government extended a state of emergency yesterday for another six months, state media said, as the junta struggles to maintain its grip on power with fighting flaring on multiple fronts and the economy in crisis.

Army-run Myawaddy media said the military-controlled National Defence and Security Council extended emergency rule to give the junta more time to put together population data for voter lists. The junta has said it will hold an election next year.

The military put the country under emergency rule for a year when it took power in a February 2021 coup, deposing the elected civilian government of Aung San Suu Kyi and triggering nationwide street protests that it violently crushed.

Harun transferred

FROM PAGE 1

six detained quota protest organisers eating at the DB office with Harun.

"Why did they do that? Whoever is taken there [DB office] is made to sit at the dining table. Don't mock the nation," said the HC.

Meanwhile, DMP Additional Commissioner Kh Mahid Uddin has been transferred to the logistics, finance, and procurement division from the crime division.

DMP Joint Commissioner (operations) Biplob Kumar Sarker was transferred to DB (South).

Besides, DMP joint commissioners Sanjit Kumar Roy was transferred to the DB (North) and Khondaker Nurrunabi (DB-North) was transferred to DMP's operations division.

Harun or Rashid

At the Monday's meeting, 14-party alliance leaders Rashed Khan Menon and Hasanul Haque Inu urged caution from ruling party members and the government officials while making public statements, according to meeting sources.

Referring to the photo of quota protesters at DB office and the statement allegedly made by them afterwards announcing the end of protests, Menon said such activities by a government official carries a wrong message.

He also said a political crisis should be dealt with by politicians.

People do not trust political solutions given by bureaucrats, and the statement made by the protesters from the DB office is nothing but a mockery, meeting sources quoted him as saying.

In reply, the prime minister, who chaired the meeting, said she will "take care" of Harun.

Quader

FROM PAGE 1

discussion with the invitees.

There were nearly 100 former Chhatra League leaders, including some ex-presidents and general secretaries of the pro-AL student body, present at the meeting.

At one stage, some ex-Chhatra League leaders started yelling and expressing their displeasure.

"Why are you [Quader] talking to the media without having any conversation with us? If you want to talk to the media, why did you invite us?" yelled some of them at Quader.

Quader then asked them to stop, but they paid no heed. Eventually, Quader left without finishing his speech to the media.

As he was heading towards his office on the sixth floor, the ex-Chhatra League leaders chanted "bhua, bhua [fake, fake]".

They chanted "bhua, bhua" again when Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, was leaving the office.

The former Chhatra League leaders also criticised AL presidium member Abdur Razzaque, who was beside Quader. They claimed that Razzaque's son supported the quota reform protest. They also questioned as to why Razzaque was invited.

Earlier, Quader held several views-exchange meetings and joint meetings with party units of Dhaka city after the quota reform protest became violent.

But on most occasions, Quader was the lone speaker at the meetings.

In his address to the media yesterday, Quader called upon all to forget their differences and fight terrorism.

"We don't need leaders and activists who will not do any work, just come to the office and give protocols. No protocol is required. Our protocol is our standard. Our protocol is the model of our politics," he said.

Police block 'March for Justice'

FROM PAGE 1

Kathpatti Road in the city around 11:00am when police dispersed them, charging batons.

The students later entered the Barishal City Corporation building, where a scuffle occurred between them and City Panel Mayor-2 Enamul Haque Bahar. At least 13 protesters were detained.

Arichul Haque, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said most of the detainees had been released.

Deputy Commissioner Tanvir Arafat of Barishal Metropolitan Police apologised to journalists.

Meanwhile, the quota reform protesters last night announced that they would remember their fallen comrades today through programmes called Remembering the Heroes.

In a press release, Rifat Rahsid, assistant coordinator of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, said the victims will be remembered by their families and classmates.

Painting, graffiti, wall writing, festoons, and photos of the incidents will be displayed at the programmes. Silent processions, street theatre, and protest songs will be organised on campuses.

Theyurgedsocialmediauserstomake posts with the hashtags #JulyMassacre, #RememberingOurHeroes.

They also demanded a thorough investigation into the killings during the violence.

Their nine-point demand include an apology from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and the resignations of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhoury, Law Minister Anisul Huq, State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat, and State Minister for Post, Telecommunications, and Information Technology Zunaid Ahmed Palak.

In Sylhet, around 100 students demonstrated in front of the gate of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) in the morning.

Police used teargas and stun grenades as the protesters, marching towards the court premises, reached Subid Bazar around 1:00pm and removed barriers placed by police.

Locals said around 50 people were injured.

Azbahar Ali Sheikh, deputy commissioner (north) at Sylhet Metropolitan Police, later told reporters that hundreds of Jamaat-Shibir men were in the procession. When the protesters threw bricks, the police used tear gas to disperse them.

He added that no one was injured or detained.

In a separate incident, around 100 cultural, social, and political activists marched through the city demanding justice for the victims.

In Khulna, police detained at least 19 people, students said.

Hundreds of students marched from the city's Nirala Mor to Royal Mor around 1:40pm. They removed barriers at Moyla Pota intersection and demonstrated at Satrasta intersection.

Police and demonstrators chased each other around 2:15pm.

In Dinajpur, police detained 10 people, including five female students. As students gathered at Dinajpur Gor-e-Shaheed Boromath around 11:30am, police chased them away.

The students then gathered in front of Dinajpur Shaheed Minar and started chantingslogans. Police detained 10 of them, said Farid Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station in Dinajpur.

In the capital, law enforcers intercepted several hundred students, mostly from private universities, near the High Court.

At least five students were allegedly picked up from the area when students, accompanied by some teachers and lawyers, attempted to enter the HC premises. One of the detainees was released later.

Meanwhile,Two Dhaka University teachers -- Prof Nusrat Jahan Chowdhury and Shehreen Amin Monami -- were also allegedly shoved by police when they along with three students tried to stop policemen from detaining a college student.

"I did not expect this behaviour. I came here to stand with the students. Don't we have the right to be here?" asked Prof Nusrat.

The University Teachers' Network later condemned the "misbehaviour" of police and demanded the authorities investigate the incident.

Around 1:00pm when police attempted to take a few more students in a pickup. Nusrat Noor, a private university student, stood in front of the vehicle and some other people joined her.

"My fellow university student has been detained by the police. We came for a peaceful protest for justice, but the police obstructed our programme," Nusrat told The Daily Star.

Around 1:15pm, a group of mostly pro-BNP DU teachers marching from the campus to the High Court was stopped by law enforcers in front of Shishu Academy.

They sat on the road where around 200 students from BUET, DU, and several private universities joined them. They went back to the Doyel Chattar area, after police released two detained students.

Around the same time, over 50 lawyers stood inside the closed Mazar Gate of the HC and chanted slogans.

In Chattogram, around 500 students demonstrated on Chattogram Court premises.

Nearly 30 pro-BNP lawyers demonstrated at the main entrance of the court building. A confrontation then occurred between them and Pro-AL lawyers.

In Jashore, students gathered in the town in the morning and as they walked towards the police superintendent's office, police hit them with batons, injuring at least six. Six students were detained there.

In Kushtia, at least 15 people were detained when they tried to demonstrate in the DC Court area.

Jahangirnagar University students and teachers marched and collected signatures demanding the release of arrested students around 1:00pm.

Structures can be rebuilt

FROM PAGE 1

Hasina said the government formed a judicial inquiry commission, led by an HC judge, to investigate the incidents even before anyone asked for it.

She said she sought cooperation from the United Nations and other international organisations to help the government conduct a proper investigation into the violence centring the quota reform protest so that the real culprits could be punished.

The PM said she has already directed the authorities to increase the manpower of the probe committee by including two more members and expand the scope of the investigation.

Hasina said she has been living with the pain of losing her dear ones. She prayed for the salvation of the departed souls and conveyed her profound sympathy to the bereaved families.

She questioned why blood was shed and such an abnormal situation was created in Bangladesh at a time when the world treats Bangladesh with respect.

Referring to her visits to different hospitals to see the injured, Hasina said she witnessed the sufferings of many people, including a small child, and it was very painful.

"I don't know what our fault was. The achievements of the country have faded and the image of the country was tarnished abroad in the name of movement without an issue. My question is who achieved what from this."

The PM said power is not for enjoyment and she did not come to power to lead a comfortable and lavish life. She said she has been tirelessly working to develop Bangladesh and she has successfully done it.

"Bangladesh is a role model for development in the world. Why is that dignity ruined? I give the responsibility of judging it to the countrymen."

Hasina said the collaborators of Pakistan occupation forces (in 1971) had dragged the country backwards time and again by hatching conspiracies, which is very unfortunate.

Talking about the fisheries resources, the PM asked the private entrepreneurs to invest in the fish processing sector to enhance export earnings.

"We are now exporting fish and fish products to 52 countries. But value addition to these exportable fish products is needed. If you can process it, we can earn more money."

She said the contribution of the fish sector to the GDP is 2.53 percent and some two crore people, including 14 lakh women, depend on this sector for their livelihoods.

Hasina said special attention should be paid to the production of fish by-products as well.

She also put emphasis on farming pearls, crabs, snails and oysters to export these items after meeting the local demand.

To mark the fisheries week, 22 individuals and organisations were honoured with the National Fisheries Medal for their outstanding contribution to the country's fisheries sector.

The National Fisheries Week 2024 is being celebrated across the country to promote sustainable development and expansion of fisheries resources.

PM VISITS KURMITOLA HOSPITAL

The prime minister yesterday visited the capital's Kurmitola General Hospital to see the patients injured in the recent violence.

After reaching the hospital at 5:10pm, Hasina enquired about the health of the injured. She instructed the hospital authorities to ensure their proper treatment.

Brig Gen Md Rahman, director of the hospital, briefed the PM about the treatment measures taken by the hospital for the injured.

Process underway

FROM PAGE 1

He said this while briefing reporters at his office after a meeting with the members of law enforcement agencies.Early today, home ministry officials said the home ministry sent the law-ministry vetted ban proposal back to the law ministry asking it to issue a notification.

Jahangir Alam, secretary to the Public Security Division at the home ministry, told The Daily Star around 12:30am today that the issuance of the circular was pending with the law ministry.

"They will put the SRO [Statutory Regulatory Order] number and after that it will be issued," he added.

The issue of the ban came to the fore after the Awami League-led 14-party alliance unanimously recommended banning the two organisations during a meeting at the Gono Bhaban with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday.

It became the talk of the town yesterday as Law Minister Anisul Huq on Tuesday said a government notification in this regard may be issued yesterday.

He said the proposal to ban Jamaat and Shibir would be sent to the law ministry from the home ministry as per rules and that the ban would be enforced though an executive order.

The government has been accusing Jamaat and Shibir of resorting to violence centring the quota reform protest.

Asaduzzaman yesterday said the Jamaat-Shibir created the ongoing situation. The Jamaat, Shibir, BNP clique resorted to destructive activities from behind by keeping the students at the forefront, he said, alleging that militant organisations were also involved.

"Students would not have resorted to destructive activities if the advisers did not advise them. So many people have been injured. Have all been shot by the police? We will also reveal how many people were killed and injured in whose firing," the home minister said.

He said Jamaat-Shibir was banned before. Late president Ziaur Rahman gave them the right to form a party.

The people in favour of the Liberation War and the civil society members are now talking about banning Jamaat. It is the demand of the people, he said.

The Election Commission on October 29, 2018, scrapped the registration of Jamaat, a long-time ally of the BNP, following a High Court verdict that declared Jamaat's registration illegal.

EU postpones negotiations with Dhaka

FROM PAGE 1

The government put the death toll at 150 in violence centring the quota reform protest.

But according to The Daily Star's count, at least 163 people were killed.

The death toll from the violence could be much higher as this newspaper could not reach many hospitals, where dozens of critically injured patients were taken.

Also, many families reportedly collected the bodies of their loved ones from the scene, and this newspaper could not contact those families.

The Daily Star's count of the victims is based solely on hospital and police sources.

In the statement, Borrell also expressed grave concern over unlawful killings perpetrated in recent days by the authorities in Bangladesh. He called for thoroughly investigating the killings and bringing those responsible to justice.

"We will follow closely the actions of the authorities in the context of this crisis and ... expect all human rights to be fully respected," Borrell said.

Bangladesh exported products to the EU market worth $24 billion in 2023. This is 58 percent of Bangladesh's total export, according to the Export Promotion Bureau.

Bangladesh enjoys duty-free access to the EU market because of its LDC status.

The country can enjoy similar privileges after 2026 under another scheme called GSP Plus, which will, however, require conditions on human rights, labour rights, democracy, and environment.

Once the country is graduated, it will face 12.5 percent duty on export of goods to the EU if Bangladesh cannot obtain the GSP Plus fulfilling EU's conditions of 32 international conventions, including four core conventions on labour, human rights, good governance, and environmental protection.

Experts said any kind of bad relationship with the EU may have a negative impact on trade.

The EU and Bangladesh agreed in principle in 2022 to sign the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA).

The first round of negotiation was scheduled in Dhaka in September.

A diplomatic source said Bangladesh is willing to hold the first round of negotiation of PCA in November, considering the 79th session of the UN General Assembly opens on September 10, 2024.

In view of the increasing importance of EU-Bangladesh relations, including in the international domain, the EU had proposed to initiate discussions for signing the PCA, which is aimed at enhancing dialogue between both sides on issues of global concern and give more scope for mutually beneficial cooperation in a wide range of policy and strategic areas, said the European Commission.

"The PCA will give Bangladesh-EU relations a new legal foundation, which is 'more comprehensive and up-to-date', and will respond better to current and evolving challenges," according to the European Commission.

Hamas leader killed in Iran

FROM PAGE 1

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei said Israel had provided the grounds for "harsh punishment for itself" and it was Tehran's duty to avenge the Hamas leader's death as it had occurred in the Iranian capital. Iranian forces had already made strikes directly on Israel earlier in the Gaza offensive.

There was no comment nor claim of responsibilty from Israel. The Israeli military said it was assessing the situation but had not issued any new security guidelines for civilians.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was expected to meet for consultations with security officials later yesterday.

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said Washington would work to try to ease tensions but said the United States would help defend Israel if it were attacked, reports Reuters.

"I don't think war is inevitable. I maintain that. I think there's always room and opportunities for diplomacy," he told reporters during a visit to the Philippines. "We're going to work hard to make sure that we're doing things to help take the temperature down and address issues through diplomatic gatherings."

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that a ceasefire in Gaza was the "imperative".

Qatar, which has been brokering talks aimed at halting the fighting in Gaza, condemned Haniyeh's killing as a dangerous escalation of the conflict. China, Russia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkey also condemned it.

Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani cast doubt over the success of future mediation between Israel and Hamas, reports AFP.

Haniyeh's assassination comes as Israel's campaign in Gaza approaches the end of its 10th month with no sign of an end to an offensive that has threatened to spiral into a wider regional conflict.

At the same time, the risk of a war between Israel and Hezbollah has grown following the strike in the Golan Heights that killed 12 children in a Druze village on Saturday and the subsequent killing of the senior Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukr.

Hezbollah has not yet confirmed Shukr's death, but said he was in the building hit by an Israeli strike.

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‘Almost a terrorist attack’ to topple govt

PM tells Indian envoy

UNB, *Dhaka*

Terming the recent violence in the country “almost a terrorist attack”, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the attacks were aimed at creating a situation like Sri Lanka to oust her government.

“It was not a movement at all, and at one stage it almost turned into a terrorist attack,” she said while Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma called on her at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

PM’s Press Secretary

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

ছাত্র নিপীড়ন এবং নিরপরাধ মানুষ
হত্যার বিচার চাই
বাংলাদেশ প্রকৌশল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের সাধারণ শিক্ষকবৃন্দ

Demanding justice for the killings and torture of students and innocent bystanders, teachers of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology bring out a procession on the campus yesterday.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

‘Killings during quota protests state-sponsored’

Says Prof Salimullah Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the killings that took place during the quota reform protests were state-sponsored and carried out by the forces of the state and its associates, said Prof Salimullah Khan of University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh yesterday.

Salimullah, while talking at a programme in front of the university, also said considering the current situation, an international probe is certainly necessary for a “credible investigation into the killings”. He also expressed skepticism whether people will get justice over the killings.

Wearing red clothes, teachers of ULAB held a sit-in in front of the university entrance in the morning, demanding the release of students who were arrested during the protests, the withdrawal of cases filed against them, an end to oppression, and a peaceful environment for education.

The government, without going to the problem’s root, is now saying they will slap a ban on this party or that party. This will not even scratch the surface of the main problem. Rather, this will make it more complex.

Salimullah said they are extending their support to the killed, injured, disappeared, and persecuted people.

He said the question of whether all will have the right to

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

More than just NUMBERS

A 20-year-old young mother shot dead in Narayanganj. A 26-year-old nightguard dies from bullet wounds at a Dhaka hospital. A 25-year-old student fatally shot in Dhaka. At least 163 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are sons, husbands, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

A family left to navigate pain and loss

Nightguard Imran, 26, dies of bullet wounds in Dhaka

SHUSHANTA GHOSH, *Barishal*

Fifteen-month-old Yaj Khalifa clinged to his mother, Shanta Akhtar, his tiny face a mixture of confusion and fear as he gazed at the unfamiliar faces in their home.

The air in their Barishal residence was thick with grief as Shanta’s sob fill the room. “How am I going to survive now? I have lost everything.”

Her husband, Imran Khalifa, 26, died after a bullet hit him near Shahjadpur Market in Dhaka around 6:00pm on July 19 amid the clashes centring the quota reform protests.

Imran worked as a nightguard in Gulshan.

He moved to Dhaka from Kalna in Barishal with his family last year in search of better opportunities.

Initially, Imran tried his hand at selling shoes on the footpath, but it failed. He then worked as a labourer, struggling to make ends meet. Finally, on July 3, he secured a job as a nightguard at an apartment building.

Life slowly started to fall into places for the three. They rented a small room in Shahjadpur Khilbaritek area. It wasn’t much but it was home.

But everything changed on July 19.

With teary eyes, Shanta recalled the events.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Bullet leaves newborn without a mother

20-year-old Sumaiya dies after being shot; family believes it came from a helicopter

SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM, *Narayanganj*

There were loud noises everywhere.

Helicopters were flying over the Siddhirganj area of Narayanganj since the afternoon.

It was July 20 and clashes were ongoing between protesters and law enforcers.

Once her two-month-old daughter fell asleep, Sumaiya Akter, 20, put her down on the bed and went to the balcony of their apartment on the sixth floor, to see what was happening outside.

Suddenly, a bullet hit her and she fell on the floor.

Her mother, Asma Begum, was already in the balcony at the time. She did not immediately realise what happened. She saw her daughter lying in a pool of blood.

“I kept calling her name, but got no response. It took me a while to realise that she was no more. She was shot in the head. The bullet pierced through the iron grille before hitting her,” Asma said while pointing to the hole in the rod of the balcony grille.

Sumaiya’s younger brother, Md Sojol,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Jihad wanted to be a cricketer

Death of 25-year-old leaves family distraught

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

In the small, close-knit community of Nalkhola Bazar in Patuakhali’s Dasmina upazila, the grief was palpable.

The Hossain family was mourning an irreplaceable loss -- their son, Jihad Hossain, a 25-year-old postgraduate student at Dhaka’s Kabi Nazrul Government College, whose life was tragically cut short during the anti-quota protests in Dhaka on July 19.

Jihad was the youngest of Nurul Amin Molla and Shahanur Begum’s four children. He was a beacon of hope for his family, known for his affable nature and academic diligence. Jihad’s elder siblings, Jannatul Ferdaus and Zainab Akhter Neela, are married, while his elder brother Jinnat Hossain is a government primary school teacher.

Their father, Nurul Amin, is a farmer.

After graduating from Dasmina Model Government Secondary School in 2016, Jihad pursued higher education in history at Kabi Nazrul Government College, residing with his cousin Kulsoom in Dhaka’s Sadarghat area.

He loved to play cricket and aspired to play for the country someday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

‘Such killings during protests unacceptable and barbaric’

Says MJF, calls on govt to probe all incidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) has expressed grave concern over the widespread violence and casualties centring the ongoing anti-discrimination student protests in the country.

Referring to a media report published on July 29, MJF, in a statement, mentioned that 210 deaths have been reported so far in the protests, with detailed information available for 150 of the deceased. Among them, 113 were children, adolescents, and young adults, including 19 individuals aged between four and 17 years.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

‘Count all the bodies, stop arrests, torture’

Demand speakers at press conference by Outraged Women Community

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent women of the country yesterday said that the government is failing to realise that the anti-discrimination student protest has the support of millions of people across the country. Because of this failure, they are constantly taking more anti-people steps and only speaking the language of bullets.

They said the people of Bangladesh sacrificed their lives for independence, but people are not safe in this independent country, they have to sacrifice their lives fighting for their rights. All bodies will be counted, mass arrests and torture must be stopped.

The remarks were made at a press conference organised by the Outraged Women Community at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU).

Women’s leader Farida Akhtar said, “As long as such autocratic incidents continue in this country, we will stay on the streets until the demands of the students are met.”

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Rights violations soar amid protests

Says MSF report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A recent media monitoring report revealed that the ongoing anti-discrimination student protests in Bangladesh have resulted in at least 211 deaths and nearly 7,730 injuries.

The report also revealed that there have been 798 incidents of violence and sabotage nationwide, resulting in 10,372 arrests.

Prepared by the Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF) and verified by local rights defenders, the report analysed data from major print and online dailies based in Bangladesh.

As per the report, in Dhaka division alone, 270 cases have led to 2,891 arrests. Notably, over 2,13,000 individuals, many of whom are unidentified, have been accused in 200 cases.

Additionally, 259 students have been arrested across Dhaka and 18 other districts for their alleged involvement in sabotage during the unrest.

The report also detailed political violence over the past two months, with at least eight people killed and 214 injured in 30 incidents in June and July. Post-election violence has claimed another eight lives and injured 490 people in 50 separate incidents.

Between June and July, there were 559 reported incidents of violence against women and girls -- including 82 cases of rape, 24 cases of gang rape, four murders following rape, 42 cases of attempted rape, 143 murders, and 63 cases of physical abuse.

The MSF report further revealed that, in June and July, 44 journalists faced torture, attacks, injuries, lawsuits, and harassment.

Additionally, since mid-July, the recent unrest has led to four journalist being killed, 35 injuries from shotgun pellets, and 224 other injuries from gunfire or attacks.

The report also documented that six people were killed extrajudicially, two died in custody, two were killed while fleeing law enforcement, and nine died in jail.

The report again indicated that nine people were killed and nine others injured in border incidents, with two also being tortured. Additionally, mob violence also claimed seven lives and left nine injured.

The monitoring report, signed by MSF Founding President Sultana Kamal, mentioned that the organisation condemns the rising rights violations and urges authorities to ensure political engagement, peaceful elections, voting rights, freedom of assembly, expression, and civic security.

David Hasanat granted bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to garment exporter KM Rezaul Hasanat David, chairman and CEO of Viyellatex Group, in a case filed over vandalising and setting Setu Bhaban on fire on July 18.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Jashim passed the order considering his health condition after his lawyer Sheikh Baharul Islam moved a petition on grounds that David was abroad during the time of occurrence.

During the hearing, the lawyer told the court that his client is a renowned businessman and was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him. The accused was abroad from July 13 to July 23.

Moreover, the accused has been suffering from different ailments. So, his client should be granted bail considering the depth of offences, said the lawyer.

While Sub-inspector Shah Alom opposed the bail petition saying that David was accused of financing the perpetrators.

Upon hearing both the sides, the magistrate granted David bail. The bail order will be valid until the submission of the probe report, said the magistrate.

KURIGRAM, LALMONIRHAT

Floodwater sweeps away fish worth Tk 6cr

S DILIP ROY, *Lalmonirhat*

Recent floods have wreaked havoc on fish farms across Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, with floodwaters sweeping away fish and fish fries worth Tk 6 crore from 3,550 ponds and enclosures.

Approximately 2,000 individuals engaged in pisciculture have been severely affected, said officials.

According to the fisheries department in Kurigram, 210 tonnes of fish and fish fries from 3,100 ponds on 450 hectares of land along the banks of the Brahmaputra, Dudhkumar, and Dharla rivers were washed away, leaving 1,600 fish farmers in dire straits with a total loss of Tk 5 crore.

In Lalmonirhat, the floodwaters washed away 50 tonnes of fish and fish fries from 450 ponds on 90 hectares of land in the Dharla and Teesta rivers' shoal areas, causing a total loss of Tk 1 crore to 400 fish farmers.

"I had taken a Tk two lakh loan to rear fish in two leased ponds on four acres of land. All the fish were washed away by the floodwaters from the Brahmaputra. I don't know how I will repay the loan and raise capital to resume my venture," said Sudan Chandra Das, a fish farmer from Patrakhata village under Kurigram's Chilmari upazila.

Fish farmers Noor Islam from the Sardob area under Kurigram Sadar upazila and Dhiren Chandra Das of Kulaghat village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila shared similar plights.

Moktadir Khan, district fisheries officer in Kurigram, said a list of flood-affected fish farmers has been prepared and sent to higher authorities, requesting government assistance for them.

'No shots were fired from Rab helicopters'

Says Rab HQ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion Headquarters yesterday in a statement once again said only teargas canisters and sound grenades were fired from their helicopters during the recent protests.

"No shots were fired from our helicopters. But a quarter is deliberately trying to make the use of helicopters controversial...," it said.

While explaining the death of 11-year-old Shafkat Samir during the ongoing violence on July 19, the Rab Headquarters said Samir was shot dead while closing the window of his house on the second floor of a four-storey building in Kafrul.

"Propaganda is being spread that Samir was shot from the helicopter of Rab forces. However, the helicopter travels in an uninterrupted pace, and the bullets move in a straight line...," it said.

"Considering the overall situation... the speed of the bullet that hit his eye does not match in any way," the statement read.

Curfew to be lifted soon

Home minister tells UN resident coordinator

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said the country's situation is gradually becoming normal and the curfew would be lifted soon.

He said this in response to a query of Gwyn Lewis, UN resident coordinator in Bangladesh.

"We will be able to withdraw the curfew soon. The army will also go back to barracks," said the minister.

After a meeting with Lewis at the secretariat, the minister spoke to the media. He said the UN wanted to know about the detention of a teenager.

Asaduzzaman said the age of the said teen is yet to be known. They came to know from his school records that he was seventeen and a half years old. "He was involved in the crime of killing a cop in Jatrabari."

They have identified him through video evidence, said the minister. He said the boy is now in a correction centre as per the existing law.

Regarding the loss of lives, he said, "Our police and security forces were forced to fire to protect lives and property. The miscreants put forth children and stayed behind during the violence. As they [miscreants] started throwing bricks and blasting crude bombs, police were forced to use tear gas. When the violence escalated, police had to take other steps that left a number of people killed."

He said the UN resident coordinator also asked him about the use of armored personnel carriers (APC) with the UN insignia.

"I informed her that the army might have used the APCs with UN logo unintentionally, but when it came to light, those vehicles were not used anymore. No operational activities were conducted by those vehicles."

Govt takes measure to form public opinion against violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has directed all deputy commissioners and UNOs to create public opinion against terrorism and violence in their areas by forming a "Terrorism and Sabotage Prevention Committee" amid the ongoing situation.

The committee, comprising representatives of local dignitaries and social, cultural, religious, professional, and business organisations, will work to form public opinion through mass contact.

In a letter yesterday, the cabinet division instructed calling a meeting for each of such committees across all metropolitans, districts, upazilas, municipalities, wards, and unions.

In this regard, the cabinet division has directed the secretary of LGD, all divisional and deputy commissioners to take the necessary measures and to report to the division, said the letter.

A family left to navigate

FROM PAGE 3

Around 5:30pm, Imran had asked Shanta to prepare dinner for his night shift. He said he would step out briefly to see what was going on outside. Tragedy struck as he walked towards the market. A sudden bullet ended his life. "My husband was not involved in politics. All he cared about was taking care of his family," Shanta wept.

While talking to Shanta, this correspondent saw Imran's parents, Nazrul Islam, 68, and Selina Akhtar, 50, sitting in silence.

Nazrul recounted the moment he received a call from Imran's phone on Friday night. "It was not him speaking. Someone said he was at a hospital."

Shanta said she rushed to the hospital, only to find Imran's lifeless body among many others. "The doctor said a bullet had pierced through his body."

Imran was buried near his village home on July 21.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 1

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Count all the bodies

FROM PAGE 3

"Almost every day, we see the prime minister visiting the injured in clashes in different hospitals. It's nothing but a farce," she said.

Rahnuma Ahmed, a writer and researcher, said the government, with its forces, not only killed the youth, but also killed the dreams and future of the country.

"Eliminating quota discrimination has now become a symbol. Young people are furious. They don't want to see such a country again. They want to rebuild the country, they want to dream anew. They want to live freely and with dignity. In doing so, they had to give their lives. What could be more shameful?"

Shireen Haque, a women's rights activist, said, "The courage of today's youth has overwhelmed us. Even after being attacked, they have developed resistance. However, from the events that have happened, it is easy to guess that our country will not go back to the previous place. But we all have to remember the fundamental rights of the constitution. Accordingly, the country should be run."

Writer and researcher Maha Mirza said, "What has happened in the last few days is genocide. What is being done to cover it up is unimaginable. Students are being picked up from their homes, it is not possible to know where they are being taken. This is a clear violation of human rights. There has never been so many human rights violations in Bangladesh."

Environment Activist Sharmeen Morshed said, "What have we gone through in the last few days? The electricity was turned off, the internet was turned off and students were picked up from their homes. In 1971, Pakistan forces attacked the youth, today our own forces attacked them. But the young people did not lose courage. The new Liberation War of the youth has begun. We are with them in this fight."

Labour leader Taslima Akhter said that the quota reform protest has now brought the issue of protecting democracy and freedom of speech to the forefront. There is no scope to divide it with the spirit of the Liberation War or Razakars. Because there have not been these many killings in this country in recent memory.

Filmmaker Reetu Sattar read out a written statement at the press conference.

The speakers also put forth six demands -- the nine-point demand of the anti-discrimination student movement must be accepted; all detained students must be released unconditionally; police killings must be investigated; curfew should be withdrawn, along with BGB and army; lives of ordinary people should be protected and general students should not be threatened through various agencies.

Such killings

FROM PAGE 3

MJF's Executive Director Shaheen Anam called for the protection of all individuals from violence, stating, "Such killings, especially of children, during protests are absolutely unacceptable and barbaric. We are extremely concerned about the high number of child fatalities. We want a safe environment for all children."

Shaheen Anam urged everyone to ensure that no child's safety is compromised and to keep children away from all political activities.

She strongly called on the government to conduct thorough and transparent investigations into each incident and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Bullet leaves newborn

A bullet pierced through this bar of the balcony grilles and struck Sumaiya. PHOTO: **STAR**

FROM PAGE 3

said, "Since the morning of that day, helicopters were flying in the area."

Asma kept pointing to the bullet hole in the iron bar, saying, "This could not have happened unless the shot was fired from above. There were helicopters flying directly over our building. If the bullet had been fired from below, the hole wouldn't look like this. That's why we believe the shot came from a helicopter."

Mentionable, Rab in a press statement yesterday stated that no shots were fired from their helicopters.

Asma said they took Sumaiya to a private hospital in the Signboard area, where doctors declared her dead. She was buried at a local graveyard.

Sumaiya was staying with her mother at Siddhirganj since May during her postpartum period. She was supposed to return to her in-law's house in Cumilla a week later.

Now, Asma is blaming herself for bringing her daughter to Narayanganj.

Asma said Sumaiya's father died during the pandemic. "She was my everything... now I lost her as well...."

Asma started crying. Her granddaughter, who was in her lap, began crying too.

Almost a terrorist

FROM PAGE 3

M Nayeemul Islam Khan briefed reporters after the meeting.

Hasina expressed sorrow for the loss of lives and destruction of properties in the carnage centring the students' protests.

Verma expressed condolence for the loss of lives during the recent violence. He welcomed the normalcy that is being restored steadily, and the gradual resumption of economic activities in Bangladesh.

Jihad wanted

FROM PAGE 3

On July 19, while heading to a roadside hotel for lunch, Jihad was struck by a bullet that pierced his right thigh. He was declared dead at DMCH.

The news shattered his family. Jinnat Hossain, Jihad's elder brother, recounted the harrowing experience of receiving the devastating news and bringing his brother's body home. "He was not involved in any politics. His death is an irreparable loss to our family. We want justice for this murder," Jinnat said.

Nurul Amin and Shahanur Begum, Jihad's parents, are inconsolable. Shahanur clutches her son's photo, her tears unceasing, questioning the senseless violence that took her son away. "What was my son's offence? I want justice for my son's murder," she lamented.

Nurul Amin recounted their last phone conversation at 3:00pm on the day of the incident. Jihad had mentioned the tense situation in Dhaka, and Nurul had advised him to stay indoors.

But fate had other plans, and by 5:00pm, the devastating news of Jihad's death had reached him. The sorrow and disbelief are etched deeply in his heart.

Consultancy Opportunities

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites applications from interested consultant to **Support the private sector stream of work in the LAWC cluster by establishing connectivity with key stakeholders such as international buyers' organizations, global business associations, chambers, investors, multinational corporations (MNCs), and employers; and develop a comprehensive knowledge base and material on the private sector in Bangladesh**. The Terms of Reference (ToR) can be downloaded from the ***United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM)*** at **https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/241879**

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Sunday, August 25, 2024, by 04:30 PM (BST time).**

National Housing Finance PLC
Registered Office: National Plaza (7th & 8th Floor)
109, Bir Uttam C.R. Datta Road, Dhaka-1205

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is for kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of **National Housing Finance PLC** at its 257th Meeting held on 31 July 2024 at 4.00pm has approved the unaudited Financial Statements as at and for the 2nd Quarter ended June 30, 2024.

The performance highlights for the Half-Year ended June 30, 2024:

Particulars	January 01, to June 30, 2024	January 01, to June 30, 2023	April, 01 to June 30, 2024	April, 01 to June 30, 2023
Net profit After Tax (Million in Taka)	69.66	122.31	34.37	61.70
Earnings Per Share	0.60	1.05	0.29	0.53

Other performance highlights for the Half-Year ended June 30, 2024:

Particulars	January 01, to June 30, 2024	January 01, to June 30, 2023	As on December 31, 2023
Net Asset Value per share (NAV)	19.52	18.94	18.93
Net operating cash flow per share (NOCFPS)	(3.64)	20.13	25.20

By order of the Board
Sd/-
Md. Sarwar Kamal, FCS
Company Secretary

Dated: 31 July 2024

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Department of Public Health Engineering, Feni.
ee.feni@dphe.gov.bd, dphe.feni@gmail.com

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Memo No. 46.203.3000.061.014.0014.24.100 Date:- 31/07/2024

Invitation for e-Tender notice-(2024/2025)

1	Ministry/Division	Local Government Division
2	Implementing Agency	Department of Public Health Engineering
3	Project/Program Name	Project for Safe Water Supply Throughout the Country
4	e-Tender ID	1003959, 1003960 & 1003961
5	Description of works:	Installation of Deep Tube well (100x38) mm with Submersible Pump at different Upzilla of Feni District under Project for Safe Water Supply Throughout the Country (PSWSC) of Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE).
6	Name, Designation & Address of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Shafiul Haque, Executive Engineer DPHE, Feni District, Feni. Tel. No. 0331-74034
7	This is online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-Gp portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: **www.eprocure.gov.bd**.	

31/07-24
(Md. Shafiul Haque)
Executive Engineer, DPHE
Feni District, Feni

GD-96

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is for information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of Bank Asia PLC. in its 532nd meeting held at 2:35 p.m. on Wednesday, 31 July 2024, in the Bank's Board Room at Bank Asia Tower (Level-10), 32 & 34, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215, has approved the unaudited financial statements of the Bank for the second quarter ended on 30 June 2024 and disclosed the following financial indicators of the Bank:

Particulars	January to June 30, 2024		January to June 30, 2023	
	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)
Net Asset Value (NAV) (Crore)	3,095.52	3,090.55	3,025.02	3,008.26
Net Asset Value (NAV) per Share	26.55	26.51	25.95	25.80
Net Operating Cash Flow per Share (NOCFPS) *	28.87	28.95	14.29	14.43

Particulars	January to June 30, 2024		January to June 30, 2023		April to June 30, 2024		April to June 30, 2023	
	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)
Earnings per Share (EPS)**	2.43	2.65	2.86	2.88	1.82	1.98	1.79	1.81

**Net Operating Cash Flow per Share (NOCFPS) increased mainly due to cash inflow by way of increase in Deposit.*
***Earnings per Share (EPS) decreased mainly due to maintaining higher provision compared to same quarter of last year.*

The details of unaudited financial statements of the Bank for the second quarter ended on 30 June 2024 will also be available on the website of the Bank at '**www.bankasia-bd.com**'.

Dated: Dhaka
31 July 2024

Bank Asia

Corporate Office
Bank Asia Tower, 32 & 34 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue
Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Construction work of a new prison goes on in Khulna city. While the cost of the project increased several times to eventually stand at Tk 288 crore, the work still could not be completed even after 12 years.

NEW KHULNA DISTRICT JAIL

Construction works drag on for 12 years

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

The construction of a modern prison of the Khulna District Jail has remained incomplete for 12 years.

The old prison of Khulna District Jail, located in the city's Jailkhana Ghat along the bank of Bhairab River, was built in 1906. It has some 1,600-2,000 prisoners at present against a capacity to keep 608 inmates.

The Directorate of Prisons in 2008 took the initiative to build the new jail to provide modern facilities to inmates.

Approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec) in 2011, the Tk 144 crore project to construct the prison started in 2012 on around 30 acres of land in Chowk Mathurabad under Dumuria upazila, near Joy Bangla Intersection on Khulna City Bypass Road, slated to be completed by 2016.

However, while the cost of the project increased several times to eventually stand at Tk 288 crore, the work still could not be completed even after 12 years.

According to sources, the project got delayed due to different reasons including change of location, and complications regarding land acquisition.

Since June 6, 2017, the project has been revised and extended a total of six times, with June 30, 2024 set as the new deadline, which has also been crossed.

As per the project's masterplan, the new jail was designed to accommodate 4,000 prisoners. However, the infrastructures under the project were later revised to keep 2,000 inmates.

So far, a total of 52 concrete structures including 47 buildings with one floor to six floors have been constructed inside the project area.

The structures include barracks for different categories of prisoners, prison guards' quarters, and observation towers. Each prisoners' barrack has a wall around it.

Visiting the project site recently, this correspondent saw that although the infrastructures have been constructed, other works including pavement and walkways, internal and connecting roads, fitting grilles, fences, and drains are still incomplete.

However, the Public Works Department sources said the work is almost complete and it will be handed over to the authorities soon.

According to the project office, the new prison is being built as a correctional facility. Here under trial and sentenced prisoners will be kept separately. There are also separate barracks for juvenile and female prisoners. There will be separate hospitals, motivation centres, work-sheds and day-care centres for female inmates.

There will also be a 50-bed hospital for male prisoners, as well as a school for the children of prison guards, a library, a dining room, a modern salon, a laundry, recreation centre, and separate prayer rooms for male and female inmates.

Kudrat-e-Khuda, president of Shushashaner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) in Khulna, said, "Even after 12 years, the construction of the new jail is not completed yet. This is unthinkable in a fair state. Corruption is associated with project delays. Prolonged projects only pave way for more corruption."

"Hopefully the project will be completed soon. The new prison will enhance the district jail's capacity to keep more inmates," said Mohammad Rafiqul Kader, jail superintendent of Khulna District Jail.

Contacted, Md Asaduz Zaman, executive engineer of PWD Division-2, Khulna, said, "The project is almost 99 percent completed and will be handed over to the authorities concerned soon."

Govt now a 'public enemy'

Says Fakhrul

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the existential crisis of the government is gradually deepening as it has now become a "public enemy" by carrying out "genocide" to suppress student protests.

In a statement, he called upon all to take part in the ongoing student-led protests to end injustices by removing the "fascist" Awami League government.

"The government, now isolated from people, has become a public enemy by committing ruthless and barbaric attacks and genocide," he said.

Fakhrul said the indiscriminate killings to subdue the movement are a crime against humanity and punishable by International Criminal Court.

He also called for the immediate and unconditional release of those arrested, withdrawal of the curfew, return of the army to their barracks, lifting of restrictions on gatherings, and reopening of educational institutions.

He said the government is doing whatever it wants to protect itself from public wrath by disregarding the law, constitution, democratic principles, and humanitarian values.

RECENT VIOLENCE

SCBA president demands UN probe, secretary blames it on BNP-Jamaat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP lawyers, led by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, and Awami League backed lawyers, led by SCBA Secretary Shah Monjurul Hoque, yesterday held two separate press conferences, regarding the current state of the country.

Khokon demanded that the ongoing curfew be lifted, along with the withdrawal of armed forces and a stop to "government's control on media".

"The government has already filed cases against lakhs of people. Around 13,000 people have been wrongfully arrested and students are being arrested by house-to-house searches. Political activists are being arrested in order to give political colour to this movement. We support the mass inquiry commission formed under the leadership of Justice MA Matin and rights activist Sultana Kamal," he said.

"We are demanding an inquiry into every incident of killings and injuries under the supervision of the United Nations. We think that hundreds of people have been killed in a planned manner."

"We are strongly demanding an amendment to the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act and to arrange speedy trial of those accused for the crimes against humanity and human rights violations," he said.

SCBA Secretary Shah Monjurul Hoque, at their event, said, "During the quota reform protests, the BNP-Jamaat-Shibir, relying on ordinary students, wreaked havoc across the country and destroyed important state structures."

"The government sincerely stood by the families of the people injured and killed in this unexpected incident and accepted all the demands of the students."

He said the SCBA is pledge-bound to protect the country's independence, sovereignty, state resources, law and order and public life. Therefore, this association protests against the anti-national activities of the anti-independence circle.

176 more hospitalised with dengue

BSS, *Dhaka*

A total of 176 people were hospitalised with dengue in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Of them, 73 patients were hospitalised in Dhaka.

This year, the total number of cases rose to 6,320, while 56 deaths were reported during the period.

In the past 24 hours, 144 dengue patients were discharged from hospitals.

Last year, the country recorded 1,705 dengue-related deaths and a total of 3,21,179 cases.

DEATHS OF 4 CHILDREN

Petition seeks HC order for judicial commission

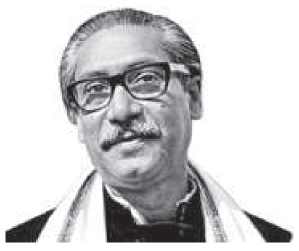
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a petition with the High Court seeking its order on the government to form a judicial commission to probe four children's deaths in the recent violence.

Advocate Taimur Alam Khondaker also prayed to the court to direct the government to give Tk 1 crore each to the families of the deceased.

The four children are four-year-old Abdul Ahad of Rajarbag in Jatrabari; 15-year-old Nayima Sultana of Uttara; 11-year-old Safayat Shamir of Mirpur and 6-year-old Ria Gope of Narayanganj.

He said the minors were killed in gunshots although they did not participate in the protests. He said the HC may hold hearing of the petition today.



Month of mourning begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The month of mourning begins today commemorating the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members on August 15, 1975.

To mark the month, Awami League will bring out a mourning procession in Dhaka at 3:00pm on Friday.

It will start from Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh adjacent to Suhrawardy Udyan and end on the Bangabandhu Bhaban premises at Dhanmondi-32 after parading through Shahbagh, Elephant Road and Mirpur Road, said a press release.

Various political and socio-cultural organisations also chalked out month-long events.

Killings during quota protests

FROM PAGE 3

compete for government jobs is not nonpolitical; rather, it is a political one.

"But instead of going towards a political solution to this question, the government first wanted to ignore it. It later resorted to repression," he said.

"The government, without going to the problem's root, is now saying they will slap a ban on this party or that party. This will not even scratch the surface of the main problem. Rather, this will make the problem more complex," he added.

"The problem should be resolved politically. For the first step in this political solution, the government should seek an unconditional apology and resign. Without this step, we cannot take any step towards a new system," he observed.

"A safe learning environment must be restored in the universities. If our students can't come, whom will we teach, what will we teach?" Salimullah asked, demanding the release of all arrested students.

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TENDER NOTICE

01. Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide vendors for Supply and Installation of Air Conditioner at Jorarganj Branch, Dewanhat Branch and Bangshal Branch of **BASIC Bank Limited.**
02. The participating companies must have at least 5 years proven experience of successfully Supplying, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of Air Conditioners in any Scheduled Bank / Bangladesh Bank or must have previous record of successfully Supplying, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of Air Conditioners in **BASIC Bank Limited.** Copy of previous work order(s) must be supplied along with the tender as proof in this regard.
03. A pay order of **Tk. 60,000/- (Sixty thousand Taka)** has to be submitted with each tender in the name of **BASIC Bank Limited, Head Office,** Dhaka as earnest money. Earnest money can be forfeited for reasons mentioned in the tender schedule.
04. The tender document may be obtained from Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of **BASIC Bank Limited** between 10:00 A.M. and 05:00 P.M. of all working days at a cost of **Tk. 1,000/-** (Non-Refundable) only. No tender document will be sold after 05:00 P.M. of **18/08/2024.**
05. Sealed tenders have to be dropped in the tender box kept at Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of **BASIC Bank Limited** within **19/08/2024** by 03:00 P.M., and the tenders will be opened at 03:30 P.M. on the same day in presence of bidders, if any.
06. Other terms and conditions can be found in the tender document.

Deputy General Manager
Common Services Division

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
তথ্য ও সম্প্রচার মন্ত্রণালয়
বাংলাদেশ ফিল্ম সেন্সর বোর্ড
তথ্য ভবন (লেভেল ১৩ ও ১৪), ১১২, সার্কিট হাউজ রোড
রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০

নং-১৫.৫৯.০০০০.০০৫.২৩.০০১.২৪-৩১৯
১৬ শ্রাবণ, ১৪৩১ বঙ্গাব্দ।
তারিখ: ....
৩১ জুলাই, ২০২৪ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

জাতীয় চলচ্চিত্র পুরস্কার-২০২৩ এর জন্য আবেদন জমাদানের সময় বৃদ্ধি

জাতীয় চলচ্চিত্র পুরস্কার-২০২৩ এর জন্য আবেদন জমাদানের সময়সীমা ২০ আগস্ট ২০২৪ বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত বৃদ্ধি করা হলো। ২১ জুন ২০২৪ তারিখে বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন, কালবেলা ও The Daily Star পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে বর্ণিত সকল শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

৩১.০৭.২০২৪
(মো. আবদুল জলিল)
ভাইস চেয়ারম্যান
বাংলাদেশ ফিল্ম সেন্সর বোর্ড
ও
সদস্য-সচিব, জুরি বোর্ড
জাতীয় চলচ্চিত্র পুরস্কার-২০২৩
ফোন: ৮৩০০৬২০

GD- 97

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শি/এ, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সরকারী মালিকানাধীন ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড, গোপালগঞ্জ কারখানায় উৎপাদন বিভাগের (Contraceptive Unit) নিম্নলিখিত পদে জরুরী ভিত্তিতে লোক নিয়োগ করা হবেঃ

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা	বয়স সীমা
০১।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০২ (Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing- এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০২।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর -০২ (Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing)	এসএসসি/ এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing- এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৩।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Vial Washing and Depyrogenation tunnel)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Washing and Depyrogenation tunnel-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৪।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Vial Washing and Depyrogenation tunnel)	এসএসসি/ এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Washing and Depyrogenation tunnel-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৫।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০২ (Vial Filling-Sealing Machine)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Filling-Sealing Machine-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৬।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০২ (Vial Filling-Sealing Machine)	এসএসসি/ এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Filling-Sealing Machine-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৭।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ Autoclave Machine (Vial)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Autoclave Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৮।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ Autoclave Machine (Vial)	এসএসসি/ এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Autoclave Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৯।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Auto-Labeling Machine Vial)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Auto-Labeling Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
১০।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Auto-Labeling Machine Vial)	এসএসসি/ এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Auto-Labeling Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
১১।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ Blister Machine (Combo Pack)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Blister Machine (Combo Pack)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
১২।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ Blister Machine (Combo Pack)	এসএসসি/ এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Blister Machine (Combo Pack)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদেরকে ০৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙ্গীন ছবি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, জীবন-বৃত্তান্ত, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র সমূহের সত্যায়িত কপিসহ আগামী ২০ আগষ্ট, ২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর বরাবরে আবেদন করার জন্য বলা হচ্ছে। উল্লেখিত কাগজপত্রসমূহ সঠিকভাবে জমা দিতে হবে অন্যথায় আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

শুধুমাত্র শর্ট লিষ্টেড প্রার্থীদেরকে সাক্ষাতকারের জন্য ডাকা হবে।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, এডমিন এন্ড এইচআরএম (চলতি দায়িত্ব)
এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

Haniyeh was seen as more moderate face of Hamas

REUTERS, *Dubai*

Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas leader who was killed in Iran, was the tough-talking face of the Palestinian group's international diplomacy as the offensive raged back in Gaza, where three of his sons were killed in an Israeli airstrike.

But despite the rhetoric, he was seen by many diplomats as a moderate compared to the more hardline members of the Iran-backed group inside Gaza.

Appointed to the Hamas top job in 2017, Haniyeh moved between Turkey and Qatar's capital Doha, escaping the travel curbs of the blockaded Gaza Strip and enabling him to act as a negotiator in ceasefire talks or to talk to Hamas' ally Iran.

"All the agreements of normalisation that you (Arab states) signed with (Israel) will not end this conflict," Haniyeh declared on Qatar-based Al Jazeera television shortly after Israel launched the offensive.

Israel's offensive killed more than 35,000 people inside Gaza so far, according to health authorities in the territory.

Three of Haniyeh's sons - Hazem, Amir and Mohammad - were killed on April 10 when an Israeli air strike struck the car they were driving, Hamas said.

Haniyeh also lost four of his grandchildren, three girls and a boy, in the attack, Hamas said.

Haniyeh had denied Israeli assertions that his sons were fighters for the group, and said "the interests of the Palestinian people are placed ahead of everything" when asked if their killing would impact truce talks.

For all the tough language in public, Arab diplomats and officials had viewed him as relatively pragmatic compared with more hardline voices inside Gaza.

Israel regards the entire Hamas leadership as terrorists.

Smoke billows from burning tyres as Israeli soldiers deploy in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron yesterday, following a demonstration by Palestinians denouncing the killing of the leader of the Hamas group. PHOTO: **AFP**

PALESTINIAN DETAINEES FROM GAZA

Israel used waterboarding to torture them: UN report

AGENCIES

Israel has detained thousands of Palestinians during the offensive in Gaza and stands accused of numerous cases of torture, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said in a new report.

The 23-page report, released yesterday, noted allegations of widespread abuse of prisoners being held incommunicado in arbitrary, prolonged detention. It was published during a tense standoff in Israel as far-right politicians and demonstrators opposed an investigation into alleged sexual abuse of detainees by soldiers.

Based primarily on interviews with released detainees and other victims from October 7 to June 30, the UN report found that since the offensive began, "thousands of Palestinians" including medical staff, have been "taken from Gaza to Israel, usually shackled and blindfolded".

As of the end of June, Israel's prison service held more than 9,400 "security detainees", the report said, adding that those detained have been "held in secret, without being given a reason for their detention" and without a lawyer.

> **"At least 53 Palestinian detainees" are known to have died in Israeli detention facilities: report**

"At least 53 Palestinian detainees" are known to have died in Israeli detention facilities, it said. It also detailed "allegations of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including sexual abuse of women and men".

The report was released during an investigation by the Israeli army, which is questioning nine soldiers over allegations of "substantial abuse" of a Palestinian detainee at the Sde Teiman detention camp in the Negev desert in southern Israel, reports Al Jazeera online.

Last week, eight Palestinian prisoners who were released by the Israeli army said they experienced torture during their time in Ofer Prison in the occupied West Bank.

Former Palestinian detainees told the UN that they were held in "cage-like facilities, stripped naked for prolonged periods, wearing only diapers".

The documented abuse included food, sleep and water deprivation and being burned with cigarettes.

"Some detainees said dogs were released on them, and others said they were subjected to waterboarding, or that their hands were tied and they were suspended from the ceiling. Some women and men also spoke of sexual and gender-based violence," the report said.

Death toll in Kerala landslides rises to 167

REUTERS, *Chooramala*

Soldiers and rescuers worked through slush and rocks under steady rain, looking for survivors and searching for bodies in the hills of India's Kerala state yesterday, a day after more than 165 people were killed in monsoon landslides.

Nearly 1,000 people had been rescued from the hillside villages and tea and cardamom estates in Wayanad district and 225 were still missing, authorities said yesterday. They said at least 167 people died and 195 were injured, while the local Asianet news TV channel put the death toll at 179.

Heavy rain in Kerala, one of India's most attractive tourist destinations, led to the landslides early on Tuesday, sending torrents of mud, water and tumbling boulders downhill and burying or sweeping people away to their deaths as they slept.

It was the worst disaster in the state since deadly floods in 2018.

Experts said the area had been receiving heavy rain in the last two weeks which had softened the soil and that extremely heavy rainfall on Monday triggered the landslides.

16-yr-old in Rangpur jail

FROM PAGE 1

but he was shown arrested in that case.

Shahjalal filed a prayer seeking bail for Mahim, and the hearing will be on August 4, he said, adding that the matter has been transferred to the children's court.

Shahjalal told The Daily Star that Mahim on July 18 was hanging out with his friends at Parkermor near his home, which is also close to the Begum Rokeya University. He was in his college uniform.

When violence erupted around Parkermor, panicked Mahim ran towards the opposite direction to his home and suffered shotgun pellet injuries to his leg, said his father, quoting Mahim's friends.

Mahim's father Shahjalal said they looked for Mahim all day but at night he received a call from someone claiming to be a law enforcer. The person said Mahim was in their custody and that he would be released the next day, July 19.

Shahjalal called the person the next day but this time he said Mahim would not be released.

That afternoon, the father learnt that Mahim was sent to Rangpur jail after he was produced before a court.

In a Facebook post at 8:24pm yesterday, a sister of Mahim claimed that the commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police called the family to his office yesterday. He assured them that Mahim was in good health and urged the family to be at the court during proceedings today. He also told them that Mahim would be released after the court proceedings today.

The Daily Star could not reach any Rangpur police officials for comments last night.

Academic calendars in total disarray

FROM PAGE 12

pension scheme issue] is a question of our [university teachers'] dignity. We'll continue our movement until our demands are met."

Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhoury said ensuring the safety of the students is the government's prime concern now.

"We're in close contact with the government authorities concerned and we'll take decisions in line with their recommendations regarding the reopening of schools and colleges," he told The Daily Star.

He said the situation in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Narsingdi and Gazipur differs from that of the rest of the country, and they will take it into consideration when making the decisions.

"However, we want to reopen schools and colleges as soon as possible."

About the teachers' protests, Mohibul said they were in talks with the teachers. "We'll request the teachers to reach a positive decision."

There are 1.98 crore students in primary level schools, 2.03 crore in secondary level and 44 lakh in all universities and affiliated colleges under public universities.

On July 1, the students took to the streets demanding reforms to the quota system in government jobs and had enforced strikes and boycott of classes and exams on all campuses indefinitely since July 6.

Their peaceful protests, however, turned violent as Bangladesh Chhatra League men attacked them on the Dhaka University campus on July 15.

Unprecedented violence and police attacks since July 16 had left at least 163 people, including students, dead (the actual number could be much higher) and thousands injured.

That very night, the education ministry declared the closure of all secondary and higher secondary level educational institutions (schools, colleges, madrasas and technical institutions), as well as polytechnic institutes until further notice. Following that, the UGC declared the closure of all public and private universities along with their affiliated colleges. It also instructed them to vacate all dormitories.

On July 17, the primary and mass education ministry issued a press release announcing the closure of all government primary schools, Child Welfare Trust-run primary schools, and Bureau of Non-Formal Education learning centres in the city corporation areas of the eight divisional cities indefinitely.

LOSSES AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Undergraduate admission seekers have been affected by the postponement of the admission processes and orientations at the Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology and Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology.

Admission tests for the cluster of nine agricultural universities for this academic year, scheduled to be held on July 20, were also postponed.

Besides, Rajshahi University authorities pushed back their undergraduate admission process on July 1 and deferred the start of the first-year honours classes.

A student of Comilla University's English department, requesting anonymity, said no classes were held at the university since early May, following a conflict between teachers and the vice-chancellor over an untoward incident at the latter's office. "Then came the teachers' movement, which further hampered the educational environment on the campus.

"We understand that we're all fighting for our rights, but at the same time we need to continue our studies ... It's the government's responsibility to stabilise the situation for the students as well as for the teachers."

HSC EXAMINEES PERPLEXED

Earlier, the government postponed the HSC and all equivalent exams, scheduled between July 18 and August 1, for eight days.

Professor Tapan Kumar Sarkar, chairman of the Inter-Education Board Coordination Committee and also of the Dhaka Education Board, said, "We'll hold the postponed exams after August 11."

Meanwhile, teachers of secondary schools said the half-yearly exams, slated for July 15-24, were postponed due to the school closure and the next exams are scheduled for July 30 till August 3.

Classroom activities were disrupted during the first half of this year due to cold waves, the national election and then heat waves. So, more closures will cause more learning loss, teachers said.

Prarthona Sarker, a seventh-grader of Monipur High School and College in Mirpur, said, "It's difficult to study at home without classroom explanations. While self-study provides some understanding, it's not as effective."

Her mother, Labonno Sarker, expressed concerns about the overall situation. "School closures are harmful for the children. On the other hand, if they reopen, there's a fear of violence during the commute [to and from school], which is also a big concern."

The government was scheduled to complete the class XI admission process by July 25 and start classes on July 30.

However, the internet shutdown since the night of July 18 hindered the timely completion of admissions. The authorities concerned are now planning to start classes for newly enrolled class XI students on August 6.

Investigate allegations

FROM PAGE 12

The Daily Star's count of the victims is based solely on hospital and police sources.

Over the last several days, police arrested more than 10,000 people in connection with the violence.

"In recent weeks, thousands of students have taken to the streets in Bangladesh to protest a lack of economic opportunity and to end the government's inequitable quota system for public sector employment that reserves government jobs for relatives of veterans of Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence," the statement said.

Rather than engaging in the legitimate grievances of the protesters, the Bangladesh security forces, including the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), responded with brute force, killing hundreds of protesters, and arresting and injuring thousands more, it said.

The statement said the right to peacefully assemble and protest is one of the foundations of a democratic society.

"The United States stands with these courageous individuals who are advocating for their dignity and for a prosperous future, and we will continue to speak up for human rights in Bangladesh and seek to hold accountable those involved in such abuses."

Meanwhile, Catherine West, UK's parliamentary under-secretary of state at the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office, said what has happened in the last couple of weeks in Bangladesh is not acceptable.

"And we have raised that on a number of occasions including the nature of judicial review which is being currently undertaken by the government of Bangladesh," she said in response to a query by Bangladesh-origin MP Rupa Huq in parliament on Tuesday.

She also said the UK and its international partners will continue to push for progress towards accountability and justice including through an independent, impartial and transparent investigation into alleged human rights violations in Bangladesh.

Rupa made a reference to the Tiananmen Square and said the use of lethal force on student protesters in Bangladesh has rightly been condemned by their government.

She urged that the UK to put pressure on the Bangladeshi investigation,so that it has an international element, because "a country that can just turn off all communications with the outside world and controls all institutions right down to their stormtrooper-like police should not just be allowed to mark its own homework."

Another Bangladesh-origin UK MP Apsana Begum said following the high death tolls among the student protesters, international human rights bodies are reporting further crackdowns on dissent from mass arrests and enforced disappearances to torture and unlawful killings.

Expressing solidarity with Bangladeshi people facing repression, she said they must have their right to exercise their fundamental human rights, including the right to protest.

Meanwhile, Australian High Commission in Dhaka on Tuesday said they remain deeply concerned about the violence and reiterate Australia's support for universal human rights.

"It is critical perpetrators of alleged violations be held to account," it said in an X post, adding that they honour the memories of all those killed in recent violence in Bangladesh.

However, China said it is heartened as the situation in Bangladesh has come "under control and social order has resumed".

At a press briefing in Beijing yesterday, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian said China is heartened by this as Bangladesh's friend and close neighbour.

He said the two countries are comprehensive strategic cooperative partners and China stands ready to work with Bangladesh to deliver on the important common understandings reached by the leaders of the two countries during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit to China.

Matiur goes on early retirement

FROM PAGE 12

his son Mushfiqur Rahman Ifat posted on social media a photo of a sacrificial goat before Eid and wrote that the animal cost Tk 12 lakh.

The post went viral with many pointing out that Matiur, as a grade-1 NBR official, had a basic monthly salary of Tk 78,000.

The Anti-Corruption Commission launched an investigation into the sources of Matiur and his family members' wealth.

In early July, a Dhaka court ordered confiscation of all moveable and immovable properties owned by him and his family members on charges of corruption, involvement in insider trading, and making money through the purchase of shares through private placement.

His involvement in the stock market raised questions since he was a tax collector.

An analysis of his and his family's shareholding in at least 15 publicly listed companies early last month showed that the top official and his family held 9.8 crore shares and the market value as of last month was Tk 174 crore.

On June 24, a Dhaka court issued a travel ban on Matiur and his family members.

Contacted yesterday, Matiur said he sought voluntary retirement because of the trial.

"I have never indulged in corruption in my workplace. Rather, I faced harassment and opposition from vested quarters when I tried to carry out automation of customs processes," he added.

Social media curbs lifted

FROM PAGE 12

To further his point, Palak said that pro-Palestine and anti-Israel posts are blocked by social media platforms.

From July 16 to 18, Facebook honoured only 13 percent of the government's requests to remove content on its platform, Palak said.

Social media platforms restrict posts related to the Awami League, Bangabandhu, liberation and Sheikh Hasina, he said.

He asked Meta if its community standards allow running a Facebook page in the name of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who is currently incarcerated.

YouTube honoured 21 percent of the government's request for taking down posts from July 17 to 26, while TikTok acted on 68 percent of the requests, Palak added.

Although all cache servers were opened from 2pm to allow all social media platforms, it would take another 24 to 48 hours for full-fledged service to resume, said Md Emdadul Hoque, president of Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh.

The mobile operators also received instructions to remove the restrictions on social media.

After the lifting of the restrictions on social media, users said the internet speed has improved but hasn't returned to previous levels.

Olympic spirit

FROM PAGE 12

the Tokyo Olympics because of the Covid pandemic.

"I congratulated them when they were introduced as Silver medallists," Lim told Korean media after the award ceremony.

When asked if they saw the South Korean pair as their rivals, Kim and Ri both shook their heads.

South Korean broadcasters have repeatedly run videos of the selfie, with many commentators reflecting on the significance of a rare moment of unity.

"This is the true spirit of the Olympics," one commentator said.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Only fair justice can restore order

Govt must allow independent probe into deaths of protesters

Try as it may, the government can no longer circumvent critical questions about the role of security forces and ruling party cadres in the deaths of protesters. Five trends that have emerged from the law enforcement measures taken in response to the violent events of July 18-21 are blaming the violence squarely on BNP-Jamaat (without evidence); mass arrests, often through block raids; gross violation of Supreme Court guidelines for arrests and remand; making destruction of public properties—rather than the deaths—a central focus of investigation; and suppression of student organisers and protesters through various tactics. All this has reaffirmed doubts about the government's sincerity to ensure justice for the horrific tragedy that befell our nation.

Against this backdrop, the prime minister's statement on Wednesday about seeking cooperation from the United Nations and other international organisations to conduct a "fair and proper investigation" into the nationwide violence offers a ray of hope. This comes after repeated calls for credible investigations into the deaths. Even the UN and the European Union also demanded a thorough and impartial probe. The PM, we may recall, earlier said the government would seek "foreign technical assistance" for the judicial inquiry committee. It has already indicated that the commission—initially tasked with investigating only the six deaths of July 16—can now probe all the killings that have since occurred.

Where does it all leave us? We have no details yet about the extent of any possible UN involvement in the process or how it will sit with the ongoing investigations by police. But we have to be reasonable about our expectations. With the entire law enforcement machine keyed to political manoeuvres, how much help the judicial commission or any team headed by the UN will have from relevant state departments in, say, collecting or verifying evidence remains to be seen.

As things stand, there is a huge gap between what's being said or sought publicly and what's being done on the ground. Leave aside the widespread panic caused by arresting nearly 11,000 individuals, including many students, over the last 13 days. Even while the PM made her UN probe call, there were reports from different parts of the country about security forces violently disrupting the protesters' "March for Justice" by charging batons and using other heavy-handed tactics. Many protesters were held, many injured. Clearly, protesters continue to be targeted as they were before. Now consider the fact that no legal steps have been taken against any member of the security forces involved in the killings. The disparity couldn't be more obvious, indicating that the government is still in denial, and without a complete turnaround in current practices, justice may continue to elude us.

To this day, the number of people who died varies widely—at least 163 as per by this daily, 150 as per the government, 211 as per *Prothom Alo,* 266 as per the student platform. The actual number could be much higher. So many deaths cannot go unaddressed or unpunished. The government must realise that nothing short of a fair investigation into its own forces—who shot indiscriminately at the protesters, aided by party cadres—will restore public order or give credibility to its efforts. Any investigation also must delve into how the conflicts became so violent in the first place, and lead to accountability for those truly responsible. The government should also stop harassing the protesters and ordinary citizens immediately.

Stop the downward economic spiral

Fresh sovereign rating downgrade shows much remains to be done

S&P Global's downgrading of Bangladesh's long-term sovereign rating from BB- to B+ is but another indication that while the nation's focus has been trained on ensuring justice for the lives lost in recent violence, the economy continues to take a hit because of the government's failure to resolve this crisis. Following the unrest that resulted in the death of so many individuals, a five-day complete internet blackout, and subsequent curfew imposition, many economic sectors have struggled to bounce back even after the situation has become less tense. The lack of internet connectivity has particularly hurt IT and business-processing outsourcing firms and export-oriented industries. Even the S&P, alongside citing persistent pressure on Bangladesh's external metrics, particularly the decline in foreign exchange reserves, also mentioned in its report how the government is grappling with widespread protests, and that the "highly concentrated political environment" may undermine the predictability of future policy responses.

The S&P downgrade is significant as it may erode confidence in our economy among investors and businesses, and could directly affect Bangladesh's foreign direct investment (FDI) prospects. It may also result in interest rates for foreign loans rising. This means that the economy faces a double whammy as it tries to stay on the path to recovery from a 9.7 percent inflation and a 35 percent reduction of foreign exchange reserves over two years. This path has been beset by problems predating the recent unrest.

For example, on the back of a statistical mismatch of export data between two major sources, Bangladesh Bank published revised figures in early July, and the S&P report mentioned that exports have declined 5.9 percent in FY24. While remittance inflow grew by 10.7 percent in the same period, the most recent data from the central bank shows that remittance inflow in the first 28 days of July was 16 percent lower compared to the full month of July a year ago, and 35 percent lower compared to June this year. Recent events have but exacerbated all these longstanding issues, highlighting once again that the economy is structurally unprepared for instability.

One may recall that Moody's previously downgraded Bangladesh's sovereign credit rating in May 2023, citing heightened external vulnerability and persistent liquidity risks, as well as institutional weaknesses. Another global credit rating agency has now downgraded Bangladesh a year on, which indicates that the authorities have failed to take lessons from the previous setback. As things stand, any economic recovery cannot be even started without first resolving the ongoing crisis through ensuring justice for those killed in the protests. So the authorities must take the latest rating downgrade with the seriousness that it deserves.

What does our labour market look like for educated youth?

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SAYEMA HAQUE BIDISHA

The student movement for the reformation of the quota system in government jobs highlights the importance and urgency of re-evaluating the current labour market scenario in Bangladesh. The reason behind the educated youth's overwhelming preference for public sector jobs, particularly those in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS), must be understood in a greater detail and also through a critical lens of youth unemployment.

FILE PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

BCS aspirants queue up in front of the central library of Dhaka University, waiting to get in to study for the exam.

In this context, we should also keep in mind that Bangladesh is going through a demographic transition with the youth (15-29 years old) constituting 36.7 percent of the total labour force (LFS 2022). However, according to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2022 data, the rate of unemployment among the youth (eight percent) is much higher than the national average (3.53 percent). Among the unemployed (reported to be unemployed for more than two years), as many as 14.7 percent are also found to have received tertiary education. This poll of educated unemployed is certainly a serious concern for the country's labour market. Besides, as many as 22 percent of the youth are found to be NEET (not in employment, education and training), with the male NEET being 16.2 percent and the female NEET being as high as 27.1 percent. With such a large proportion of our youth not being in the mainstream labour market activities and another significant proportion being unemployed, one of the most crucial challenges of Bangladesh's labour market is to effectively utilise our favourable demographic profile.

> **Our educational institutions, starting from the primary level, do not offer such skills with due importance and, as a result, a large mass of the youth population, especially those from the rural areas and underprivileged backgrounds, seriously lack such skills in most of the cases. In addition, skill mismatch due to poor academia-industry linkage is also partly responsible for shrinking the domain of private sector employment for graduates.**

However, from the demand-side point of view, if we explore the employment opportunities for the educated youth in particular (those with tertiary level of education), for the salary-based employment, there are basically two broad streams: public sector jobs and private sector employment. In addition, there is a separate stream comprising different self-employment activities, including entrepreneurial activities, freelance work, and digital platform economy-based jobs. Although all such jobs require a common set of eligibility in terms of education and skills, it is obvious that each of these categories requires different skill sets of its own. In this context, high-skilled private sector employment in most cases requires strong interpersonal communication skills both in the native language as well as in English, along with computing and data management skills and teamwork in many cases.

Our educational institutions, starting from the primary level, do not offer such skills with due importance and, as a result, a large mass of the youth population, especially those from the rural areas and underprivileged backgrounds, seriously lack such skills in most of the cases. In addition, skill mismatch due to poor academia-industry linkage is also partly responsible for shrinking the domain of private sector employment for graduates. Therefore, it can be argued that a "push factor" is working for a significant mass of educated youth searching for high-skilled jobs with decent salary and benefit structure. In addition, there are also complaints and accusations of nepotism and favouritism, which discourage the young people coming from underprivileged backgrounds to compete for them.

On the other hand, we can say that there is a "pull factor" for public sector jobs and it is not only due to the reasonably decent salary and benefits, but also for the stability and job security associated with employment in the public sector. In addition, public sector employment is traditionally considered prestigious, with high possibilities for climbing up the occupational ladder, and is also seen as a source of power and social status. It is therefore not surprising that a young graduate will consider public sector jobs, especially the BCS cadre ones, as the most desirable.

It is not only in the context of salary-based employment but also for different self-employment ventures that there exist several challenges, all of which again "pushes away" the potential young graduates from such ventures. On the one hand, there are challenges in the context of availability of credit, market access, and required infrastructural support, while on the other hand, there are limited policy support and strategic directions for those who want to build and progress their career with their own efforts. A relevant question in this context is whether we actually need so many graduates or not, and whether we should put greater emphasis on specialised short courses, diplomas and technical and vocational education and training (TVET)-based employment instead. However, to attract more young people to TVET-based education and employment, we need to deal with the social stigma attached to it, and at the same time we must work on modernising the training programmes.

The government also needs to re-evaluate the overall labour market scenario for the youth and take necessary steps to broaden the horizon of their employability. In this regard, greater collaborative efforts of industry and academia are required to deal with the issue of skill mismatch and due emphasis should be given to develop soft skills of students through a wide range of initiatives. In this connection, the importance of quality education focusing on basic language, analytical and computing skills, especially at the primary level, cannot be overemphasised.

Finally, with a view to facilitate the entrepreneurial activities of the young graduates, availability of cheaper sources of credit, market linkages, suitable digital infrastructure, budgetary incentives, etc must be ensured, and a favourable ecosystem for the graduates seeking self-employment activities must be built.

In the aftermath of violence

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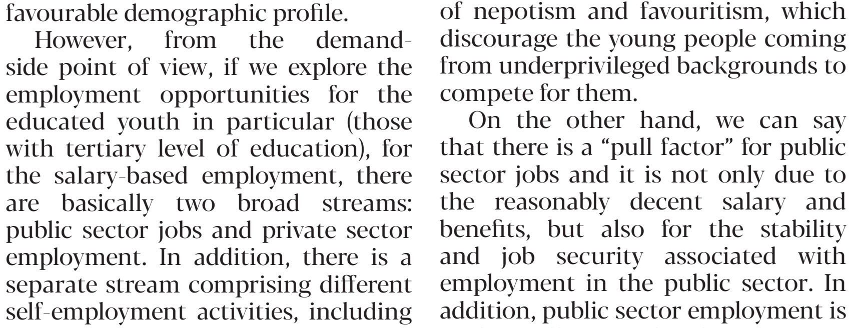
MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

"Are you okay?"

Friends, family and relatives from abroad all share the same concern. They keep asking while I keep reassuring them that I am okay, at least physically. That was more than enough to be grateful about, I explain. These days, they ask more questions, difficult ones, and one of these questions keeps ringing in my head.

One of my school friends from Delhi asked how I felt and I had no answer to that.


Dhaka
Hospital
সাহিত
অধিকার চাইলে আমার সন্তানকে হত্যা করা হবে কেন?

A parent holding a placard that reads, 'Why would my children get killed for asking for their rights?' in front Dhaka Medical College Hospital entrance on July 30, 2024.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

In my mind, I kept rewinding time to figure out when was the last time I really felt something. I tried very hard to remember the last thing I felt. Was it the annoyance of traffic jams caused by the quota protests? Or the deep-seated shame of being unable to empathise with the plight of my peers? Perhaps it was the shock of witnessing violence unfold on my own campus, or the momentary relief of our halls being freed from student politics. Maybe it was the anger at a system that demanded martyrdom before acknowledging legitimate grievances, or the frustration of being unable to stand in solidarity with the protesters, and the sorrow of scrolling through countless obituaries on social media? Was it the fear of becoming another victim, or the pride of belonging to a generation that had etched its name in history?

I do not know. The truth is I have been feeling so much and so little at the same time. There are things I feel a little more these days, like helplessness and vulnerability. And then there are things I no longer feel, like sleep and hunger. I spend hours on social media seeking updates and then regret being so adamant. The desire to stay informed is matched by an equal desire to escape the relentless barrage of distressing news. I cannot sleep in the comfort of my own home knowing what my peers are going through. Their dialogues haunt me as nightmares, pulling me out of a slumber of despair. I keep thinking how the list gets longer every day and how I can no longer keep up with remembering their names. I realise that the victims have formed a closer circle around me, from strangers to people I know. How do I label this feeling that seems to be strangling me every day, embracing me in a cloud of remorse and contempt?

So, as I refresh my news feed for the hundredth time, I realise another day has passed and I still do not have the answer to their question. There is nothing much I do these days, except for sharing these stories and saying a silent prayer. The weight of grief is suffocating, and I cannot imagine how long I can endure it. I carry the burden of shared loss because this is where I belong. I do not remember the last time I felt like this, all of it seems very new. It started with an excruciating pain which has now given way to numbness. My tears have dried up and are replaced by a sense of emptiness. I feel hollow if that is something you could feel, and I know that it is here to stay for a while.

All this while I realised that we are capable of feeling way more than our hearts can contain. Yet, amidst the despair, a flicker of hope remains. This makes me feel strong and alive when everything else is falling apart. It is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit, a force that united thousands of us in the face of adversity. This hope, fragile though it may be, is the only anchor in the storm. No matter what lies ahead, I want this hope to persist. It is probably the only feeling that makes sense right now.

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Enough!

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MOHAMMAD SHAMSUZZAMAN

Police patrol. Paramilitary fly and fire. Army amble amid curfew. Smokes lick the sky. Shrieks and screams can be heard from many places. A slow-motion mayhem is all set. The horror unleashes. They cry. They sigh. They die. Clashes and confrontations renew. Bullets still pierce. Blood still drips. Bodies still drop. The atmosphere is spooky.

This is not a scene from a horror movie. This is what unfurled in Bangladesh during the third week of July. We are jinxed since. A part of the whole state apparatus appears to be up against its student populations. They are brutally killed and fatally wounded. No one knows exactly how many students have already perished. Victims, including civilians, are legion. As of July 30, *The Daily Star* confirmed 163 deaths. No student movement has been attempted to be quelled by any government since our independence in 1971 that costs so many lives. This is perplexing, paralysing!

Shockingly, a disconnected voice reminds us that the government has deployed only five percent of its power to deal with the defectors, who are the agents of anarchy. They (read: the government) don't own up to the terrible mess that the country is now. They look for scapegoats. They swagger around like saints and angels, whose failure is someone else's fault. Whatever they did, and do, bolsters democracy and fosters development. Rigged elections don't bother them. A muzzled press doesn't embarrass them. Epic corruption charges against government officials seem to them infractions of a slapstick proportion. They ignore. Consequently, the potential for crime, corruption, and discrimination metastasises. People feel divided and vulnerable. They yet stand no criticism. When they encounter a conflict with their beliefs, values, and vision, they become confrontational and condescending. They trot out labels for othering. One of the common labels they almost religiously drizzle is *Razakar*—the traitor. This time around, the label fell on the wrong ears, and exploded agitations nationwide.

And that's how we've reached where we stand now. Students from universities across the country were protesting against the quota system in civil service. On July 21, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court ordered that 93 percent of jobs in civil service will be merit-based. Case closed!

If it were! The country simmers in anger and uncertainty, for, in the meantime, what the government did went against every rule. Patience and negotiations were not their currencies of reconciliation. They threatened repression. They lauded the muscle power of their student wing. Nothing seemed enough to deflect the students from their demands. The government pulled the levers of power immediately. Police swung into action. They appeared exhausted. Paramilitary chipped in. The chaos confounded. The army took over the streets. Curfew continues. Helicopters whir. Guns roar. Sound grenades blast. Whoever lives here, as it seems, lives by luck. Many are not lucky enough against guns and goons. Death sneaks around for anyone, everyone. Why did the government pit itself against its student populations when some of them are not voters yet and most of them are disinterested in politics? They are off to the wrong genies. Students mustn't have been the excuse for the government to lock everyone down in their houses.

When Bangladesh bleeds, no one scores any political point, however lofty their political ideologies are. The photo was taken in Dhaka on July 19, 2024. FILE PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

The government proceeded from the assumption that they would weather the crisis and would come out strong, as they did in the past with protests and movements. Their tactics and rhetoric seemed tested. They appeared invincible. Abu Sayed, a student of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur, punctured their aura of invincibility. Abu Sayed was killed live on July 16. He stood open-air with a stick in his hand, pretending to dodge a fusillade of rubber bullets. The bullets hit hard. He collapsed to the ground. He bled profusely and lost consciousness before he perished on his way to the hospital. The nation witnessed how state-sponsored violence crushed innocence and courage to maintain its grip on power. People panicked. Anger intensified. The protests were no longer confined to public universities. Students from private universities, colleges, and schools joined. The whole country seemed implicated. The country that emerged subsequently was not the country we thought we knew.

Why did the students have to protest to compete for government jobs on the basis of merit? Jobs are one of the primal needs that a functional country ensures to its citizens. While the country is awash in rhetoric of development, the unemployment rate is still staggeringly high in Bangladesh. Jobs here mean government jobs, given the perks and privileges attached to them. Approximately 400,000 candidates apply for 3,000 positions in the civil service in Bangladesh each year. Such a system also contributes to causing discrimination in social, economic, and political structures by disrupting equilibrium. Students realised that, as did everyone. When, however, the government realised it, it was already too late. The country already paid " such a heavy price," when it finally acquiesced to the students' demand, as Sushmita S Preetha, in her pitch "Did we have to pay such a heavy price for this verdict?" in *The Daily Star*, claims. It's a sobering time for the country now.

I have never felt so helpless and useless thus far in my life. I wonder what it means to be a teacher in the face of such a crisis. The more I commit to my country, the more I feel connected to my students. I'm deeply invested in helping them forge their future so that the country marches forward. Now that they are on the streets and their lives are endangered, grief and guilt consume me. During the protests, we saw authority without leadership from the merchants of dreams. Whose dream was that nightmare? They used such a big knife to cut such a small political cake. I wish they were more patriotic and political. Their hubris was puzzling!

That upsets me. The country hangs on a cliff to go further south. Every infrastructure totalled, every life perished, and every drop of blood spilt are provocations for further division and destruction. A sledgehammer approach to turning the country on the right track is apparently a recipe for disaster. When Bangladesh bleeds, no one scores any political point, however lofty their political ideologies are. The student movement demonstrates that we lose as a nation when we fight for political space and prestige amid traumas and tragedies. I apprehend times of dread ahead. Toni Morrison claims, referring to her friend, in her essay, "No Place for Self-Pity, No Room for Fear," that this is precisely the time for artists to go to work. Teaching is the art of cultivating wisdom and ethics. Being a teacher, I'm an artist. With prayers and tears, as I resolve to resume my work, I implore everyone to stop bleeding Bangladesh.

It's already ENOUGH!

NETANYAHU'S SPEECH

Congress applauds and AIPAC pays

Yousef SY Ramadan
is the ambassador of Palestine to Bangladesh.

YOUSEF SY RAMADAN

There are big differences between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's first three Congress speeches and the fourth one that he recently delivered as his war on Gaza approaches its 10th month.

The first difference appeared in the Israeli public sentiment, where Netanyahu transformed from a crowned king whose rivals could not undermine his monopoly, to a problematic figure who convinced the majority of the Israeli public to demand the downfall of his failed administration for the longest war fought by Israel since its establishment.

As for the United States itself, Netanyahu turned from an active, effective and beloved leader who united the superpower behind his leadership, to an active and effective element in provoking a division within the US political and partisan class and dispelling the consensus on the Gaza war. This political division was evident by the empty seats of 120 Democratic Congress members who objected to his mere invitation. Outside Congress, the flag of Palestine rose high, with protesters denouncing Netanyahu and his genocide, calling on the US administration to stop its political and financial support for the war, a scene reminiscent of the strong popular uprisings against the Vietnam War in the last century.

Netanyahu came to his loyal Congress, but this time he arrived wounded and bleeding, stirred by the million demonstrations against his leadership before and during the Gaza war, and by fierce demands for a cessation of the war.

He arrived with mountains of corruption cases on his shoulders. Had it not been for the war, he would have been sent to prison long ago. On top of that, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has provided an explicit and decisive condemnation of Israel's occupation and illegal settlements, along with its systematic exploitation of the Palestinian people and their inalienable human, historical and political rights. This is in addition to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which convicted him as a war criminal and is now awaiting his prosecution and punishment.

His fourth speech was arranged behind the backs of the Democratic administration to contribute to the undermining of Biden and the success of Trump. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) spent a hefty amount to make it the largest demonstration in support of the Republican campaign before President Joe Biden's resounding fall in the crucial debate. Netanyahu was there to deliver the fatal blow to the already weakened president.

During the speech, it was clear that Netanyahu's warm reception was the result of many filled pockets, as is usual for events organised by the AIPAC, and that the applause and standing ovations after every empty sentence were eclipsed by a small sign raised by Rashida Tlaib, with the words "war criminal" on one side and "guilty of genocide" on the other.

The small sign was more honest than the exaggerated applause, simply because it wasn't paid, and because it stood out as a symbol of morality amid a sea of Israeli criminality in front of the world's cameras.

US House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) and Senate Foreign Relations Chair Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD) listen as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a joint meeting of Congress at the US Capitol in Washington, US on July 24, 2024. FILE PHOTO: **REUTERS**

This was a show by Netanyahu—an insult to the US, portraying it as a small Israeli settlement, a vehicle dragged by Zionist horses. Netanyahu explicitly said that Israel is the one who protects the US and not the other way around, and that the American people who demonstrated against the Israeli war of genocide in Gaza are just groups of rogue mercenaries. The calamity is that the representatives of the American people clapped for these insults. Everything is welcome as long as Netanyahu speaks and the AIPAC pays.

Netanyahu knows all this; he is an expert on US politics and its fluctuations, but he does not care about what he knows, especially as he is fighting his last battle.

The US, in this battle, is just a bottomless fuel tank for his authoritarian aspirations. He prepares for the day the Democrats will leave the White House and looks forward to the Republicans and their leader Trump making a comeback, despite his belief that what the Democrats gave him in this war was the most generous of all that was presented to Israel by previous administrations.

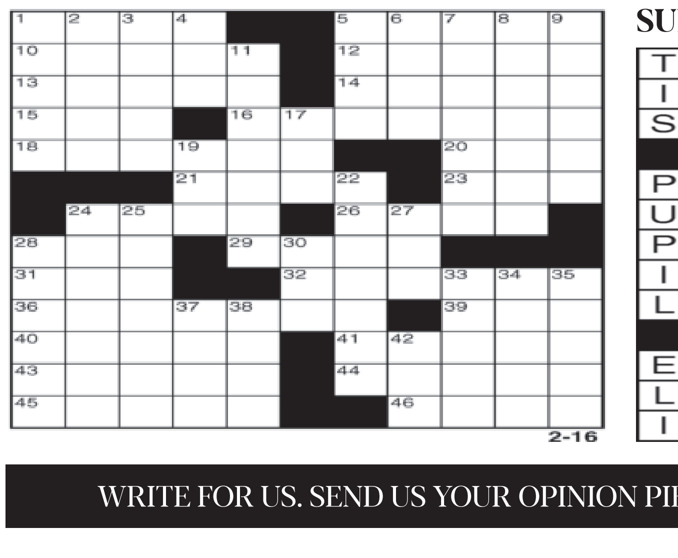
Netanyahu, for purely personal reasons, longs for Trump's leadership, who gave him the deal of the century with all its consequences and tragedies, without even checking a word of its details.

This situation will not halt the momentum of popular American progress towards a balance, but it will inevitably benefit Israel and its illegal occupation and settlements. Despite this, Congress and administrations are influenced by considerations of votes and funding, so the American people, who have demonstrated and protested against the war, still have the opportunity to steer towards their goal. Ultimately, it is through the support of the people that battles are won, even those of the Palestinian people.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Places for the pampered
5 Fought
10 Caruso, for one
12 Tehran native
13 Job reward
14 Nemo's creator
15 Be decisive
16 House leader
18 Less powerful
20 Lumber tool
21 A party to
23 Headed
24 Let off steam
26 Not new
28 The Grinch's dog
29 Matching
31 Artist Jean
32 Lab vessel
36 Gym shoe
39 Mendes of movies
40 Following
41 Be patient for
43 School paper
44 Jousting need
45 Throws off
46 Tire tracks

DOWN
1 Scarecrow fill
2 Treaty goal
3 "West Side Story" role
4 Urgent call
5 Workers' home
6 Open space
7 Fruity brew
8 Added onto
9 Like wedding cakes
11 Bristles at
17 Old hand
19 Family
22 XXII, e.g.
24 Wood coat
25 Outlay
27 Squid's home
28 Rabble
30 Penny prez
33 Reeves of "John Wick"
34 Kick out
35 Assesses
37 Mil. sch.
38 Florida feature
42 Simple card game



SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

T	E	M	P	T	S	■	A	B	B	A
I	T	A	L	I	C	■	L	A	I	D
S	E	R	E	N	A	■	A	C	T	S
■	■	■	A	T	R	I	S	K	■	■
P	A	R	T	■	■	S	K	I	T	S
U	M	A	■	M	E	L	A	N	I	E
P	I	C	■	A	G	E	■	G	A	L
I	N	K	B	L	O	T	■	U	R	L
L	O	I	R	E	■	■	S	P	A	S
■	■	N	E	S	T	L	E	■	■	■
E	D	G	E	■	A	U	D	I	T	S
L	A	U	D	■	P	L	A	N	E	T
I	M	P	S	■	S	U	N	D	A	Y

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

EDCL

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শি/এ, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সরকারী মালিকানাধীন ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড, গোপালগঞ্জ কারখানায় প্রোডাক্ট ডেভেলপমেন্ট (PD) বিভাগের নিম্নলিখিত পদে জরুরী ভিত্তিতে লোক নিয়োগ করা হবেঃ

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা	বয়স সীমা
০১।	ল্যাব এসিস্ট্যান্ট-০১ (এনালাইটিক্যাল উইং)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)/ বিএসসি	কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে এনালাইটিক্যাল কাজে (Analytical) কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩২ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০২।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০২	ন্যূনতম এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে বিভিন্ন ধরনের মেশিনের (Compression/ Mixer/ Granulator/ Coating/ Blister Machine) অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদেরকে ০৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙ্গীন ছবি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, জীবন-বৃত্তান্ত, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র সমূহের সত্যায়িত কপিসহ আগামী ২০ আগষ্ট, ২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর বরাবরে আবেদন করার জন্য বলা হচ্ছে। উল্লেখিত কাগজপত্রসমূহ সঠিকভাবে জমা দিতে হবে অন্যথায় আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

শুধুমাত্র শর্ট লিষ্টেড প্রার্থীদেরকে সাক্ষাতকারের জন্য ডাকা হবে।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, এডমিন এন্ড এইচআরএম (চলতি দায়িত্ব)
এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

Witnessing the Turkish century

Review of 'The Endless Country' (Picador, 2024) by Sami Kent

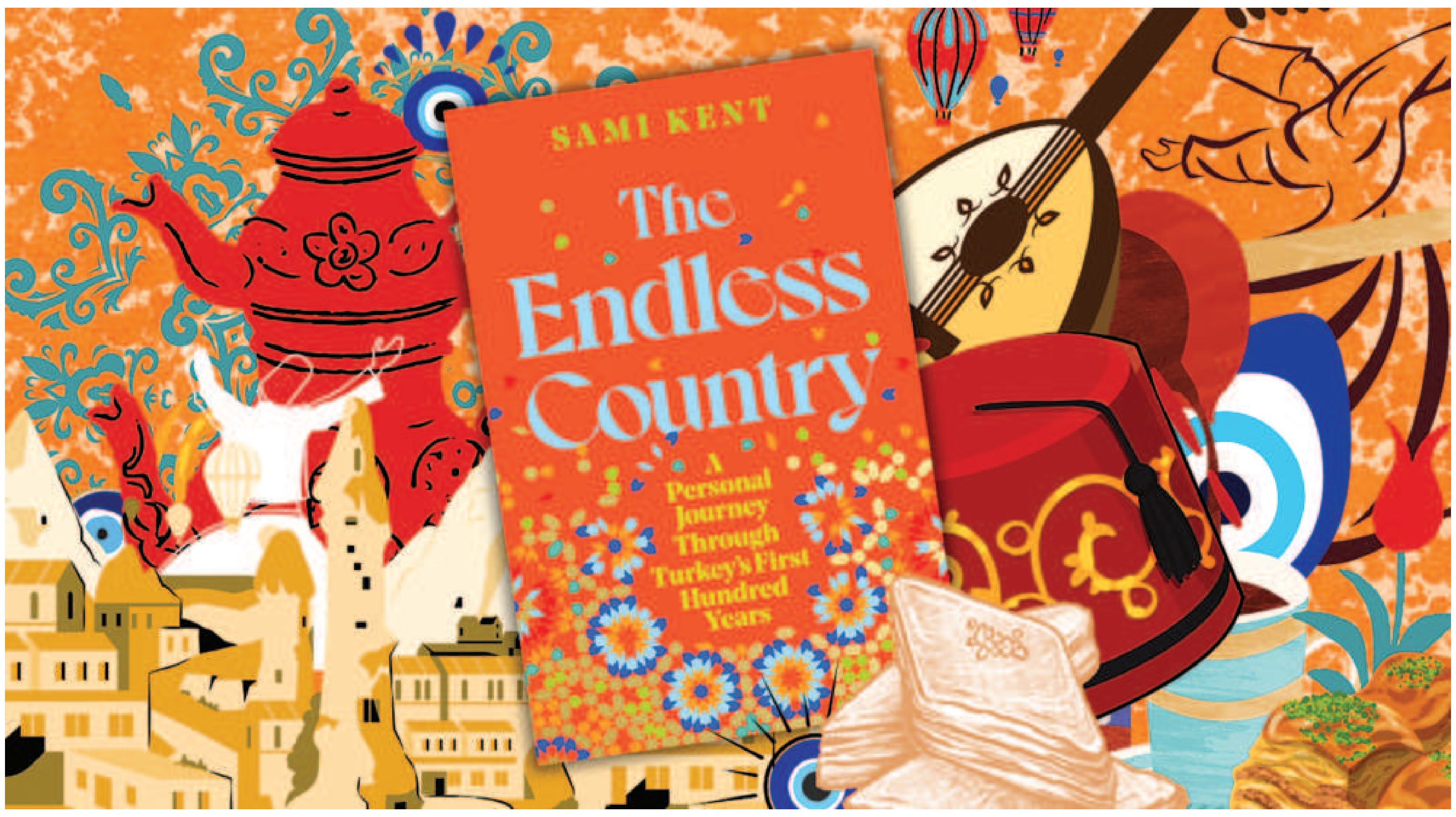

SAMI KENT
The Endless Country
A Personal Journey Through Turkey's First Hundred Years

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

ISRAR HASAN

In the post-9/11 world, no country's name has been evoked more than Turkey's (or its newly rebranded name of Türkiye) in public discussions by foreign policy pundits and politicians alike, to demonstrate the harmonious symbiosis of the East and West, Islam and secularism, and tradition and modernity. Turkey has been championed as a model that other states in the Middle East, and the broader Muslim world, can emulate. It has been 100 years since the multicultural Ottoman empire was abolished, and Turkey has long been its sole, albeit contested, successor, breaking with its past to create a new "Turkish" identity.

In his book, *The Endless Country*, Sami Kent, a British journalist of Turkish origin, takes us on a tour of a Turkey seldom known, seen, and heard of. Part-travelogue, part-memoir, and part-history, *The Endless Country* transverses through the annals of statecraft and culture to demonstrate the major events that have helped shape the country. Kent, the son of a Turkish father, finds himself "betwixt-and-between", never knowing his own culture, and notes how his "Turkishness would be lightly worn."

Over the years, the Turkish model began to assert itself on the world stage, as Erdogan's strongman style leadership steered its course from a heavily top-down secularist form of governance to one espousing conservative, Sunni Islamic values. In the same vein, Turkey has anchored not towards the East or the West, but in itself trying to craft a new beginning. It is between the beginning of the nation-state and its current prognosis that Kent tries to uncover the paradoxes of Turkish society and the state.

Kent avoids the typical reliance on past scholarly studies; instead, he leverages his journalistic acumen to offer a vivid and nuanced portrait of the nation. Through extensive travels across the country, Kent interviews a diverse array of characters: communists, Islamists, bandits, prison guards, political dissidents, and family members. These interviews are not just personal anecdotes, but rather tied to various symbols: headscarves, fezzes, hats, books, ice cream, musical instruments, and languages—each representing different eras and policies of the Turkish state over its century-long history. Kent organises the chapters decade-wise, allowing readers to witness the gradual build-up of modern Turkey. This structure helps in understanding the evolution of Turkish society and politics, balancing moments of hope and despair, and navigating through a quagmire of complex problems.

Turkey's thrust into capitalist modernity involved a top-down approach which wanted to "blow away the Arab winds", and one of the first casualties was the fez, a hat worn by many Turks regardless of religious and political views. The fez, now seen as a "Muslim" hat and inescapably backward, was banned. This was followed by the ban of headscarves, which was uplifted fairly recently in 2013.

In many ways, the modern nation-state of Turkey has largely been synonymous with its spectacular general—the great Mustafa Kemal Atatürk—who moulded Turkey in an image very much unknown to his countrymen: Western, secular, and nationalist—all of which have various contested meanings in Turkish history. The irony is not lost, however, as Kent shows that in order to create a modern state, the founding father of Turkey, Attaturk himself, had transformed the country into a mostly Turkish and almost exclusively (Sunni) Muslim state due to an exodus of non-Muslim minorities. Through his interviews with members of the dwindling Greek and Armenian minorities, and his descriptions of decrepit churches and monasteries, Kent demonstrates the lost cosmopolitanism of Turkey's yesteryears. With conspicuous religious minorities no longer inhabiting the landscape, the focus on religious exclusion is geared towards the Alevis, a Shia Muslim offshoot who have routinely protested for their civil liberties. The formation of "the other" strikes a jarring resemblance to many Muslim majority countries often discriminating Muslim minority sects.

Over the years, the Turkish model began to assert itself on the world stage, as Erdogan's strongman style leadership steered its course from a heavily top-down secularist form of governance to one espousing conservative, Sunni Islamic values. In the same vein, Turkey has anchored not towards the East or the West, but in itself trying to craft a new beginning.

Kent further notes how the volatile cocktail of ethnic and religious tensions have plagued the country with numerous sides claiming victory, but none have been more everlasting than their skirmishes with the Kurds. Thrust into the modes of democracy and the Cold War, Turkey has always struggled with its "Kurdish question" from the 1930s till this day and multiple forms of repression including militarisation, surveillance, and crackdowns on civil societies have taken place. It is particularly in these chapters that Kent shows how the Turkish republic hankers to its past and how, instead of dealing with its demons of the yesteryear, it keeps bringing it to life. It is this modus operandi of the intolerance towards dissent that has led to it jailing the highest number of journalists, and housing Europe's biggest prison, Silivri Prison, earning the moniker "Prison Nation".

The strength of Kent's book lies in his ability to humanise historical, socio-economic, and political narratives. His firsthand accounts and the variety of perspectives he includes offer a rich and textured understanding of Turkey. Marking the pivotal moments in the country's history, from the formation of the Republic to its current malaises, Sami Kent navigates the massive labyrinth of a nation with diverse misfortunes and fortunate happenings.

Israr Hasan *is a research associate at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health.*

THE SHELF

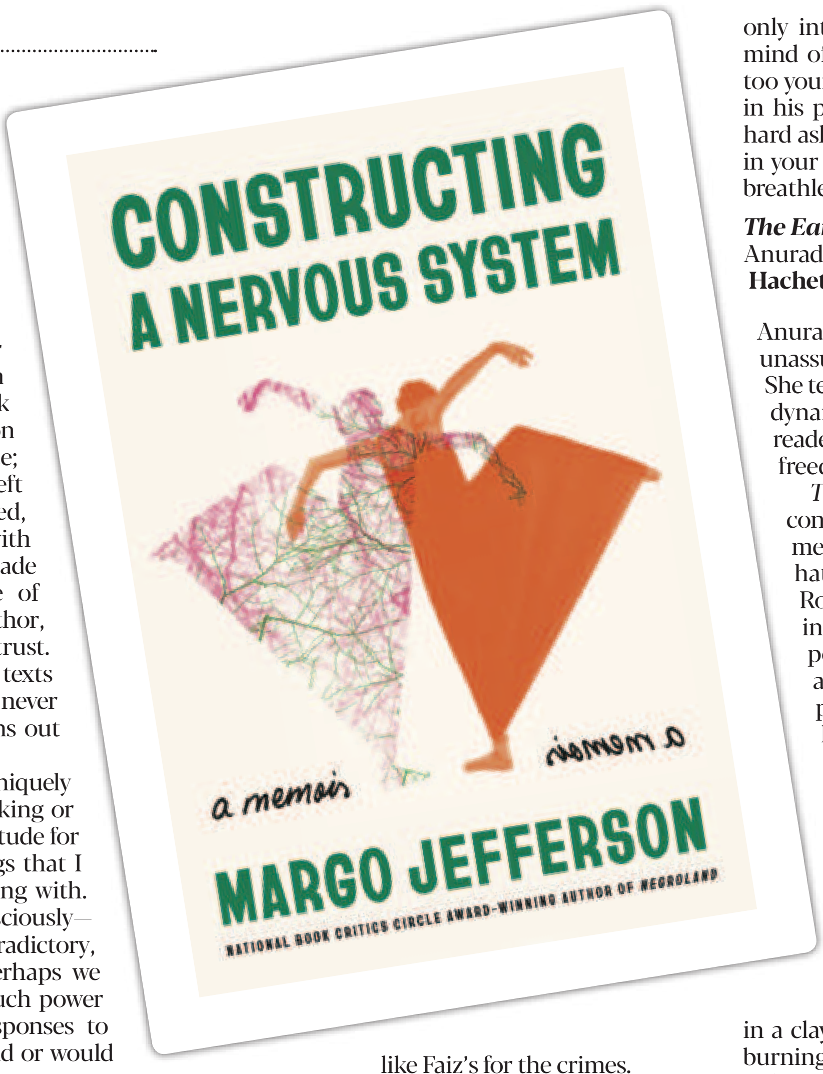
4 books I was grateful to read this year

SARAH ANJUM BARI

Books are so intrinsically tied to space. A fellow writer from my MFA program recently told me that she's "only buying books [she] actually want[s] to *have*, not just read." It's true, I feel differently about books that I previously disliked or enjoyed reading and books that I want as a physical presence in my life. A few that fall in the latter category: An author whose voice, craft, or research moves I want to emulate; a book with gorgeous cover art; an edition with an especially insightful preface; or, books on my nightstand that left me, by turns, frustrated, intimidated, laughing, crying, or wrestling with thoughts that fluctuated as I made my way through the text. Some of these books I found through an author, professor, or friend whose taste I trust. Others were related to subjects or texts I'm already drawn to. Reading is never a solitary act; it almost always spins out through such webs of association.

I've come to recognise this as a uniquely different experience from simply liking or disliking a book. Instead, I felt gratitude for specific things *about* a text—things that I both agreed and enjoyed disagreeing with. Perhaps we all read this way subconsciously—our responses gooey and contradictory, often heightened by emotions. Perhaps we give (social) media rhetoric too much power when we reduce our reading responses to 'good/bad', 'one to five stars', 'would or would not recommend to a friend'.

***The Earth Spinner* shares some central concerns with *Djinn Patrol*, such as a memorable dog, and more importantly the hate born of Hindu-Muslim conflict. But Roy is more interested in showing how art is inextricably tied to politics, and how identity politics itself is such a deeply embedded and problematic part of life in India.**


CONSTRUCTING A NERVOUS SYSTEM
a memoir
a memoir
MARGO JEFFERSON
NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF NEGROLAND

Djinn Patrol On The Purple Line
Deepa Anappara
Hamish Hamilton, 2020

Obsessed with the sleuths of Indian television (Byomkesh Bakshi, Karamchand, characters from *Crime Patrol*), nine-year-old Jai wants to do some "detectiving" into why children are going missing from the Delhi slum he calls home. As with most famous detectives, Jai decides that a skinny street dog he calls Samosa will be his sidekick and key to finding clues. Meanwhile, it's his bookworm friend Pari who gets closest to the truth, asking all the right questions to the missing children's family and neighbours. Their friend, Faiz, believes it is djinns who are abducting their classmates, while the rest of the slum soon begins to blame Muslim families like Faiz's for the crimes.

Deepa Anappara's novel delights in the tropes of mystery noir, with its world feeling familiar to that of *Slumdog Millionaire* and Katherine Boo's reportage in *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*. But while both those works brought a western, partially-outsider gaze to the poverty and corruption of slum-life in India, *Djinn Patrol* is interested in speaking through the minds of its most marginalised characters. The young, the abused, the tortured—a little boy escaping his violent home; his mother who must work through her rich employers' family party while her son is missing; a woman whose abused soul has taken to haunting a traffic signal—these are the characters we get to know intimately.

A crisply choreographed climax does arrive, but the book seems to be about, instead, recentering stories and pushing the reader's perspective not only into political peripheries, but also into the mind of a frustrating, endearing narrator who is too young and mercurial to be reliable. You believe in his passion for solving these crimes, but it's a hard ask to trust him. Mostly, your heart is caught in your throat for the child's safety. It makes for a breathless and heartbreaking reading experience.

The Earth Spinner
Anuradha Roy
Hachette, 2021

Anuradha Roy's writing is graceful and unassuming because it doesn't scream its politics. She tells simple stories that reveal complex social dynamics. Just by sharing their pasts before a reader, her characters gain some semblance of freedom or catharsis from their difficult lives.

The Earth Spinner shares some central concerns with *Djinn Patrol*, such as a memorable dog, and more importantly the hate born of Hindu-Muslim conflict. But Roy is more interested in showing how art is inextricably tied to politics, and how identity politics itself is such a deeply embedded and problematic part of life in India. Her protagonist, Elango, is a potter whose family has, for generations, devoted itself to the primarily Hindu artform. But Zohra, the woman he loves, belongs to an ancestry of Muslim calligraphy. Roy gives us multiple love stories—Elango and Zohra's, Elango and Chinna's (the dog he befriends from the woods), Chinna and the entire neighbourhood's, and that of Elango and young Sara, his pottery student and the narrator of the book.

The idea of all their unions is manifested in a clay horse that Elango is creating based on a burning horse he sees in his dreams, onto which Zohra's grandfather will etch the Arabic verses of Kabir. Descended from Hindu mythology, the burning, underwater horse denotes apocalypse as well as a balance between fire and water, desire and purity, man and woman. Its physical form in their lives becomes a site on which art and language can shed divisions of caste or religion. A tall promise and a fevered dream, one that crumbles against the harsh reality of communal violence.

Constructing A Nervous System
Margo Jefferson
Pantheon, 2022

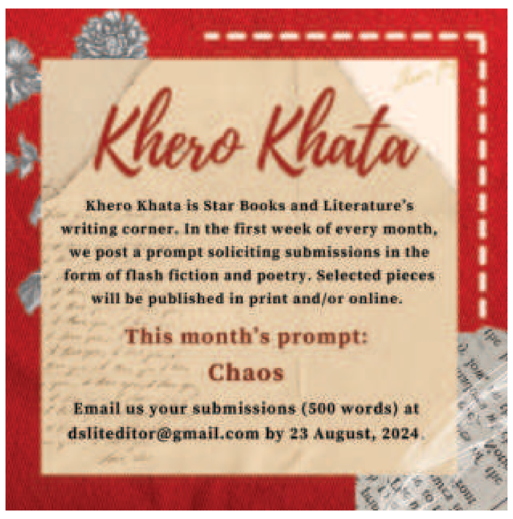
Towards the end of a History of the Essay seminar I took last year, we had to create a family tree of essays for ourselves. It brought up the question of how we considered ourselves 'related' to certain pieces of writing—work that forms part of our socio cultural or political history, work that we're literally, familially tied to, writers whose style have informed our own, essays that made us realise what we like, why we want to write, what we don't want to write.

Margo Jefferson, professor of writing at Columbia University and a Pulitzer-winning giant in the world of criticism, takes on a similar project in *Constructing A Nervous System*. The memoir presents the 'nervous system' of writers, artists, (Jazz) musicians, athletes, and other cultural milestones that have informed Jefferson's mind and heart. But she's writing particularly about engaging with art (as a Black woman) that won't imagine you unless you're white. "Too much of white art requires a negative capability that negates whole parts of one's self", she writes.

It's the way she marries language and form to replicate the concept of a nervous system that blows your mind. Her prose feels sinewy—she's teasing apart and garlanding pieces of culture across time and space, with her own mind as the connecting force. "Temperamental autobiography", she calls it. The effect is like witnessing a mind shaping itself in real time, like watching an animated x-ray.

This is an excerpt. Read the full listicle at *The Daily Star* and DS Books' websites.

Sarah Anjum Bari *is a writer and editor pursuing an MFA in the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa, where she also teaches Rhetoric and Literary Publishing. Reach her at sarah.anjum.bari@gmail.com or @wordsinteal on Instagram and Twitter.*



Khero Khata

Khero Khata is Star Books and Literature's writing corner. In the first week of every month, we post a prompt soliciting submissions in the form of flash fiction and poetry. Selected pieces will be published in print and/or online.

This month's prompt:
Chaos

Email us your submissions (500 words) at dsliteditor@gmail.com by 23 August, 2024.

Star
SPORT
DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 1, 2024, SRABAN 17, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
The Hundred
London Spirit vs Welsh Fire
Live from 8:00 pm
Southern Brave vs Manchester Originals
Live from 11:35 pm
SPORTS 18
Olympics
Live from 11:30 am

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS
Women's Artistic Individual All-Around
10:15 PM
ATHLETICS
Men's 20km Race Walk
11:30 AM
Women's 20km Race Walk
1:20 PM
CANOE SLALOM
Men's Slalom
9:30 PM
FENCING
Women's Team Foil
Friday 12:30 AM
JUDO
Men 100 kg
Women 78 kg
8 PM
SHOOTING
Men's 50m Rifle Three Positions
1:30 PM
SWIMMING
Women's 200m Butterfly
Friday, 12:30 AM
Men's 200m Backstroke
Friday, 12:38 AM

SEINE-SATIONAL TRIATHLON: Paris Olympics organisers received a pre-dawn green light for yesterday's triathlon swim leg to be held in the Seine, ending days of suspense over whether the French capital's scenic river would be clean enough for racing. In the women's race, France's Cassandre Beaugrand made her break for gold on the last lap of the run stage, while Britain's Alex Yee ran a perfectly-paced 10km to snatch a dramatic gold in the men's triathlon. PHOTO: **AFP**

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

Archer Sagor faces early elimination

SPORTS REPORTER

Archer Sagor Islam, the only Bangladeshi athlete to qualify directly for the 2024 Olympics, has ended his Paris campaign with a 6-0 set-points defeat against Mauro Nespoli of Italy in the 1/32 elimination round of men's individual recurve event yesterday.

The 18-year-old archer from Bangladesh, who had finished 45th among 64 participants in the ranking round of his event, failed to put up a fight against the three-time Olympic medallist at the Esplanade des Invalides.

Sagor lost the first set by 30-27 points before putting up a bit of a fight in a 27-26 defeat in the second set. However, the teenager from Rajshahi lost the third set by 28-25 points to face an early elimination.

Sagor is the third of five Bangladeshi participants in the Summer Games this year. Earlier, shooter Robiul Islam finished 10m air rifle event with a 43rd finish among 49 contestants while swimmer Samiul Islam Rafi finished 49th among 69 swimmers in 100m freestyle event.

Swimmer Sonia Khatun and sprinter Imranur Rahman are yet to compete.

Race walks launch track and field festivities

SPORTS DESK

The undisputed crown jewel of every Olympic Games, the track and field events kick off today in Paris. The eagerly awaited series of competitions begins with the men's and women's 20km race walks.

Preliminary and qualification rounds for other events will commence tomorrow, ramping up the excitement as athletes vie for their spots in the finals.

The women's 100m final will take place on August 3, followed by the men's 100m final the next day, ensuring back-to-back nights of high-speed drama.

As the games progress, all sprint and middle-distance races will unfold on the striking purple track of the Stade de France in Paris. This iconic venue will also host the various field events, making it the epicenter of athletic prowess.

Meanwhile, the marathon and race walks will wind through the picturesque streets of the French capital, offering a scenic yet challenging route for the competitors.

The grand finale of the track and field events is the women's marathon on August 11, bringing these thrilling competitions to a close on the final day of the Games.

Throughout these days, fans will be treated to a dazzling array of running, walking, jumping, and throwing competitions, underscoring the essence of the Olympic spirit.

RACE WALK 20KM RECORD

MEN'S 20KM WALK	WOMEN'S 20KM WALK
World record: 1:16:36 Suzuki Yusuke (Japan) Nomi, 2015	World record: 1:23:49 Yang Jiayu (China) Huangshan, 2021
Olympic record: 1:18:46 Chen Ding (China) London, 2012	Olympic record: 1:25:16 Qieyang Shijie (China) London, 2012

GOAT Biles is back

AGENCIES

Simone Biles could claim her ninth Olympic medal in today's all-around final two days after leading the United States women to a gymnastics team gold in Paris.

Biles is the big favourite coming into the event after qualifying for the final by a healthy margin, and the drama may centre on the race for silver featuring a Tokyo rematch between defending champion Sunisa Lee of USA and Brazil's Rebeca Andrade.

Lee held off Andrade for gold in the Tokyo all-around final, from which Biles withdrew due to a potentially dangerous mental block known as the "twisties".

The 27-year-old American -- considered the greatest gymnast of all time – appears to be a different person to the one who abruptly pulled out of the Tokyo Games.

"After I finished vault I was relieved because, phew, there were no flashbacks or anything," Biles told a packed press conference after clinching her fifth Olympic gold.

Biles said her second team gold -- eight years after her first -- felt different.

"It was just like we were a little young and naive," she said of 2016. "So it didn't hit the way that it does now.

"Now that I'm much older, we have so much more experience and we're out here really having fun and enjoying what we're doing."

Triumph over adversity: Lind dreams of medal

AFP, *Paris*

For Danish table-tennis player Anders Lind, just making the Paris Olympics is a triumph over adversity: after breaking two vertebrae in a serious car crash, he feared he would never walk again.

Now the 25-year-old is into an improbable Olympic last 16 and dreaming of a medal.

When doctors x-rayed his spine after the crash in 2021, "they said maybe I'll never walk normally again," Lind told AFP after his win on Wednesday.

"They said maybe I'll have some nerve damage, and that with the bones that broke, there was a 70-80 percent probability that I would be paralysed," he added.

Even if he could walk again, none of the doctors he saw said he would be able to resume top-level sport -- news he said sent him spiralling into depression.

But with the help of a corset and zimmer frame, Lind began the long road to recovery that has taken him to performing in front of a packed Olympic crowd in Paris.

Despite having a metal rod inserted into his back, Lind said he suffers no major physical ill-effects from the accident, although he cannot bend as well as he used to.

Mentally, the near-death experience has given him a sense of perspective.

"If I have a bad match, I can look back and say, 'It's not as bad as it was then'," he said.

His setback has also given him a fierce determination that pulled him through in his last-32 match against Poland's Milosz Redzimski in a game in which he made a number of comebacks to prevail eventually.

A medal after the agonies he has suffered would be sensational, but the shock defeat of world number one Wang Chuqin has blown the draw wide open, he said.

"With the top seed going out, I'm dreaming for a medal. It's still a long shot, and it's very unlikely, but there is a chance, and if the chance comes, I'm going to take it," Lind said.

Back in coaching, Maruful eyes SAFF U-20 final berth

SPORTS REPORTER

Veteran coach Maruful Haque is looking forward to guiding the Bangladesh under-20 football team to the final of the SAFF Under-20 Championship in Nepal later this month as he returns to coaching after a year-long sabbatical.

The former national team head coach, who left Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club early last year and then worked as a technical advisor to Chittagong Abahani last season, has been given the charge of the under-20 team by the Bangladesh Football Federation for the first time.

Talking to The Daily Star after conducting the first training session in Kamalapur yesterday, the successful club coach said he would try to focus on the tactical side of things in the South Asian event, which will take place in Kathmandu from August 18 to 28.

Bangladesh have been pitted against Sri Lanka and Nepal in Group A while Group B features India, Bhutan and Maldives.

"I am getting to know the players personally although I've seen most of them play in the Bangladesh Premier League," Maruful said. "With only around two weeks left for the SAFF Under-20 Championship, it will not be possible to focus on the players' fitness. So I would try to focus mainly on tactical aspects of the players, majority of whom played in the last premier league."

The under-20 team features three players – Mehdi Hasan Srabon, Mojibor Rahman Jony, and Chandon Roy -- with senior national team experience while eight players come from the BFF Academy. The coach feels the team is strong enough to make it to the final.

Bangladesh had played in the final in the last edition as well, eventually losing to hosts India after extra time.

"We were runners-up last time around. So I'm pretty confident we will reach the final this time too," said Maruful, who will also guide the team in the AFC U-20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Vietnam next month.

Bangladesh will play against hosts Vietnam as well as Syria, Bhutan and Guam in that qualifying campaign, with 10 group winners and five best runners-up teams slated to qualify for the final round.

Maruful feels that he would get more time for that competition, hence he is setting the target high. "We will get more time to prepare for that tournament. Our target will be to qualify for the final round," the coach said. "We always do well at youth level and the teams like Syria and Vietnam are only mid-tier teams in Asia. So we can definitely target the final round."

Taskin on red-ball track, Shakib available

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are awaiting key returnees to the Test outfit ahead of the Pakistan series in mid-August with ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan confirmed as available while pacer Taskin Ahmed, who had decided to sit out Tests owing to injury issues at the beginning of the year, is likely to return to the red-ball format.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) cricket operations chairman Jalal Yunus addressed the media yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium and gave updates on players returning from injuries or otherwise.

"He [Shakib] is available [for the Pakistan Tests]. He has talked with me, the board, and also the selectors," Jalal told reporters yesterday.

Shakib, currently playing the Global T20 League in Canada, will either return to the country before the series or join the team directly in Pakistan. Shakib has played in just four Tests in the last two years and questions regarding his availability for the longer format keep resurfacing ahead of any Test series.

"If time is not available then he will move directly from Dubai to join the side [in Pakistan]. Or else, as he has been told, he will join the side in Dhaka and go through one or two days of practice before departure," Jalal added.

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

Bangladesh will play two Tests in Pakistan on August 21 and September 30. Keeping the series in mind, six national team stars have already been named in the 'A' team's tour of Pakistan -- preceding the national team's Test assignment in Pakistan -- to play the first four-day fixture on August 10.

Meanwhile, Taskin Ahmed began training in Mirpur and also gave a fitness test on Tuesday.

Taskin had issues bowling in red-ball cricket owing to a shoulder injury and had decided to sit out Tests. He played his last Test in June last year although he had continued in other formats, featuring for the Tigers in the T20 World Cup in the USA and the West Indies in June. On Tuesday, he bowled with a red ball during an individual practice session.

Taskin has been given the green light to continue on the trajectory to return to Tests by physios following the assessment but a final call is to be made by BCB chief physician Debashish Chowdhury when he sees the reports.

"Taskin had an assessment yesterday [Tuesday]. He is being considered for red-ball. It will be the selectors' call," Jalal confirmed to the media on Taskin being considered for Pakistan Tests.

Meanwhile, another Test prospect Ebadot Hossain had been sitting on the sidelines since an ACL injury last year in July saw him miss out both the ODI and T20I World Cups.

"Ebadot is recovering. We are in communication with him and he has recovered about 70 percent. Hopefully, he will recover more in the next two months. He is still in rehabilitation," Jalal said.

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Social media curbs lifted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday lifted the restrictions on social media platforms, including Facebook, TikTok and WhatsApp, bringing a sigh of relief to the tens of thousands of F-commerce entrepreneurs.

The development comes after Zunaid Ahmed Palak, the state minister for telecom and ICT, held a meeting with the representatives of the social media platforms yesterday.

While representatives from ByteDance, the parent company of TikTok, were present at the meeting held at the headquarters of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Authority, officials of Meta, the parent company of Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram, joined in virtually from Singapore. YouTube sent an emailed reply.

"We, through the BTRC, enforced some restrictions for a certain period, but we have now withdrawn those -- there are no barriers on Facebook, TikTok and YouTube operating in Bangladesh's cyberspace," Palak said after the meeting.

The restrictions on the platforms were lifted to facilitate the business of e-commerce and F-commerce sites and students who depend on the platforms for their studies.

"Facebook, in the meeting, promised that they will be more cautious in the future. We asked Facebook how the post of Tarique Zia (Rahman), who is a convicted and absconded person, stating 'Hasina's killing force has murdered our sons on the streets' meets its community standards. Which community standards allow such words?"

SEE PAGE 7 COL 3

Bronze medallist Jonghoon Lim of South Korea takes selfie with gold medalists China's Wang Chuqin (rear R) and China's Sun Yingsha (front L), silver medalists North Korea's Ri Jong Sik (2nd L), and North Korea's Kim Kum Yong (C) and bronze medallist and teammate South Korea's Shin Yubin (rear R) at the end of their mixed table tennis doubles competition at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Olympic spirit trumps cross-border tension

AFP, *Seoul*

Images of Olympic table tennis players from North Korea and South Korea taking a selfie together on the medal podium in Paris went viral in South Korea yesterday, hailed as a rare show of cross-border unity.

Nuclear-armed North Korea declared the South its principal enemy earlier this year and tensions between the two countries are at one of their highest points in years.

But after South Korea won bronze and North Korea silver in the mixed doubles behind China, South Korea's Lim Jong-hoon took a group photo after the medal ceremony.

North Korea's Ri Jong Sik and Kim Kum Yong, the South's Shin Yu-bin and the victorious Chinese team Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha all beamed into Lim's phone, a South Korean-made Samsung.

"A selfie with both Koreas' national flags and a Samsung phone," said the widely read daily JongAng Ilbo.

It was the first time North Korea had been on an Olympic podium since 2016, as they did not send athletes to

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Nationwide drives on

281 more held over violence centring quota protests

STAR REPORT

Law enforcers arrested at least 281 more people in the capital and elsewhere in the country in 36 hours preceding 6:00pm yesterday amid the nationwide crackdown on alleged saboteurs over the recent violence.

Of them, 205 were held in 31 districts and the rest in the capital, according police and court sources.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police produced 76 arrestees before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka during the same period. The court sent most of them to jail and placed some of the arrestees on remand.

With the latest arrests, at least 10,769 people, including students and leaders and activists of the BNP and Jamaat-Shibir, have been arrested in 673 cases filed in the capital and 51 districts over the last 14 days since July 18. One of those cases was lodged in Chattogram on Tuesday night.

Several thousand named and several hundred thousand unnamed individuals have been accused in those cases.

The cases were filed, mostly by police, with different police stations over violence, vandalism, arson, illegal gathering, rioting and assaulting law enforcers, said DMP sources.

The country witnessed violence after peaceful demonstrations of the quota reform protesters came under attack by Chhatra League men on July 15 on different university campuses.

Among those arrested in the 31 districts, 19 were held in Pabna, six in Madaripur, eight in Rangpur, three in Feni, 31 in Gazipur, two in Tangail, 18 in Rajshahi, five in Bogura, six in Gaibandha, 16 in Narayanganj, five in Khulna, seven in Mymensingh, two in Kishoreganj, four in Satkhira, three in Cox's Bazar, seven in Naogaon, six in Cumilla, three in Panchagarh, 17 in Chattogram, three in Chandpur, two in Magura, seven in Savar, two in Brahmanbaria, 11 in Noakhali, five in Laxmipur, and two in Barishal and one each was picked up in Thakurgaon, Moulvibazar, Joypurhat, Netrakona and Natore.

CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES

Academic calendars in total disarray

Most primary schools to open Aug 4

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR *and*
ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The month-long disruption to university education and two-week long closure of schools have led to the cancellation of public and school exams, upsetting academic calendars and hampering the education of crores of students.

The government shut down all schools, colleges and universities on July 16. Activities at public universities, however, have been halted since July 1, when teachers went on work abstention to demand the reinstatement of the previous pension scheme in place of the Prottoy scheme.

Meanwhile, uncertainty hangs heavy on the academic lives of a large number of students as the reopening of secondary schools and universities are yet to be declared.

Yesterday, the primary and mass education ministry said primary schools across the country, apart from the 12 major city corporations – Dhaka North, Dhaka South, Khulna, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barishal, Cumilla, Sylhet, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Mymensingh -- along with Narsingdi district, will reopen on August 4.

Meanwhile, the situation at universities took a more volatile turn as the students demonstrating for quota reforms are yet to call off their movement, while agitating teachers continue their protest.

Many public university students, especially those from colleges under the National University, said they were already facing session jams and this prolonged closure will only make matters worse.

> **"We understand that we're all fighting for our rights, but at the same time we need to continue our studies ... It's the government's responsibility to stabilise the situation for the students as well as for the teachers."**
>
> **a student of Comilla University**

Prof Muhammad Alamgir, acting chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC), yesterday told The Daily Star that no decision has yet been taken regarding the reopening of universities.

Nizamul Hoque Bhuiyan, general secretary of the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers Association, which spearheaded the teachers' protests, said, "We're protesting as this [the

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

QUOTA PROTESTS

Investigate allegations of rights violations

2 US senators, 2 UK MPs urge Bangladesh govt

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Two US senators and two UK MPs have called on the Bangladeshi authorities to urgently conduct an independent and impartial investigation into alleged human rights violations.

UK MP Rupa Huq stressed that Bangladesh's probe into the violence has an international element.

In a statement on Tuesday, US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Ben Cardin and Senator Cory Booker also called for respecting the rights of the protesters and working in good faith to address their grievances.

They condemned Bangladeshi security forces for using force and violence against student protesters. "The security forces involved in these horrific acts include a paramilitary unit whose leaders have faced US sanctions over human rights abuses."

The government put the death toll in the violence at 150.

But according to The Daily Star's count, at least 163 people were killed.

The death toll from the violence could be much higher as this newspaper could not reach many hospitals, where dozens of critically injured patients were taken.

Also, many families reportedly collected the bodies of their loved ones from the scene, and this newspaper could not contact those families.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

GRAFT ALLEGATION

Matiur goes on early retirement amid probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government granted early retirement to former customs official Matiur Rahman, who was embroiled in allegations of corruption in June.

Over a month ago, the finance ministry transferred him to the Internal Resources Division (IRD) from the Customs, Excise & VAT Appellate Tribunal of which he was the president.

The government also removed Matiur from the position of director of state-run Sonali Bank PLC in June amid allegations over his illegal wealth.

Matiur applied for voluntary retirement on completion of his 25 years in service, said an IRD order yesterday.

The application was granted, and he will go on voluntary retirement without financial benefits on August 28.

Allegations of corruption surfaced after

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

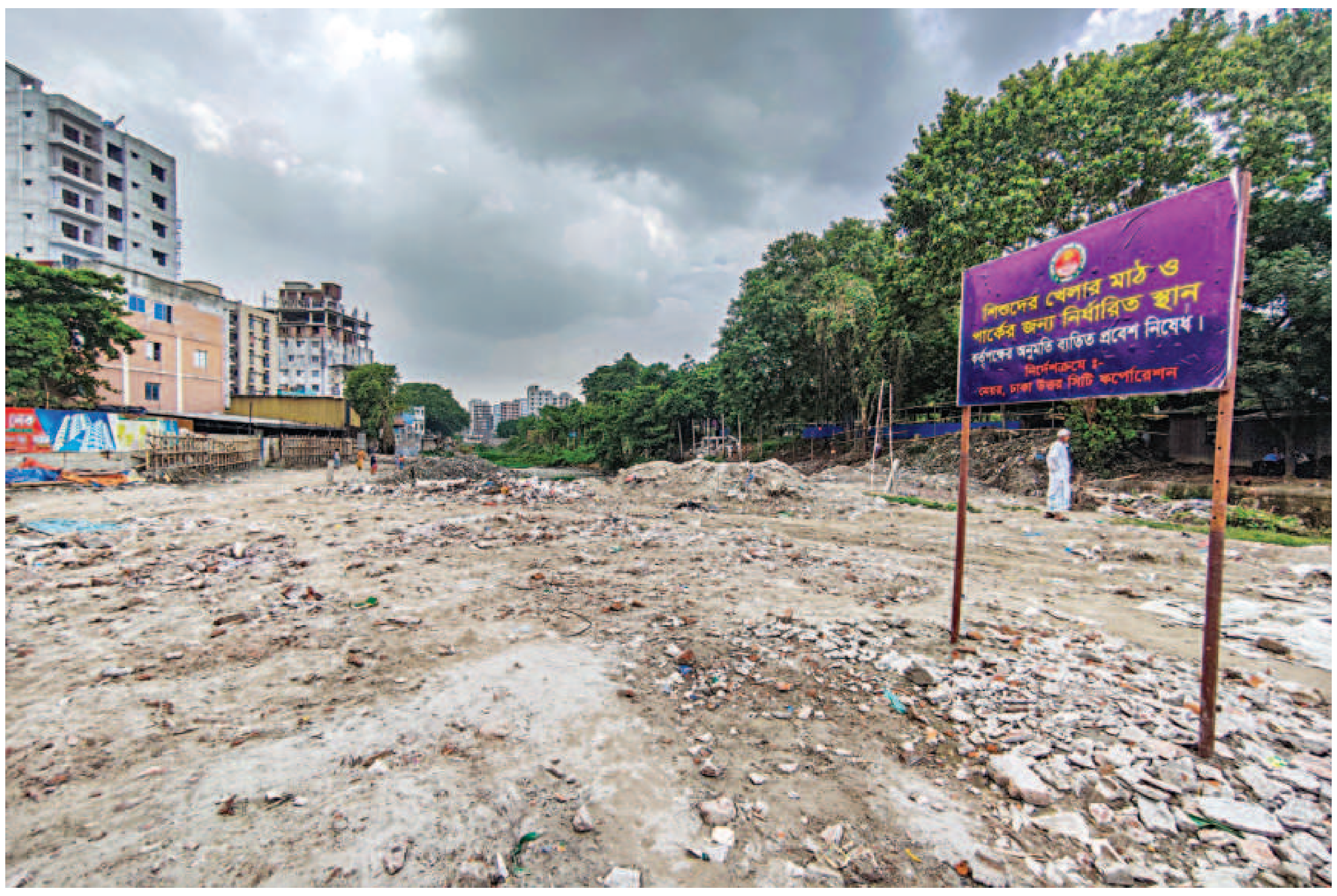
Imran offers conditional talks with Pak military

REUTERS, *Islamabad*

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan has offered to hold "conditional negotiations" with the powerful military as he serves a year into a jail term that he said he was given on trumped up charges designed to keep him out of power.

Khan did not specify what he wanted to discuss with the military, but in a post on his official X account yesterday said that one of the conditions for negotiations was that "clean and transparent" elections be held and that "bogus" cases against his supporters be dropped.

He said he had appointed Mahmood Khan Achakzai, a close political ally and a known critic of the military, to represent him in any talks. The military has previously ruled out talks with Khan.


শিশুদের খেলার মাঠ ও পার্কের জন্য নির্ধারিত স্থান।
কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমতি ব্যতিত প্রবেশ নিষেধ।
মেয়র, ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন

Dhaka North City Corporation has recently recovered this land on the Ramchandrapur canal in Mohammadpur after evicting encroacher Sadeeq Agro, a farm that reared mostly cattle. The corporation put up a sign declaring that a playground and a park would be built here. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Female sharks make babies alone in Italy

AFP, *Rome*

Italian researchers have noted the first case of "virgin birth", or reproduction without fertilisation, in an endangered shark species, a scientific journal reported this week.

The findings published in Scientific Reports concern the first case of the phenomenon in the common smooth-hound shark, Mustelus mustelus, a species threatened by illegal fishing that inhabits the Mediterranean and other warm waters.

Researchers from the Experimental Zooprophylactic Institute of Piedmont, Liguria and the Aosta Valley found that two female M mustelus sharks under observation in captivity had exhibited parthenogenesis -- in which a female can reproduce asexually without the need of sperm to fertilise the egg -- each year since 2020.

The two 18-year-old sharks have been at the Cala Gonone Aquarium in Sardinia since 2010.

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Jamaat-Shibir BANNED

Govt issues gazette citing Anti-Terrorism Act, says it has evidence of the party's 'involvement' in recent violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday banned Jamaat-e-Islami and all its front organisations and entities, including Islami Chhatra Shibir.

After the law ministry's approval, the home ministry yesterday issued a gazette notification banning the anti-Liberation party and all its associate outfits.

The gazette came into effect immediately, meaning Jamaat and its front organisations are now not allowed to be in politics.

The ban came three days after a meeting of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance, with Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair, unanimously recommended banning Jamaat-Shibir for their alleged involvement in anti-state activities.

According to yesterday's gazette, the government took the decision as per section 18 (1) of the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009 and listed it as a banned entity under the second schedule of the act.

The gazette came into effect immediately, meaning Jamaat and its front organisations are not allowed to be in politics now.

The section reads: "For the purposes of this act, the government, on reasonable grounds that a person or an entity is involved in terrorist activities, may, by order, enlist the person in the schedule or proscribe the entity and enlist it in the schedule."

The notification said the government has enough evidence that Jamaat and Chhatra Shibir were directly involved in the recent killings, and destructive and terrorist activities and had also incited them.

The International Crimes Tribunal in several verdicts held Jamaat and Chhatra Shibir (previously known as Islami Chhatra Sangha) liable for committing genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

The notification mentioned the verdicts the International Crimes Tribunal-1 delivered in the case against former Jamaat ameer Ghulam Azam and also the ones International Crimes Tribunal-2 delivered in the cases against Jamaat leaders Abdul Quader Mollah and Muhammad Kamaruzzaman.

Five top leaders of Jamaat were sentenced to death for their crimes against humanity committed during the Liberation War.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

University teachers under the banner of "teachers against repression" hold a rally at the foot of Raju Bhaskarjya yesterday demanding immediate release of students arrested during block raids, justice for those killed, and an end to the harassment of students and teachers. PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

UN free to probe any incident of violence: PM

UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the United Nations and any country can send their experts to Bangladesh for proper investigations into the recent incidents of violence.

"I want all incidents to be investigated because it should be found out what was behind those incidents and how those happened. I have appealed to the United Nations to send their experts. If any other country wants, they can send their experts also," she said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

UN offers to send fact-finding team

Its rights chief says reports of violence have serious implications for Dhaka's int'l standing

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk has offered to deploy an independent fact-finding team to assist the Bangladesh government in building trust among all stakeholders and to help de-escalate tensions.

"In these challenging times, my office is ready to support your efforts in resolving the current crisis," he said in a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 23.

Violent clashes centring the students' protest led to the killing of at least 201 people, as per The Daily Star count. Also, authorities arrested nearly 11,000 people across the country.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

QUOTA PROTESTS

6 organisers freed from DB custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The six organisers of the quota reform protests who had been in the Detective Branch custody were released yesterday afternoon.

Badrul Islam, father of organiser Nahid Islam, confirmed their release to this newspaper, saying his son and the five others were freed around 1:30pm.

"I am taking my son home now ... I got a call early in the morning today from the DB office, and they asked me to come and pick him up,"he said.

Protesters will hold programmes, including mass processions and prayers at mosques, temples, churches for those killed, today.

A photojournalist from The Daily Star, who was at the spot, saw the students coming out of the DB office on the capital's Minto Road and get into a black microbus.

Three of the key protest organisers -- Nahid Islam, Asif Mahmud and Abu Baker Majumder -- were picked up from the Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital in Dhaka on July 26.

Nahid and Asif were undergoing medical treatment there while Baker was with them.

The next evening, DB picked up Sarjis Alam and Hasnat Abdullah.

Then on early July 28, the law enforcers picked up Nusrat Tabassum from her relative's home in the capital's Mirpur.

The six coordinators have since then been kept at the DB office. Detectives claimed that the students were kept in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

ভালো দুধ মানেই
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Farm Fresh
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A Product of
AKIJ Dairy Ltd.
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QUOTA PROTESTS

Judicial probe body gets two more judges

They'll visit scene of Abu Sayed's killing, other spots

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The judicial commission formed to investigate the deaths and injuries in violence during recent quota reform protests will visit Rangpur on August 4.

They will visit the places where Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed and five others lost their lives and record testimonies of witnesses from August 5, Commission Chairman Justice Khandaker Diliruzzaman told reporters at its makeshift office on the Supreme Court premises.

The commission was expanded to a three-member body yesterday. New members Justice KM Zahid Sarwar and Justice Mohammad Showkat Ali Chowdhury of the High Court were also present at the press meet.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Lebanese civil defence workers extinguish a fire following an Israeli air raid on the town of Shamaa in southern Lebanon yesterday, amid ongoing cross-border clashes between Israeli troops and Hezbollah fighters. PHOTO: AFP

Govt to give legal aid to HSC examinees held over quota protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will provide legal support to the HSC examinees who have been arrested in connection with the recent violence centring the quota protests.

They will receive assistance in securing bail if they apply with their admit cards and relevant documents, said a press release from the home ministry, signed by Sharif Mahmud Apu, a senior officer at the ministry.

The government will also provide legal assistance to the detained students who do not face serious charges, according to the release.

Meanwhile, three HSC examinees, who were in police custody, secured bail yesterday with the support of the education ministry.

The trio, students of Rajuk Uttara Model College, will soon be released from prison and return to their families, said a press release signed by MA Khair, public relations officer at the ministry.

The release also mentioned that information about another HSC examinee was found, and they are expected to be released by Sunday.

Moreover, the ministry requested that any information regarding the detention of other HSC examinees be sent to helphsc24@gmail.com, the release added.

TIMELINE

In 1941, Jamaat was founded by highly controversial Islamist ideologue Abul Ala Moududi

In 1959 and in 1964, the party was banned for its communal role

In 1971, Jamaat sided with the Pakistan army and worked against the country's liberation

In 1971, Jamaat formed Al-Badr, Razakar, Al-Shams and peace committees, which were involved in crimes against humanity

In 1972, Bangladesh government banned Jamaat

Jamaat was allowed back in politics during late president Ziaur Rahman's rule

In 1992, Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee tried the then Jamaat ameer Ghulam Azam at the people's court (Gono Adalat) for war crimes

In 2010, the government formed International Crimes Tribunal

Between 2013 and 2016, five top Jamaat leaders were executed for crimes against humanity in 1971

In 2013, the HC declared Jamaat's registration with the EC illegal

In 2018, EC scrapped Jamaat's registration, rendering it ineligible to take part in polls

In 2023, the SC upheld the HC verdict

In 2024, Jamaat and its associate bodies are banned

Jamaat-Shibir banned

FROM PAGE 1

In August 2013, the gazette said, the High Court declared the registration of Jamaat with the Election Commission illegal. The Supreme Court later upheld the HC verdict.

Justice seekers and war crimes victims and their family members have long been demanding the trial of Jamaat as a party. Their voices grew louder after February 5, 2013, when people occupied Shahbagh demanding highest punishment for war criminals and a ban on Jamaat-Shibir.

The investigation agency of the tribunal recommended that charges be pressed against Jamaat after concluding a probe into Jamaat's role in 1971.

Law Minister Anisul Huq on many occasions had said that the government would amend the International Crimes (tribunals) Act-1973 to try parties, but the act was neither amended nor the charges were pressed.

The issue of banning Jamaat came up again after the government blamed Jamaat-Shibir men for the recent violence centring the quota reform protests.

Shyamoli Nasreen Chowdhury, president of Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, said, "With the banning of Jamaat, we are relieved of the curse. We are satisfied with the decision."

She, however, demanded confiscation of all properties belonging to Jamaat and its associate bodies.

"Measures should also be taken so that Jamaat cannot emerge in politics again under a new banner," she said.

Shyamoli, widow of Shaheed Alim Chowdhury, said they have long been demanding trial and ban of Jamaat for committing crimes in 1971.

"Jamaat even came to power and carried out terrorist activities. We are happy as they [Jamaat] are finally banned," said the eminent teacher who testified in a war crime trial.

Prof Anu Muhammad, a former teacher at Jahangirnagar University, said the issue of banning Jamaat-Shibir has been discussed for a long time.

"But the government has banned Jamaat-Shibir to gain political mileage at a time when a massive movement is going on in the country," he said.

JAMAAT'S RESPONSE

Hours after issuance of the gazette, Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman in a statement said, "We strongly condemn and protest this unconstitutional, undemocratic and unjust decision of the government."

The constitution gives all citizens the right to assemble and organise. The government has violated the constitution by banning Jamaat and Chhatra Shibir, he said.

"The government wants to divert the ongoing movement by banning Jamaat and Chhatra Shibir through an executive order to cover up their misdeeds.

"However, they may try to increase their efforts to blame Jamaat by creating some untoward incidents. The countrymen should be careful in this regard," he added.

BNP'S RESPONSE

The BNP yesterday said it was unfair and unconstitutional to ban any political party without a justifiable, credible, acceptable, and impartial investigation of international standards.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in a statement sent to the media last night said, "The right to form a political party or organisation is enshrined in the constitution of Bangladesh. With this constitutional right, anyone can form a political party or organisation."

It also said with these undemocratic activities, the government would not be able to divert people's attention from the BNP's one-point demand, resignation of the government.

"We call upon all those who believe in democracy, irrespective of party affiliations and opinions, to intensify the movement to topple the government," the statement read.

It also noted the "Awami League's past affinity with Jamaat". "They were once allies. During the all-party mass movement against autocracy in the 1980s, the Awami League, along with Jamaat-e-Islami, undermined the movement and participated in an election to legitimise autocracy," it said.

The then leaders of Jamaat met Hasina at her Dhanmondi-32 home and presented her a Quran and jainamaz, it said, adding that many remember the smiling pictures of the leaders of both parties exchanging gifts.

ICT VERDICTS

The ICT-1 in the verdict against Ghulam Azam observed, "... Jamaat-e-Islami, as a political party under the leadership of accused Prof Ghulam Azam, intentionally functioned as a criminal organisation especially during the War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971."

The Tribunal-2 in the verdict against Kamaruzzaman observed, "Jamaat-e-Islami had played a substantial role in the formation of the Al-Badr, Razakar, Al-Shams and peace committees [during the war].

"Jamaat had indulged in indiscriminate massacre of their political opponents belonging to the Bangalee nation in the name of liquidating 'miscreants' and 'infiltrators' for which it had used Razakars and Al-Badr."

UN offers to send fact-finding team

FROM PAGE 1

Till Sunday, this newspaper was able to confirm 163 deaths.

Since then, The Daily Star has confirmed 38 more deaths that occurred during the violence.

This number could go up even higher as this newspaper could not get confirmation from different hospitals where dozens of critically injured victims were taken for treatment.

The reports of violence against its citizens advocating for fundamental rights have serious implications not only domestically and in terms of Bangladesh's human rights obligations, but also for its international standing, Turk said.

"As one of the largest contributors to the United Nations peacekeeping missions, Bangladesh has consistently been steadfast supporter of global peace and security. However, the use of excessive force, arbitrary arrests and tortures reported during the protests raise serious concern."

He also spoke about the use of bullets, arbitrary arrests, detention, ill-treatment and torture by the law enforcers and violent attacks by groups reportedly affiliated with the government.

The deployment of paramilitary units, such as the armoured police force, Border Guard Bangladesh and the Rapid Action Battalion, poses further risks, he said, adding that he is aware of arrests of the opposition figures.

The Supreme Court ruling narrowing the quota may open a space for meaningful and inclusive dialogue with all relevant national stakeholders to address the underlying issues and grievances.

For a conducive environment for public dialogue, the UN has urged the government to ensure that all operations of the law enforcers are in line with human rights international standards.

An impartial, independent and transparent investigation into all alleged human rights violations is essential to ensure accountability and justice for victims of past violations and to contribute to preventing recurrence, Turk said.

For the longer term, he suggested comprehensive reforms to the security sector to prevent future abuses and safeguard the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.

He welcomed an opportunity to discuss with Prime Minister Hasina directly, either through a telephone call or on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in September.

In response to Turk's letter, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen said he appreciates the concerns of the UN high commissioner for human rights, but noted that the briefs Turk received about the recent events appeared to have conflated a number of facts and issues.

The students' protest initially was peaceful, but turned violent as the "third forces" comprising BNP-Jamaat and extremist forces eventually infiltrated the movement, Momen said.

The situation was exacerbated to the extent that some lives were lost and certain egregious brutalities occurred under the cover of the students' movement, Momen said. Besides, huge public properties were also destroyed by the opposing political and extremist forces.

As part of the ongoing law and order drive, a number of suspected individuals including opposition political figures across the country have been arrested and taken into custody, Momen said.

However, the government has assured those involved in attacks would be brought to justice through due process of law.

"Regrettably, the overall investigation process has been made somewhat challenging due to the wide circulation of rumours and disinformation at home and abroad," Momen said.

He went on to request Turk's office to refrain from making any conclusive statements that may otherwise influence or shape public perception.

The Bangladesh government remains open to meaningful engagements with the UN Office of the High Commissioner within and beyond the office, Momen said.

Bangladesh's political leadership would be happy to meet with him in person either in Geneva or New York at any time of mutual convenience.

A UN official said Bangladesh authorities have yet to make any approach seeking any support from the UN.

6 organisers freed from

FROM PAGE 1

custody "for their own security".

Earlier, in the wake of the countrywide complete shutdown by the protesters and subsequent clashes, Nahid was picked up by plainclothes men from his friend's house in Nandipara area of the capital's Khilgaon on July 19.

The next day, he found himself in Purbachal. He had deep bruises in different parts of his body. He then admitted himself to the hospital, from where DB picked him and the other two up again.

Two lawyers, Manjul Al-Matin and Ainunnahar Siddika, filed a writ with the High Court on Monday, seeking the release of the six coordinators and the court's directives on not firing bullets on students across the country.

The writ was heard by a bench on Monday and Tuesday and was on the cause list for Wednesday.

A court source said the hearing could not be held on Wednesday as one of the judges, Justice SM Masud Hossain Dolon, took a two-day leave due to illness.

TODAY'S PROGRAMME

Abdul Kader, one of the coordinators of the anti-discrimination student movement, last night announced fresh programmes for today, including prayers and a mass procession after Juma prayers to press home their nine-point demand.

All mosques, temples and churches were urged to hold prayers for the students who were killed.

Meanwhile, Kader urged all the citizens; including teachers, workers, professionals, cultural activists, human rights workers, intellectuals, students, and even those of madrasas to help make the programme successful.

From left: **Nahid Islam, Asif Mahmud, Abu Baker Majumder, Sarjis Alam, Hasnat Abdullah, Nusrat Tabassum.**

UN free to probe any incident of violence: PM

FROM PAGE 1

The premier was speaking at a programme, organised by Bangladesh Krishak League at the capital's Krishibid Institution, Bangladesh, marking the National Mourning Day.

Hasina, also the Awami League president, said, "We will have to take action against the culprits no matter who they are."

She said her government has attained the status of a developing country for Bangladesh.

"But the country's image is being tarnished abroad by carrying out false propaganda and militant activities. I am leaving it to the people to judge it."

The PM said her government has built the country following the ideals of the father of the nation, but infrastructures were destroyed and people were killed.

"They [the perpetrators] would be tried one day. This is why I want those incidents to be investigated and a fair trial be held."

Hasina said not a single incident related to militancy occurred in Bangladesh after the Holey Artisan attack due to the vigilance of the law enforcement agencies.

"But now they have shown the ugly teeth of militancy under the cover of the quota reform movement," she said.

The PM said there should be no place for militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh.

Talking about Jamaat-Shibir, she said the main strength of the militants is Jamaat-e-Islami and its student front Islami Chhatra Shibir.

"They [Jamaat-Shibir] will be banned under clause-18 of the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009 so that they don't have any social dignity."

She said Jamaat-Shibir would try to carry out destructive activities again. "All will have to try to resist them and save the people. All will have to do it unitedly."

She called upon the people to remain vigilant against any such incident.

Hasina questioned the rationale for continuing the quota reform protests by students despite all their demands being already fulfilled.

She criticised a section of intellectuals for supporting the movement.

"Many of our knowledgeable personalities, dignitaries and intellectuals continue giving their support to this movement. What support are they giving? The demand has already been fulfilled completely."

At the outset of the programme, a one-minute silence was observed in memory of the departed souls of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other martyrs of the August 15, 1975, carnage.

A special prayer was also offered seeking salvation of the departed souls of the martyrs of the August 15 carnage and those killed in the recent violence.

Another dies from pellet wounds

FROM PAGE 12

reforms to government job quotas, according to The Daily Star.

Till Sunday, this newspaper was able to confirm 163 deaths.

Since then, The Daily Star has confirmed 38 more deaths that occurred during the violence.

This number could go up even higher as this newspaper could not get confirmation from different hospitals where dozens of critically injured victims were taken for treatment.

Also, many families reportedly collected the bodies of their loved ones from the scene, and this newspaper could not contact those families.

F-16s delivered to Ukraine 'will be shot down'

Says Kremlin

AFP, *Moscow*

The Kremlin said yesterday that any F-16s delivered to Ukraine would be shot down and have little impact on the battlefield, in response to reports that the first fighter jets have arrived.

"Their number will gradually decrease, they will be shot down... But of course, these deliveries will not have any significant impact on the development of events on the front," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

For more than two years, Ukraine has pleaded with Western allies for the US-made fighter jets -- long considered the crown jewel in the sprawling list of military hardware Kyiv has sought from its Western backers.

BNP-Jamaat used students as shield: PM

UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated that Jamaat-Shibir and BNP used the student protests for quota reform as their shield to unleash the recent reign of terrorism across the country.

"They [Jamaat-Shibir and BNP] just used the students as their shield," she said while Italian Ambassador Antonio Alessandro called on her at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

PM's Deputy Press Secretary Noorelahi Mina briefed the reporters afterwards.

He said the prime minister mentioned that Jamaat-Shibir and BNP are used to kill people through arson attacks.

She said she has visited different hospitals to see the injured who are getting treatments following the violence.

"We are providing medicare facilities to all equally," she added.

The Italian envoy expressed his condolences for the loss of lives and properties.

"He hoped that the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

PHOTO: STAR

Teachers march at Khulna University. *Inset*, students, teachers stage street drama on Jahangirnagar University campus.

Teachers, students demand justice for those killed

They march at 5 public universities, 12 students held for 'their own safety' in Barishal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers from five public universities staged demonstrations on their campuses yesterday, demanding justice for those killed during the quota reform protests.

They organised human chains, rallies, and silent marches to protest the ongoing harassment of both teachers and students nationwide.

Students also held programmes under the "Remembering Our Heroes" initiative called by the anti-discrimination student movement.

At Rajshahi University, teachers intervened to prevent law enforcers from detaining students during a protest.

At Barishal University, police detained 12 students during a demonstration.

In Dhaka, the Bangladesh University Teachers' Network held a rally near Raju Sculpture, demanding immediate release of arrested students and withdrawal of law enforcers from campuses.

They also called for the reopening of educational institutions.

Prof Kamrul Hasan Mamun of DU Physics department said, "People have now woken up. They will not stop until justice is served for each killing and wrongdoing. We have to ensure justice."

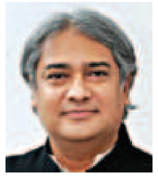
Prof Tanzimuddin Khan of DU International Relations department said, "The recent student protests have brought people from all walks of life to the streets."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Police, Rab and BGB were not permitted to open fire

Says Arafat, govt to conduct judicial probe

BSS, *Dhaka*



State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat yesterday said none of the police, Rab and BGB personnel was permitted to open fire, they had to work in line with the country's constitution.

"But some law enforcers might have broken the law on the ground. We will bring those to book too following an independent judicial probe," he said while addressing the media at the secretariat.

He said the government never wanted any casualties.

He also said only individuals involved in criminal activities will be prosecuted, based on specific evidence, and innocent students will not be harassed.

The government respects the protesting students and added that the destruction of state properties during the quota reform protests was carried out by miscreants, not students, Arafat added.

"They [the third party] tried to cause more casualties to escalate tension so that they can fish

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

HSC exams postponed until Aug 11

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent exams have been postponed till August 11.

Prof Tapan Kumar Sarkar, chairman of the Inter-Education Board Coordination Committee and also of the Dhaka Education Board confirmed the information to The Daily Star yesterday morning.

Following the latest decision, the exams scheduled for August 4, 5, 7, 8, and 11 will not be held on those dates, he said.

Due to the situation surrounding the quota reform protests, the HSC and equivalent exams will be held according to a new schedule after August 11, he said, adding that all exams have been postponed until then.

Earlier, authorities postponed examinations of all education boards scheduled for July 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 29, 31, and August 1.

Social media has now become a danger: chief justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Obaidul Hasan expressed concern about social media yesterday, stating that it has become a danger.

"If a husband and wife quarrel, that now also comes to Facebook. If we say something about social media, question of rights to freedom of expression arises," he said while presiding over a bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court during hearing of a contempt of court petition filed against six pro-BNP lawyers for making "slanderous, derogatory and contemptuous" comments about two apex court judges.

The chief justice told them that they did not apologise but sought exoneration from personal appearance, which is not acceptable. The SC asked them to appear before it on August 22.

Train services resume on a limited scale

STAR REPORT

Movement of passenger train resumed yesterday on a very limited scale, 14 days after the suspension amid countrywide violence centring the quota reform protests.

"Operations of short-distance local, mail and commuter trains resumed this morning," said BR Director General Sardar Shahadat Ali.

On Tuesday, railway authorities decided to resume operations. No intercity trains will be operated now. The authorities suspended operations of passenger trains on July 18 afternoon amid the violence.

Rizvi placed on 3-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed six people, including BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, on a three-day remand each in a case filed over vandalising and setting Setu Bhaban on fire on July 18.

The other accused are BNP Organising Secretary Qazi Sayedul Alam Babul, its Dhaka North City unit Member Secretary Aminul Haque, Publicity Secretary Sultan Salauddin Tuku, Bagerhat district unit Convener MA Salam and Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar.

1 more dies of dengue

UNB, *Dhaka*

One more death was reported from dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the number of fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease in Bangladesh to 57 this year.

During the period, 197 more patients were hospitalised with viral fever, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

More than just NUMBERS

A 31-year-old journalist shot dead in Jatrabari. A 45-year-old hotel employee dies from bullet wounds in Badda. A 20-year-old student fatally shot in Banasree. At least 201 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are sons, husbands, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

Journalist killed in the line of duty

Mehedi dies of bullet wounds while covering news in Jatrabari

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Mehedi Hasan, staff reporter of Dhaka Times, was not just a journalist; he was a son, a husband, a father, and the sole earner of his family.

On July 18, while covering clashes between protesters and law enforcers in Dhaka's Jatrabari area, Mehedi was shot and killed.

Mehedi was the eldest of three brothers and took on the responsibility of caring for his family at a young age.

"He worked hard to keep his parents well, thinking about the happiness of the family," recalls his aunt, Mahinur Begum. "We were so proud when he became a journalist through his own efforts. He was looking after all of us. We can't even imagine that he is gone."

She said Mehedi recently built a one-storey house for his parents in Hosnabad village of Patuakhali's Baufal upazila.

However, that came at a cost; to build the house, Mehedi had to take a loan from a local NGO. Every month, he paid off the loan installments, ensuring that his family had a safe and secure place to live.

With Mehedi gone, his elderly parents are now struggling to comprehend life

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

We had to bribe hospital for his body

Says brother of Gani who died after being shot in Dhaka

SUZID DAS

With a trembling voice, Abdul Gani's wife, Lucky Akhtar, kept asking, "Who will take the responsibility of my son and daughter?"

A single bullet has devastated her family beyond imagination.

On July 19, Gani, 45, was heading to his workplace, a hotel in Gulshan, from Gupipara of Uttar Badda, when he was struck in the head by a bullet during a clash between law enforcers and protesters in the Shahjadpur Banshtala area.

Gani was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital later that day.

"He called me around 9:00am," Lucky recalled. "He wanted to know if everyone at home had breakfast. He said he was going to work after receiving an urgent call and warned me that the situation in Dhaka was tense. He asked me to keep

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

No parent should have to bury a child

Says father of 20-year-old Maruf who died of bullet wounds

NAFIS ALMAS SIAM

Twenty-year-old Maruf Hossain of Kushtia's Khoksa upazila dreamed of changing his family's future with the IT skills he possessed.

Being the eldest of two children, he felt it was his responsibility to start taking care of his family as soon as possible. With that goal, Maruf, an eighth-semester Diploma student, was going ahead with his studies in Computer Science and Technology at Kushtia Polytechnic Institute.

However, all his aspirations were dashed by single a bullet, as he was shot dead during a clash between protesters and police and BGB centring the quota reform protests in the capital's Banasree area on July 19.

His friends took him to nearby Advance Hospital.

"He was like my brother. And now he is gone. I couldn't do anything to save

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

RECENT VIOLENCE

Publish list of those who died: Shujan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) yesterday demanded the publication of a list of people who died in the violence centring the ongoing protest, along with their detailed descriptions.

It also demanded a transparent and credible investigation into the violence and bringing the people responsible to justice.

The citizen's platform placed the demand at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital.

Speakers at the event said the government must sit with the agitating students, university authorities, political parties, and civil society and accept the logical demands raised by all the sections, including the students, to resolve the deadlock.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said Awami League formed the government in 2008, banking on the support of the young people, but this group has now taken a stance against the government.

"We have to think about why such a situation has arisen," he said.

Expressing solidarity with the demands of the protesting students, he said students are not getting jobs, and their freedom of speech is being curtailed at the university campus.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said the events surrounding the students' movement affected the entire society.

There is no scope to forgive the deaths of so many people, she said, adding that people will not be silent unless a fair trial is conducted with the involvement of the United Nations.

> **" If the government wants to suppress the movement by force and even if it succeeds in that, it will face discontent again in the future, the consequences of which may be more terrible.**
>
> **DILIP KUMAR SARKAR**
> Central Coordinator of Shujan

Dhaka University Professor Robayet Ferdous said the movement to eliminate quota discrimination is no longer limited to students only, as people of all classes and professions have gotten involved there.

He said the government suffered a moral and political defeat as it suppressed the movement by killing people.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

We had to bribe

FROM PAGE 3

him in my prayers before we disconnected the call. That was the last time I spoke to him."

Now, Lucky is left alone to care for their two children -- Al-Amin, an HSC candidate, and daughter Jannat, a six-year-old.

With their house in Natun Bazar area of Khankanapur union in Rajbari still under construction and loans taken to build it, Lucky is desperate. "How do I pay back the two lakh taka we owe? How can I provide for my children and ensure their education?"

Al-Amin said, "My father always told me to study hard so that we could overcome our sorrows. Now, who will tell me those words? Who will bring justice for my father's death?"

Gani's father, Abdul Mazid Sheikh, received the tragic news from an unknown caller around 10:30am.

"The caller said my son had been shot and urged me to send someone to a hospital in North Badda. I didn't even know which of my sons was in danger. Both of them live in Dhaka. I had to call my younger son, Tariqul, to figure out what was happening."

Tariqul, Gani's younger brother, then called his brother's number. Someone picked it up and told him to go to the hospital.

"I found Gani unconscious and bleeding in an ambulance. I rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where the doctor told me to bring some medicine. When I returned after 10 minutes, the doctor said it was too late," said Tariqul.

Tariqul said his brother died around 11:30am on Friday.

However, obtaining Gani's body proved to be a gruelling and costly process.

"I got his body from Dhaka Medical College Hospital two days later, on Sunday afternoon," said Tariqul.

He said he was forced to pay bribes totaling Tk 9,000 to get his brother's body, which included paying Tk 500 each to search three rooms at the morgue.

He also paid Tk 7,500 to avoid procedural delays, he said.

"Then I rented an ambulance for Tk 10,500 but was compelled to hire another one through the morgue's in-charge, costing Tk 20,000," he added.

"Finally, we were able to bury my brother. But is this how we treat the body of an innocent man?"

No parent should

FROM PAGE 3

him," said his friend Touhidul Nobby, who brought his body to the hospital.

"We came to Dhaka together from Kushtia for three months, as we started working as interns at an IT-based company as part of our final semester," said Touhidul, Maruf's classmate and colleague.

"We didn't even join the protests. Only 19 days had passed since we came to Dhaka, so we didn't know much about anything around here. We just got out of our house in Banasree to see what was going on. Then we saw a vehicle of BGB approaching towards us and bullets were being fired, so we rushed into an alley as everything got so chaotic there," said Touhidul.

"Maruf and I got separated. So, when he got shot, I couldn't even see it or know it immediately. After some time, when I was looking for him, I saw his body lying on the road. I quickly got a rickshaw and rushed him to the hospital, but the doctor said he was already gone," he added.

The duty doctor at the emergency department of Advance Hospital said a bullet entered through Maruf's back and pierced through his stomach.

Later, Maruf's uncle came to the hospital and took his body back to Kushtia.

"Maruf was a freelancer. He wanted to make a career in web development. He was already earning money so that he didn't burden his family," Touhidul told this newspaper.

Maruf wanted to get done with the internship soon and get back home soon so that he could finish his diploma and start his career, he added.

Instead, his lifeless body went back home, wrapped in a white shroud.

Later, when this correspondent reached out to Maruf's father, Shoriful Islam, he was in no state to talk.

"I don't know what's there to say. I buried my son with my own hands. So, nothing matters to me anymore," said, Shoriful, who runs a shop in the Khoksa area.

"Life has stopped for us. I don't feel like going to my shop. We are trying to accept that Maruf is no more and he will never be back. All we can do is keep praying for him," he added.

Banning

FROM PAGE 5

secretary Md Abu Sayeed, highlighted the necessity of reviving the Bangalee nationalism.

The statement read, "The party has been banned for the second time in Bangladesh. This fundamentalist group was an accomplice of the Pakistani invading forces during the Liberation War in 1971. After independence, the government of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman banned the party for abuse of religion, opposing independence, and participation in genocide."

The release criticised the subsequent reinstatement of Jamaat by the Ziaur Rahman government, stating that the group's principles have remained unchanged for the last 53 years, making the current ban a reiteration of history.

The ban, executed under the Anti-Terrorism Act, follows the International Criminal Tribunal's previous designation of Jamaat as a war criminal and terrorist group, it added.

Meanwhile, Gonojagaran Mancha and Amra Muktijoddhar Shantan welcomed the government's move.

The government yesterday banned Jamaat and all its front organisations including Shibir as political parties and entities under the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009.

Teachers, students

FROM PAGE 3

Prof Samina Lutfa of DU Sociology department, added, "We do not want any forces [law enforcers] at the Dhaka University campus. It is our campus. The forces must be withdrawn immediately."

The teachers then marched to Central Shaheed Minar to observe a minute of silence for the victims.

Besides, over 100 faculty members from Independent University, Bangladesh, expressed solidarity with the protests.

At Rajshahi University, the "University Teachers Network" held a silent procession and rally at the Shaheed Intellectual Memorial at 11:00am.

As the procession ended, plainclothes law enforcers with batons suddenly grabbed some students and moved them towards a police van. Teachers and other students intervened, resulting in their release.

The same officers assaulted two journalists who were recording the incident, said students.

Mohammad Hemayatul Islam, additional police commissioner (crime and operation) of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, said they primarily detained a student to talk about why he misbehaved with a cop. "We've not arrested anyone," he claimed.

At Jahangirnagar University, a protest march honoured those who died during protests.

Twelve teachers from Daffodil International University joined the programme in solidarity.

In Khulna University, teachers held a human chain and silent march.

STUDENTS' DEMO

In Barishal, police picked up 12 students for "their own security" during the "Remembering Our Heroes" programme.

Abdur Rahman Mukur, officer-in-charge of Bandar Police Station, said, "We have taken 12 students into our custody for security purposes. They are neither arrested nor detained."

In Narayanganj, at least 10 people were injured as police charged batons on the protesters yesterday evening when they tried to gather in front of Central Shaheed Minar in Chashara area to organise a candle light protest.

The protesters said police barred them from gathering there and also charged batons on them.

They claimed that police detained at least three students from the spot.

Police, however, claimed that they were later released.

Contacted, Sahadat Hossain, officer-in-charge of Sadar Model Police Station, denied charging batons on students. He said students gathered there without permission for which they had to disperse them.

Death anniv of Justice Abu Sayeed today

STAR REPORT

Today is the death anniversary of former president Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury, said a press release.

Justice Chowdhury, also a former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, played a leading role in mobilising world opinion in favour of Bangladesh during the War of Liberation in 1971.

He was also elected chairman of the UN Human Rights Commission in 1985.

He authored four books – "Probashe Muktijuddher Dinguli", "Manobadhikar", "Muslim Family Law in the English Courts" and "Human Rights in the Twentieth Century".

On the occasion of his death anniversary, a doa mahfil will be held at Dabail Jamia Ashrafia Madrasa in Tangail.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 2

	Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-30	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Journalist killed in the line

FROM PAGE 3

without their son. They are faced with the uncertainty of how they will continue their medical treatments or pay off the loan.

Mehedi's two daughters, just seven months and four years old, are too young to understand the tragedy that has befallen them.

In the wake of his death, the family received a Tk 10 lakh worth savings certificate and Tk 50,000 in cash from the prime minister.

His aunt Reba Akhtar said, "His dream was simple -- to raise his daughters well, to give them the opportunities he worked so hard to create. But a bullet shattered that dream."

Mehedi was laid to rest on July 30 in the backyard of the house he built.

Police, Rab

FROM PAGE 3

in troubled water. But they did not do it directly, rather they used the students as shields and abused their emotions and feelings," he added.

Arafat urged protesters to remain vigilant against such infiltrators and to maintain patience and logic to prevent further unrest.

Arafat called on the police to avoid harassing students who participated in demonstrations.

Expressing sorrow for casualties, he said the government is committed to transparent trials through the independent judicial commission.

If needed, the government will seek help from external experts, he added.

BNP-Jamaat

FROM PAGE 3

prime minister will ensure justice and accountability of the culprits behind these vandalism," Mina said.

He appreciated the prime minister's steps in handling the recent attacks and vandalism.

He said Bangladesh and Italy historically enjoy excellent friendly relations.

In this connection, he mentioned that some two lakh plus Bangladeshi expatriates are the bridge of this relationship and they are contributing to both the country's economies.

Publish list

FROM PAGE 3

Reading out a written statement, Dilip Kumar Sarkar, central coordinator of Shujan, said if the government wants to suppress the movement by force and even if it succeeds in that, it will face discontent again in the future, the consequences of which may be more terrible.

He stressed the need for a fair and transparent investigation under UN supervision into all the violence and ensuring punishment of the people responsible.

Dilip also demanded the withdrawal of all the cases against the students, the release of detained students, and an end to mass arrest through block raids.

SPACES FOR TO-TET
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8A, House-157, Road-12,
Block- E, Banani, Dhaka-1213,
Contact : Fazle : 01787172209,
Rabina : 01714310084.

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নির্মাণ প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভূক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

উদ্দীপন একটি সুপ্রতিষ্ঠিত জাতীয় বেসরকারী উন্নয়ন সংস্থা (NGO)। ঢাকা ও সাভারসহ বাংলাদেশের বিভিন্ন স্থানে উদ্দীপনের নিজস্ব ভবন রয়েছে। সেসব ভবনের সংস্কার এর কাজ করা হবে। ভবন সংস্কারের কাজ পরিকল্পিত ও সুন্দরভাবে সম্পাদন করার লক্ষ্যে অভিজ্ঞ ও স্বনামধন্য নির্মাণ প্রতিষ্ঠান সমুহকে তালিকাভুক্ত করা হবে। তাই ভবন সংস্কার কাজে দক্ষ ও অভিজ্ঞ নির্মাণ প্রতিষ্ঠান সমুহকে তালিকাভুক্ত হওয়ার জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় হালনাগাদ কাগজপত্র (ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, BIN সার্টিফিকেট, ট্যাক্স ও ভ্যাট সার্টিফিকেট, অভিজ্ঞতার প্রমানপত্র, ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সার্টিফিকেট) সহ আবেদন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হচ্ছে।

আবেদনপত্র দাখিলের স্থান, শেষ তারিখ ও সময় : খামের উপর প্রতিষ্ঠানের নামসহ তালিকাভূক্তির জন্য কোম্পানীর প্যাডে আবেদনপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের ১৫ দিনের মধ্যে শুক্র ও শনিবার ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকায় নিম্নে উল্লেখিত ঠিকানায় প্রশাসন বিভাগে সংরক্ষিত টেন্ডার বক্সে জমা দিতে হবে।

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Nilphamari
www.lged.gov.bd

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Memo No. 46.02.7300.000.14.003.24-1783
Dated: 31-07-2024

e-Tender Notice: 02/2024-25
(OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works are given below:

Sl. No.	Tender Proposal ID	Name of the Scheme with Package No.	Last selling date and time	Closing & opening date and time
01.	1006303	(A) Improvement of Rupahara Non-Govt.Pry.School-Shuresh House Via Mazidul Member House Road at Ch.00m to 1655m.(Road Part) B) RCC Box Culvert & U-Drain,1). Construction of 04 Nos 0.625x0.600m U-drain at Ch.120,368,588 & 1229m. 2) Construction of 02 Nos. 1.50x1.50m RCC Box Culvert at Ch.400 & 730m on the same road [Road Id: 173124075,[Upazila: Dimla, District: Nilphamari], Package No. e- PRO/NIL/DIM/VR/23-24/W-491	21-Aug-2024 Time: 17:00 Hrs	22-Aug-2024 Time: 12:30 Hrs

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to 17.00 Hrs.on 21-Aug-2024.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) and also for e-mail: xen.nilphamari@lged.gov.bd or call to: 0551-61485.
Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

Md. Firoz Hasan
Executive Engineer
LGED, Nilphamari
Mobile No.01708-123225
xen.nilphamari@lged.gov.bd

GD- 98

Government of The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Chapainawabganj.
www.lged.gov.bd

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Memo No.: 46.02.7000.000.07.001.24.1454
Date: 31/07/2024 খ্রীষ্টাব্দ
১৬/০৮/১৪৩১ বঙ্গাব্দ

e-Tender Notice No : 04/2024-25
Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following Packages :

Sl No	Description of Work, Package No & Tender ID	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)	Re-marks
01	Widening & Strengthening of Dogha Bazar (KGPS RHD)-Shibganj Upazila Porishad Road via Shibnogar & Mohonbag GPS . at Ch.00m- 6110 m under Shibganj Upazila, District: Chapainawabganj. Road ID No-170882011, [Salvage cost: 22,33,209.00]. (Package No. RDIRWSP/CNG/SHIB/R-84) (Tender ID- 1006451).	02 Sep-2024 16:00	03 Sep-2024 11:00	03 Sep-2024 11:00	OTM

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP system portal (http:www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks Branches up to Last Selling Date & Time as mentioned above. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

৩১/০৭/২৪
(Md. Mazaher Ali Pk)
Executive Engineer
Ph: 0781-52589
e-mail : xen.cnganj@lged.gov.bd

GD- 99

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Natore PWD Division, Natore
Tel. No.0258871273; Fax: 02588871026

Invitation for Tenders (IFT)

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Housing & Public Works.
2	Executing Agency	Public Works Department
3	Name of procuring entity	Executive Engineer, Natore PWD Division, Natore.
4	Procuring entity code	Not used at present
5	Procuring entity district	Natore
6	Invitation for	Procurement of Physical Services
7	Invitation Reference No.	25.36.6900.320.18.24.086/39
8	Date	31-07-2024
KEY INFORMATION		
9	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10	Budget and source of fund	Revenue Budget, Government of Bangladesh
11	Development partners (if applicable)	None
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12	Project /programme code (if applicable)	Not available.
13	Project /programme name (if applicable)	Not applicable
14	Tender Package No.	Not applicable
15	Tender package name	**Supply of 2 (two) Nos. drivers for inspection vehicle of PWD Natore Division, Natore through outsourcing process. FY 2024-2025**
16	Tender No.	PSN/Driver/2024-2025
17	Tender publication date	31-07-2024
18	Tender last selling date	18-08-2024 up to 17.00 hours
19	Tender closing date and time	19-08-2024 Time 12.00 hours
20	Tender opening date and time	**19-08-2024 Time 2:00 hours**
21	Name & address of the office(s)	
	Selling tender document (principal)	Office of the Executive Engineer, Natore PWD Division, Natore.
	Selling tender document (others)	Dhaka PWD Division-1,4 Dhaka/Barisal PWD Division, Barisal/ Chittagong PWD Division-1, Chittagong/ Khulna PWD Division-1, Khulna/Rajshahi PWD Division-1, Rajshahi/ Sylhet PWD Division, Sylhet/ Mymensingh PWD Division, Mymensingh/Gopalgonj PWD Division.
	Receiving tender document	Office of the Executive Engineer, Natore PWD Division, Natore. Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Natore. Office of the Superintendent of Police, Natore.
	Opening tender document	Office of the Executive Engineer, Natore PWD Division, Natore.
22	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting	Office of the Executive Engineer, Natore PWD Division, Natore on 08.08.2024; Time 11.00 hours
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
23	Brief eligibility and qualification of tenderer	a. The minimum number of years of general experience of the Tenderer in contracting industries in public sector as Prime Contractor/Sub Contractor/Management Contractor shall be 3(Three) years. b. Having experience as a Prime Contractor of at least **1(one) number of** supplying manpower for **driving motor vehicle** guarding of Tk **6,00,000.00 (Six lac)** in a single contract in **Government/ Semi-Government/ Autonomous Organization** of Bangladesh during last **03 (Three) years.** c. The required average annual turnover of the Tenderer shall be at least of the amount of **Tk 10,00,000.00 (Ten Lac)** last five years. d. The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e. working capital or credit line(s) of the Tenderer shall be **BDT 3,00,000.00 (Three Lac).** e. Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the Contract under the Applicable Law. f. Tenderers shall have registration and updated licence under section 7 of Bangladesh Labour Rules 2015. g. Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh *The full eligibility and qualification criteria will be available in details in the Tender Data Sheet (TDS, section 2) of Tender Document.*
25.	Price of tender document (BDT)	**BDT 1000 (One thousand) only.**

26.	Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security amount (BDT)	Completion time
	I	**Supply of 2 (two) Nos drivers for inspection vehicle of PWD Natore Division, Natore through outsourcing process. FY 2024-2025**	PWD Natore Division	**Tk. 20,000.00 (Twenty Thousand)**	**12 (Twelve) months** (Time will be started after the signing of the contract).

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
27	Name of official inviting tender	Amit Kumar Dev
28	Designation of official inviting tender	Executive Engineer
29	Address of official inviting tender	Natore PWD Division, Natore.
30	Contact details or official inviting tender	Tel.No.02588871273; Fax:02588871026,email: ee_nator@pwd.gov.bd
31	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings.	
32	Updated rules and regulations of VAT and Income Tax will be followed.	
33	Contract period can be extended depends on the satisfactory performance of manpower supplier by the approval of Proper Authority.	

Amit Kumar Dev
Executive Engineer
Natore PWD Division, Natore

GD- 108

BANNING OF JAMAAT-SHIBIR

Govt ready to counter their covert activities

Says law minister

STAR REPORT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the government is ready to confront any covert activities by the just-banned Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing, Islami Chhatra Shibir.

He made this statement while talking to journalists at the Secretariat.

Asked whether Jamaat-Shibir would go underground once banned, the minister acknowledged the possibility.

"However, we are prepared to handle such a situation," he said.

The minister also mentioned that the government has taken steps to amend the International Crimes Tribunal Act.

"It is not that banned party members cannot be punished. The ban may not directly lead to penalties, but they can still be prosecuted for any crimes committed under Bangladeshi law," he explained.

In response to a question about the fate of the party's assets post-ban, he assured that measures are in place.

He also said the government has taken necessary measures so that any innocent person is not sent to jail in cases filed in connection with violence centring the quota reform protests.

The prosecution has been directed to take initiative in favour of the court's granting bail to those, including HSC examinees and minors, who are not involved in the incident of violence, he said.

Security tightened in the capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has beefed up security measures, especially at the key points to prevent any untoward situations or violent activities centring the ban on Jamaat and Shibir.

"We are ready to tackle any kind of criminal activities and sabotage. We have already strengthened security at major installations, and points of the capital," said DMP Commissioner Habibur Rahman.

Additional check posts have been set up in different major points of the capital so that no one can be able to carry out any subversive activities, said police sources.

The home ministry yesterday issued a gazette notification banning Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Chhatra Shibir, and all of its front organisations as political parties and entities under the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009.

According to the gazette, the government took the decision as per Section 18 (1) of the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009 and enlisted it as a banned entity in the second schedule of the act.

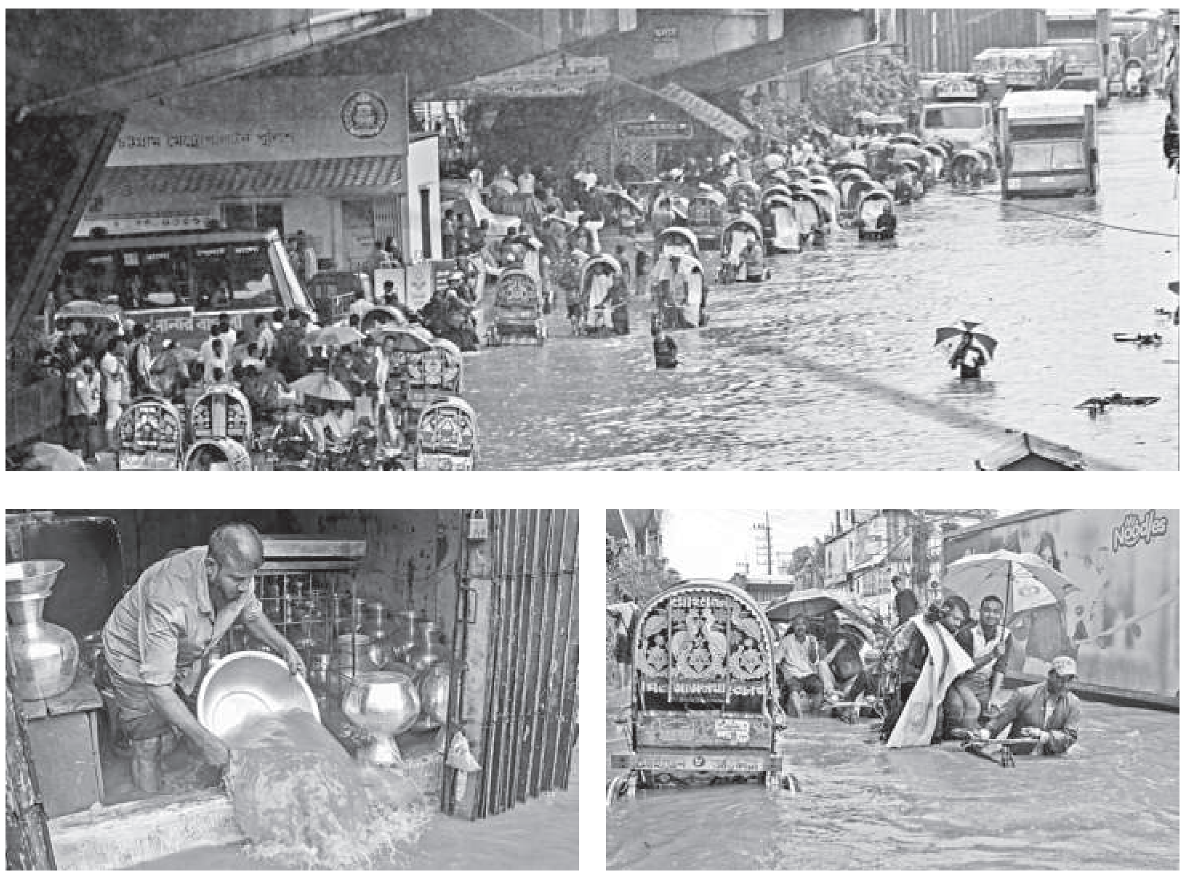


PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Ctg drowns in torrential rain

Many low lying areas in port city waterlogged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Torrential rainfall since midnight led to waterlogging across numerous low-lying areas of Chattogram city yesterday.

Visiting different areas across the port city, this correspondent witnessed people going through a hard time with their daily commute. Roads across Chawkbazar, Bakalia, Agrabad, Halishahar, GEC Intersection, Muradpur, Bahaddarhat, Kapasgola, Shulakbahar, Chandgaon and Katalganj were seen submerged under ankle to knee-deep water, while few vehicles were available.

"I have been waiting for a vehicle to go to office for at least half an hour, so far in vain," said Rashed Iqbal, an office-goer stuck at GEC Intersection.

Mina Das was seen wading through knee-deep water on KB Aman Ali Road.

"I have to attend to my ailing mother-in-law, who is currently hospitalised. I am compelled to tread this dirty water from overflowing drains since I could not find a single rickshaw to reach the hospital," she lamented.

In 24 hours till 3:00pm yesterday, 148.6 millimetres of rain has been recorded in the port city, said Ali Akbar Khan, assistant meteorological officer at Chattogram Met Office.

The downpour, triggered by active monsoon winds over the area, may continue for the next 24 hours, he added.

Meanwhile, Chattogram Sea Port was advised to hoist Cautionary Signal-3, the official mentioned.

He stressed that the incessant rain might put 6,558 families, who live on the slopes of 26 hills in the city, in risk of landslides.

According to officials of Chattogram district administration, the vulnerable families were asked to evacuate risky structures and move to safety.

However, most of them did not pay heed to the warnings, said local sources.

Contacted, Abul Bashar Mohammad Fakhruzzaman, deputy commissioner of Chattogram, said they were asking people through loudspeaker to leave their homes on the risky hill slopes and come to shelter centres.

"The shelter centres have adequate accommodation capacity, but many are still remaining in their houses. We cannot force them to evacuate their homes, so we are requesting them using loud speakers in different vulnerable areas," he added.

Govt to consider technical support from the UN

Says foreign secretary

UNB, *Dhaka*

Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen yesterday said the government first wants to see the outcome of the investigation being carried out by the judicial inquiry commission instead of engaging in anything parallel to that.

"We want them [commission] to work and complete their process," Masud told reporters after briefing the development partners at a state guesthouse.

The foreign secretary, however, said they will surely consider taking technical-related assistance from the United Nations to that end.

"We are hopeful that they [Inquiry Commission] will fairly, impartially and transparently investigate each incident to hold the responsible persons accountable and bring them to justice," Masud said.

Masud's comments came after UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk said his office is also available to deploy an independent fact-finding team, which would assist in building trust among all stakeholders and to help de-escalate tensions.

The foreign secretary said the government already responded to the 14 foreign missions who wrote to Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud recently.

"We have addressed their issues in the reply," he said, adding that today the development partners wanted to know more about freedom of assembly, and wanted to know whether any force is being applied or anyone is arrested.

He said there was no problem where people were protesting peacefully but there were some problems in some places where the people tried to create disruptions going beyond peaceful atmosphere.

Banning Jamaat-Shibir not enough

Sector Commanders' Forum calls for upholding ideals of Liberation War

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ban on Jamaat and Shibir is not sufficient on its own, said the Sector Commanders' Forum-Liberation War '71 in a statement yesterday. They advocated for a collective effort from the government, various organisations and cultural society to steer Bangladesh towards a progressive and democratic path in line with the Liberation War ideals.

The forum, in a press release signed by office

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

SHAYESTAGANJ UPAZILA IN HABIGANJ

Wastes being dumped near reserve forest

MINTU DESHWARA

For the past several years, local residents have been dumping household wastes in the open on Olipur-Shahjibazar road in Brahmandura union under Shayestaganj upazila of Habiganj.

Just on the other side of the road lies the Ranghunandan Hill Forest Reserve, one of the oldest forest area in the Sylhet division. A rail track also passes along the road.

Visiting the area recently, this correspondent saw a heap of garbage has piled up on the roadside, leaving the road and walkway dirty and slippery, causing nuisance to the residents, passengers of vehicles and pedestrians alike.

"Currently, wastes from houses and markets in the neighbourhood are being disposed of on the roadside in Olipur area under supervision of some locals," said Abdur Rauf, a local resident.

Nannu Chowdhury, another resident of the area, said the situation has been like this for the last five-six years, making it difficult for people to use the road due to the stench and litter produced from the garbage heap.

Mohan Mia, a member of Brahmandura Union Parishad, said, "There is no place or Secondary Transfer Station (STS) in the area to dump household wastes, so people are discarding those in the empty space next to the railway track."

He urged the authorities concerned to set up a waste dumping zone in the area.

Tofazzal Sohel, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon in Habiganj, said wastes are being discarded in the open right next to a reserve forest, posing threat to the environment and wildlife.

Contacted, Tariq Rahman, assistant conservator of forests in Habiganj, said the Forest Department is currently working on a solution to address this issue.

"The matter has been informed to the higher authorities for further action," said Saifullah, assistant engineer (Roads) of Bangladesh Railway in Shayestaganj upazila.

Contacted, Hossain Mohammad Adil Joj Mia, chairman of Brahmandura Union Parishad, said they have informed the upazila administration and steps will be taken soon to resolve the issue.

Government spreading lies: Fakhrul

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the government, along with some pro-ruling party officials in law enforcement agencies, is spreading lies in a coordinated effort about the killings during the student protests.

He said this is merely an attempt to obscure the truth.

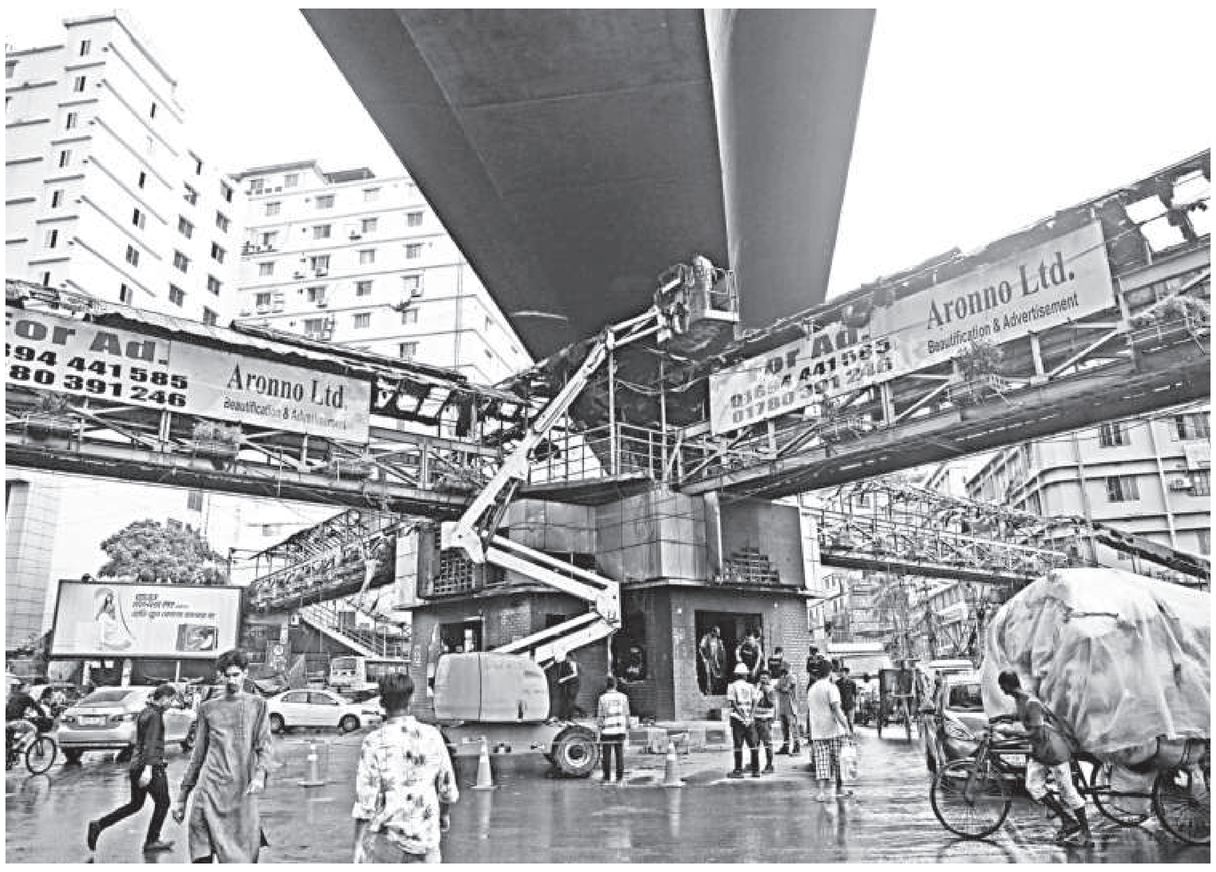
In a statement, he urged all government officials and employees, including those in the administration and law enforcement agencies, to stop oppressing students by ignoring the unjust and illegal orders, instructions, and pressures.

The BNP leader also cautioned that as the torture intensifies, mass resistance will only grow stronger in response.

He said the government is pitting the law and order forces and the administration against the students in a well-planned manner, which is an ominous sign for the state.

"The head of government and government minister-leaders and some Awami-minded members of law enforcement agencies are constantly resorting to lies and saying that the so-called 'third power' forces have carried out the shootings and massacre, but people all over the world saw that the general public including students did not have firearms," the BNP leader said.

He said firearms were seen in the hands of law enforcers and the Chhatra League and Jubo League. "Despite this, the government continues to repeat this chorus of lies in a superficial attempt to obscure the truth."



Employees of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited inspect a section of the metro rail at the Mirpur 10 intersection area yesterday. During the recent unrest in the country, this foot-bridge was set on fire, which is why the DMTCL is checking to see if any damage occurred to the metro rail.

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

2 killed as pickup hits truck in Munshiganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Munshiganj*

The driver of a pickup and his helper were killed when the vehicle hit a truck from behind in Lauhajong of Munshiganj early yesterday.

The accident took place around 3:30am in front of Padma bridge North Police Station on the Bangabandhu expressway as the driver lost control over the pickup, said police.

The deceased were identified as Palash Chandra Das, 24, the driver from Sharifpur area in Shibpur upazila, Narsingdi; and Joy Chandra Das, 25, his assistant from the same area.

Kanchan Kumar Singh, in-charge of Hasara Highway Police Station, said they seized the pickup.

Gas supply in several Dhaka areas to be shut for 9hrs today

UNB, *Dhaka*

Gas supply will remain suspended for 9 hours -- from 6:00am to 9:00pm -- today in different Dhaka areas due to emergency relocation of gas pipelines.

According to Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company, the areas where gas supply will remain halted include Mugda, Ahmedbagh, Bashabo, and Shantibagh.

Titas regretted the temporary inconvenience to consumers saying that the adjacent areas may experience low pressure in gas supply for the same reason.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

PHOTOS: **SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED AND ORCHID CHAKMA**

Artistes unfazed by heavy rain, censorship

DEMAND JUSTICE FOR STUDENTS

DOWEL BISWAS

In a powerful show of solidarity with the nine-point demands of the anti-discrimination protest, a diverse group of professionals from the fields of film, television, photography, theater, journalism and other visual media gathered for a rally. The demonstration started on 11:15am yesterday at the Farmgate intersection in Dhaka.

During the rally, attendees were seen delivering their speeches despite the downpour, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to the cause. Their statements focused on demanding justice for the students killed in the quota reform protests, an end to mass arrests, and the cessation of legal actions against the protesters.

The rally was a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggle for justice and reform in Bangladesh, highlighting the role of visual media professionals in amplifying the call for accountability and change.

Calling themselves Drissho Madhyam Shilpi Shomaj (Visual Media Artistes Association), the members posed a significant demonstration in support of the ongoing student protests against the violence in the 2024 quota reform movement, also the nationwide crackdown on students that has seen the arrest of thousands of students. Although the protest was scheduled to take place in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban on Manik Mia Avenue, they had to change their location to Indira Road. However, the demostration later moved to the Farmgate intersection.

In a powerful statement, the group declared, "We demand justice for all killings. End violence, mass arrests, and harassment." This call for action aligns with the students' nine-point demands, which have sparked widespread unrest and controversy across the country. The recent violence and mass arrests have ignited a firestorm of criticism and calls for accountability.

With slogans, including the famed ***Ganatantra Mukti Pak, Swairachar Nipat Jak***, placards, songs, and banners -- celebrities stood firm showing their staunch support for the protesters.

The protest stands as a bold assertion of the artistes' commitment to justice and human rights. The demonstrators are not just reacting to the immediate incidents of violence, but are also making a broader demand for the protection of civil liberties and the rule of law.

The association has made it clear that their protest is not just a moment of solidarity but a call to action. They demand justice for the murders associated with the movement, an end to the violence perpetrated by state forces, the cessation of mass arrests and harassment, and the immediate release of detained students.

Reflecting on the historical context, the group notes that the great Liberation War was fought for a Bangladesh rooted in justice, equality, and human dignity. They remind the nation that these principles are enshrined in the constitution and must be upheld. "As citizens of this country, our constitutional right is to live in safety and receive fair treatment under the law," the statement asserts.

The protest has garnered significant attention, with the group urging media houses to cover the event. They had called on daily newspapers and electronic media to send correspondents and camera crews to document the demonstration, ensuring that the voices of the protesters are heard and their demands are spotlighted.

"Salute to the young ones who had to lose their lives to get justice," said Ashfaque Nipun during the demonstration. "They are true heroes. As for the media industry, I am sure that any losses occurred will be overcome if the state becomes more humane."

Azmeri Haque Badhan, Bangladesh's only actress to officially attend the Cannes Film Festival, said, "It could have been my daughter at the protest, she could have lost her life." The actress teared up as she was saying this. "Any state, that kills its own people to assert power, cannot be a democracy. The government has to take responsibility for this."

Among the notable figures present were Shahidul Alam, Mosharraf Karim, Siam Ahmed, Akram Khan, Rafiath Rashid Mithila, Sabila Noor, Amitabh Reza, Eresh Zaker, Nazia Haque Orsha, Syed Ahmed Shawki, Wahid Tarek, Ritu Sattar, and several others who braved the rain to make their voices heard.

NEWS

Some 11,000 held in last 15 days

FROM PAGE 12

Magura; eight in Noakhali; seven each in Sylhet and Chattogram; six in Satkhira; five each in Savar and Narayanganj; four each in Sirajganj and Mymensingh; three each in Tangail, Bogura, Rangpur, Kishoreganj, and Barishal; two each in Habiganj, Narsingdi, and Jhenaidah; one each in Madaripur, Gaibandha, Natore, Panchagarh, Meherpur, Manikganj, and Laxmipur.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed and five others on a three-day remand each in a case filed over the vandalism and torching of Setu Bhaban on July 18.

The others are Jamaat Secretary General Miah Golam Parwar, BNP Organizing Secretary Qazi Sayedul Alam Babul, its Dhaka North City unit Member Secretary Aminul Haque, Publicity Secretary Sultan Salauddin Tuku, and Bagerhat district BNP unit Convener MA Salam.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam passed the order after Abu Sayeed Miah, an inspector of Detective Branch of Police and also investigation officer of the case, produced them with a 10-day remand appeal.

Earlier in the day, the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Saddam Hossain sent eight men, including former Ducsu vice-president Nurul Haque Nur and BNP activist Mahmudus Salehin to jail after police produced them before the court upon completion of their five-day remand in a case filed over the vandalism of the Kazipara Metro Station in the city's Mirpur on July 19.

Moreover, a juvenile court in Dhaka yesterday again rejected a bail petition of Hasnatul Islam Faiyaz in a case filed over the killing of a police constable during the recent violence in Dhaka's Jatrabari on July 19.

Judge Roksana Begum Happy of Juvenile Court-3 of Dhaka passed the order after Faiyaz's lawyer sought his bail on the grounds the client was not involved with the incident.

Meanwhile, the court of Additional Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, Tofazzal Hossain granted bail to Md Emon Khan, an HSC examinee and a student of Dhaka Udayan Govt College, in a case filed over the vandalism of an office of Chhatra League in the city's Adabor on July 19.

Besides, a Chattogram court sent a quota protest coordinator to jail after he was arrested in a case filed over the clash between the BCL activists and quota reform protestors in the Muradpur area on July 16.

The arrestee Adnan Sharif, is a student of Islamic studies department at of Chittagong University.

Quader now says no shoot-on-sight order

FROM PAGE 12

information and broadcasting, said none of the police, Rab, and BGB personnel was allowed to open fire, they had to work in line with the country's constitution.

"But some law enforcers might have violated the law on the ground. We will bring those to book following an independent judicial probe," he said while addressing the media at the secretariat.

This newspaper found at least 44 people were shot deadsince the "shoot-on-sight" order was mentioned.

"According to the law, a written government order [gazette] must be sent to the forces, authorising them to 'shoot on sight'. The government order clearly outlines the circumstances under which the forces are allowed to shoot on sight e.g. breaking a curfew. I have not heard of such a written order being published," said Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain, eminent security and defence analyst.

When the defence is deployed "in aid of civil power", they have to be sanctioned by a magistrate to shoot to kill.

"The army and the BGB need a magistrate present on a spot in order to shoot and kill someone. I don't know if any magistrate was present on the spot when people were killed. The police may have magistracy power to shoot to kill -- that I don't know for sure. But then the question is, which rank has that power? Were members of that rank present on the spot where the shooting happened?" questioned Sakhawat, also a former election commissioner.

"If they have been tasked with guarding a key-point installation, then they [army, BGB) can shoot to kill without a magistrate. If a magistrate is not present, then they must later answer to a magistrate why they shot to kill."

He added that according to the rules of engagement, the armed forces cannot shoot to kill without a warning. "They must draw a line on the ground and if the opponent crosses the line, then they are obliged to fire."

The home and law ministers, and the chiefs of police, Rab, and BGB did not respond to our calls and text messages seeking their comments if there were any "shoot-on-sight" order, and if not, why law enforcers shot people so indiscriminately.

Judicial probe body gets two more judges

FROM PAGE 2

Justice Khandaker said announcements will be made in Rangpur over loudspeakers from today to inform the people of the commission's arrival.

Statements regarding the death of Sayed will be recorded on the first day. The statements on the deaths of Sajjad Hossain, Moslem Uddin Milan and Md Manik Miah will be recorded on August 6, and Md Merazul Islam and Md Abdullah Al Taher on August 7, he added.

The recording of testimonies would start at 9:00am every day at Rangpur Circuit House.

He urged the people to come forward for the testimonies and warned against any form of intimidation against the people who will making statements and giving evidence to the commission.

Besides identifying those responsible for the deaths and injuries during the quota reform protest from July 16 to July 21, the commission has been tasked with unearthing the reasons behind the violence surrounding the protests.

Spotlight on American sprint duo

FROM PAGE 12

whether Richardson can hold off Jamaica's Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, the ageing five-time world 100m champion seeking her third Olympic gold in the discipline.

Richardson is seeking to become the first US woman to win an Olympic 100m title since Gail Devers in 1996.

While Lyles and Richardson might grab the initial headlines with the finals on Saturday for the women and Sunday for the men, there will be a huge array of talent on show in the French capital.

Sweden's pole vault king Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis will seek to push his own limits for victory with a potential tilt at a 10th consecutive world record, while two of the most mouth-watering events are in the same discipline: the 400m hurdles.

Three years ago in Tokyo, the hurdles produced two of the most astonishing races ever run in Olympic history, made all the more remarkable as they were in a spectator-less stadium.

First up, Norway's Karsten Warholm smashed his own world record by a staggering 0.76sec to win the men's hurdles in 45.94sec.

Twenty-four hours later American Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone did the impossible and improved her own world record by 0.44sec to 51.46sec.

The two hurdles race again promise to be cracking races in Paris, with Warholm under pressure from American Rai Benjamin and McLaughlin-Levrone from Dutchwoman Femke Bol.

The men and women's 800m races also look likely to throw up two absolute must-see races, with two world records under threat.

Algerian Djamel Sedjati has his eyes on Kenyan David Rudisha's 1:40.91 while, in absence of champion Athing Mu, Britain's Keely Hodgkinson comes to Paris as the athlete to beat in the women's two-lap field, having run a life-time best of 1:54.61 in London two weeks ago to show she can upgrade her silver from Tokyo.

In Paris, the irrepressible Kenyan Faith Kipyegon will be gunning for a third successive Olympic title at 1500m.

The men's 1500m offers one of the keenest rivalries on the circuit as British team captain Josh Kerr goes head-to-head once more with the defending Olympic champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen.

Free all detainees within 24 hours

FROM PAGE 12

enforcers in the dead of night, causing widespread fear among parents.

"Mothers can't sleep. They keep looking through the windows, with worries that cops might visit their homes to pick up their children."

She demanded immediate release of all the detained students and children.

Brac University teacher Saimum Reza Talukder said Arif Sohel, a coordinator of the quota reform movement at Jahangirnagar University, was arrested for an arson attack on Setu Bhaban in the capital though he was leading the protests on his campus.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said they want assurance that the six released coordinators would be able to carry on doing their works freely and safely.

"Do you think us as slaves whom you can just pick up at will and detain for as long as you wish? Then you offer us noodles, polao, chicken, or eggs and circulate those images to the media.

"We have seen political arrestees receiving treatment at the PG hospital for long. In the latest case, you picked up the tortured students without giving them treatment. We don't want this kind of law enforcement agencies.

"We don't want the police of the Awami League, BNP, or Jatiya Party.... You [police] should work for the people and be the police of Bangladesh," she said.

Samina Lutfha, an associate professor of sociology at DU, said, "You are in power to protect the people of Bangladesh, not to cause bloodshed on the streets. Stop torturing the people of Bangladesh."

Human rights activists Farida Akhter, Shireen Huq, Nur Khan Liton, Association for Land Reform and Development Executive Director Shamsul Haque, Prof Gitiara Nasreen of DU, Prof Mirza Taslima Sultana of JU and Prof Sayeed Ferdous were also present.

Rushad Faridi, an assistant professor of economics at DU, announced that they would hold their next protest rally "Droho Jatra" at 3:00pm today in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

He called upon the people from all walks of life to join the rally.

16-yr-old Alfi gets bail

FROM PAGE 12

according to his birth certificate.

Alfi's father Shahjalal told The Daily Star that his son on July 18 was hanging out with his friends at Parkermor near his home, which is also close to the Begum Rokeya University. He was in his college uniform.

When violence erupted around Parkermor, panicked Alfi ran towards the opposite direction to his home and suffered shotgun pellet injuries to his leg, said his father.

Alfi's father Shahjalal said they looked for Alfi all day but at night he received a call from someone claiming to be a law enforcer. The person said Alfi was in their custody and that he would be released the next day, July 19.

Shahjalal called the person the next day but this time he said Alfi would not be released.

On July 16, Begum Rokeya University student Sayed was shot and killed during the quota reform protest near his university.

Video footage shows police shooting Sayed, who posed no threat to the law enforcers. He died soon afterwards.

But contradicting what is clear as daylight, the First Information Report filed by police says Sayed was not a victim of police firing.

"The protesters fired weapons and threw chunks of bricks from different directions, and at one stage, a student [Sayed] was seen falling to the ground," read the FIR.

Abu Maruf Hossain, additional police commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police, yesterday said police picked up Alfi and later showed him arrested in the Sayed murder case, which was filed on July 16.

He said they would drop his name from the case.

EAST-WEST PRISONER SWAP

WSJ journo among 26 freed in Russia prisoner deal

REUTERS, *Moscow*

Jailed US Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reporter Evan Gershkovich and ex-US Marine Paul Whelan were among 26 prisoners from the United States, Russia, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway and Belarus being freed in a major east-west exchange yesterday, Turkey's presidency said.

It said 10 prisoners, including two minors, had been moved to Russia, 13 to Germany and three to the United States.

Turkish intelligence had announced that it was coordinating an extensive prisoner exchange, amid signs of a major swap between Russia and Belarus on one side and Western countries including the United States and Germany on the other.

"Our organisation has undertaken a major mediation role in this exchange operation, which is the most comprehensive of the recent period," the National Intelligence Agency (MIT) said in a statement.

Both the Kremlin and the White House declined to comment when asked about a possible exchange.

Flight tracking site Flightradar24 showed that a special Russian government plane used for a previous prisoner swap involving the United States and Russia had flown from Moscow to the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, which borders Poland and Lithuania, before heading back to the Russian capital.

Reuters footage showed a Russian government plane on the ground in the Turkish capital Ankara.

Whelan and Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Russian-British dissident, both jailed in Russia, had suddenly disappeared from view in recent days, according to their lawyers.

Iranians gather for the funeral procession of assassinated Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Iran yesterday. The Islamic Republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led prayers for Haniyeh ahead of his burial in Qatar, having earlier threatened a "harsh punishment" for his killing.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

SHIP COLLISION

India govt summons Sri Lanka envoy

REUTERS, *Mumbai*

India summoned the Sri Lankan envoy yesterday to protest following a collision between one of its fishing boats and a Sri Lankan naval vessel that killed a fisherman, with a second missing, authorities said.

The collision took place 5 nautical miles north of Katchatheevu, an island at the focus of contention between the neighbours, although India ceded it to Sri Lanka 50 years ago. Indian fishermen are barred from the waters around the island.

"The government of India has always emphasised the need to deal with issues pertaining to fishermen in a humane and humanitarian manner," India's foreign ministry said.

Sri Lanka did not want an escalation of the issue and looking to work with India for a solution, Foreign Minister Ali Sabry told Reuters. "We understand this is about livelihoods and lives," he added.

HEAVY RAINS

Hundreds rescued from Himalayas in north India

12 people killed

REUTERS, *New Delhi*

Emergency workers rescued nearly 1,000 people who were stranded in different parts of the Himalayas following torrential rainfall in northern India, which caused widespread damage and left at least 12 people dead, officials said yesterday.

The capital Delhi received intense rainfall late on Wednesday, totalling 147 mm (5.8 inches) in eastern parts of the city and its suburbs, the India Meteorological Department said. At least seven people died in Delhi, according to local media.

Three people died and parts of two bridges washed away after a cloudburst in Uttarakhand state, officials said, and bad weather was hampering communications in the terrain.

Rescue workers saved over 1,000 people who were stranded in different locations on the Kedarnath route and a patch of the national highway was washed out, district official Saurabh Gaharwar said by phone.

ISRAELI OFFENSIVE IN GAZA

Destruction of water wells deepens misery

REUTERS, *Gaza*

Israel's military blew up more than 30 water wells in Gaza this month, a municipality official and residents said, adding to the trauma of airstrikes that have turned much of the Palestinian enclave into a wasteland ravaged by a humanitarian crisis.

Salama Shurab, head of the water networks at Khan Younis municipality, said the wells were destroyed by Israeli forces between July 18-27 in the southern towns of Rafah and Khan Younis.

The Israeli military did not respond to the allegations that its soldiers destroyed the wells.

It is not only ever-present danger from Israeli bombardment or ground fighting that makes life a trial for Gaza's Palestinian civilians. It is also the daily slog to find bare necessities such as water, to drink or cook or wash with.

People have dug wells in bleak areas near the sea where the bombing has pushed them, or rely on salty tap water from Gaza's only aquifer, now contaminated with seawater and sewage.

Children walk long distances to line up at makeshift water collection points. Often not strong enough to carry the filled containers, they drag them home on wooden boards.

Gaza City has lost nearly all its water production capacity, with 88 percent of its water wells and 100 percent of its desalination plants damaged or destroyed, Oxfam said in a recent report.

Palestinians were already facing a severe water crisis as well as shortages of food, fuel and medicine before the destruction of the wells, which has deepened the anguish brought on by the Gaza offensive, now in its 10th month.

COGAT, the branch of the Israeli military that manages humanitarian activities, told Reuters it has coordinated water line repairs with international organizations and "dozens" were done in the last month including one to the northern Gaza Strip.

Other work including power repairs at a desalination plant and construction of additional lines was under way.

Hamas fighters "have been known to attack civilian infrastructures and humanitarian aid routes, adding to the complexity and danger of delivering much-needed humanitarian aid to the region," COGAT said.

All Gazans can do is wait in long lines to collect water since US, Qatari and Egyptian mediators have failed to secure a ceasefire from Israel and its arch-foe Hamas. Not only is there a shortage of water, much of it is also contaminated.

"We stand in the sun, my eye hurts because of the sun, because we stand for long (hours) to (secure) water," said Youssef El-Shenawy, a Gaza resident.

Iran, allies plan joint retaliation against Israel

Say sources, analysts

AFP, *Beirut*

Iran and armed groups backed by it are preparing coordinated action meant to deter Israel but avert all-out war, sources and analysts said, after the killings of top Hamas and Hezbollah figures.

On Wednesday, Iranian officials met in Tehran with representatives of the so-called "axis of resistance" -- a loose alliance of Tehran-backed groups hostile to Israel -- to discuss retaliation for the deaths of Hamas's leader and Hezbollah's top military commander, said a source close to Lebanese group.

"Two scenarios were discussed: a simultaneous response from Iran and its allies or a staggered response from each party," the source who had been briefed on the meeting told AFP, requesting anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei threatened a "harsh punishment" for the killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, which the group blamed on Israel, also vowing revenge.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah was speaking yesterday at the funeral of Fuad Shukr, the group's top commander leading operations in Lebanon's south, where the group has been exchanging near-daily fire with Israel since the Gaza offensive began in October.

"There is a very strong likelihood that the response will be coordinated... among other resistance actors," said Amal Saad, a Hezbollah researcher and lecturer at Britain's Cardiff University.

Trump attacks Harris's racial identity

Says she opted to 'turn Black'

REUTERS, *Chicago*

US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump falsely suggested to the country's largest annual gathering of Black journalists on Wednesday that his Democratic rival Kamala Harris had previously downplayed her Black heritage.

"She was always of Indian heritage, and she was only promoting Indian heritage. I didn't know she was Black, until a number of years ago, when she happened to turn Black, and now she wants to be known as Black," Trump said, drawing a smattering of jeers from an audience of about 1,000 people.

"So I don't know, is she Indian or is she Black? Trump continued. "But you know what, I respect either one, but she obviously doesn't, because she was Indian all the way, and then all of a sudden she made a turn, and she went - she became a Black person."

Harris, who is of Indian and Jamaican heritage, has long self-identified as both Black and Asian. She is the first Black person and Asian American person to serve as vice president.

Hours after Trump's comments, Harris told members of the historically Black sorority Sigma Gamma Rho gathered in Houston that his remarks were "yet another reminder" of what the four years under the former president looked like.

ONE DAY, THE POOR WILL HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO EAT BUT THE RICH OPPRESSORS
JOIN THE MOVEMENT #FIGHT FOR BETTER NIGERIA
THIS HUNGER IS TOO MUCH
ALL ANTI NEOLIBERAL OF PRIVATIS DEREGULATION
GOODWINE NEEDS
Stop Corp

Demonstrators gather as they participate in an anti-government demonstration to protest against bad governance and economic hardship in Abuja, Nigeria yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

বাংলাদেশ উন্নয়ন গবেষণা প্রতিষ্ঠান
BANGLADESH INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

নং-২০.০৮.০০০০.২০০.১১.০০৩.২৪.১৪৯

তারিখঃ ১৫ শ্রাবণ ১৪৩১
৩০ জুলাই ২০২৪

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ উন্নয়ন গবেষণা প্রতিষ্ঠানে (বিআইডিএস) 'প্রধান প্রকাশনা কর্মকর্তার' ১টি স্থায়ী পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে নিম্নবর্ণিত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশি নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে-

পদের নাম	সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, অভিজ্ঞতা এবং বয়স	(জাতীয় বেতনস্কেল, ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী)
প্রধান প্রকাশনা কর্মকর্তা	০১	বিশেষ করিয়া গবেষণা অথবা শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানস্থ পাবলিকেশন/ইনফরমেশন ডিভিশন বা শাখায় প্রথম শ্রেণীর কর্মকর্তা হিসাবে ৮ বৎসরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ মাসকমিউনিকেশন/সাংবাদিকতা/পাবলিক রিলেশনস্ অথবা এক্সটেনশন এডুকেশনে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উন্নত ডিগ্রী। ইংরেজী বা বাংলা ভাষা সম্পর্কিত বিশুদ্ধ জ্ঞান এবং একইভাবে প্রকাশনা, সম্পাদনা এবং মুদ্রণ সম্পর্কিত জ্ঞান থাকা আবশ্যক। অথবা সাংবাদিকতা/পাবলিক রিলেশনস/এক্সটেনশন এডুকেশন এর যে কোন শাখায় বিদেশী স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রী অথবা বিশেষ করিয়া একটি গবেষণা বা শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানস্থ পাবলিকেশন অফিসার বা ইনফরমেশন অফিসার হিসাবে ৬ বৎসরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ সামাজিক বিজ্ঞানে দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণীর এম.এ. অর্থনীতি বা ইংরেজী সাহিত্য অগ্রগণ্য। প্রিন্টিং পাবলিকেশন বিষয়ে একটি বিদেশী ডিপ্লোমা অতিরিক্ত যোগ্যতা বলিয়া গণ্য হইবে। **বয়সঃ** সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা ৪৫ বৎসর, তবে অভ্যন্তরীণ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে শিথিলযোগ্য।	গ্রেড-৬: ৩৫৫০০-৬৭০১০/- এবং তৎসহ বিধি অনুযায়ী প্রদেয় অন্যান্য ভাতা।

ক) ০১ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখে আবেদনকারীর বয়স, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র নম্বর, পরীক্ষায় পাশের প্রাপ্ত বিভাগ/শ্রেণী/জিপিএ/পাশের সন উল্লেখপূর্বক পূর্ণাঙ্গ জীবনবৃত্তান্ত সম্বলিত আবেদনপত্র, সম্প্রতি তোলা ০৩ কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবি, সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদপত্র, নাগরিকত্ব সনদ, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র ও অন্যান্য অভিজ্ঞতার সনদের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি আগামী ০১ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে **সচিব, বাংলাদেশ উন্নয়ন গবেষণা প্রতিষ্ঠান (বিআইডিএস), ই-১৭, আগারগাঁও, শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭** এই ঠিকানায় পৌঁছাতে হবে।
খ) আবেদনপত্রের সাথে **"সচিব, বাংলাদেশ উন্নয়ন গবেষণা প্রতিষ্ঠান, ঢাকা"** শিরোনামে অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, প্রধান শাখা, ঢাকা এর অনুকূলে ৫০০/- টাকার পে-অর্ডার/ডিডি (অফেরতযোগ্য) দাখিল করতে হবে।
গ) অসম্পূর্ণ ও ত্রুটিপূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
ঘ) সরকারি/আধাসরকারি/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে চাকরিরত প্রার্থীকে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে।
ঙ) আবেদনপত্র বাছাইয়ের পর কেবল উপযুক্ত বিবেচিত প্রার্থীদের লিখিত পরীক্ষায় ডাকা হবে।
চ) খামের উপর বামপাশে আবেদনকৃত পদের নাম উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
ছ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোনো আবেদনপত্র/নিয়োগ প্রক্রিয়া বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।
জ) নির্দিষ্ট তারিখের পর প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র বিবেচনা করা হবে না।
ঝ) কোনো তথ্য গোপন করা বা ভুল তথ্য প্রদান করে চাকরিতে নিয়োগপ্রাপ্ত হলে সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রার্থীর নিয়োগাদেশ বাতিল করা হবে এবং তার বিরুদ্ধে আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

সুবাস চন্দ্র সাহা
সচিব (চলতি দায়িত্ব)

GD-102

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Legal manoeuvring can't hide ugly truths

Free all detained students, protesters without delay

The manner in which the government has dealt with the whole issue of the six coordinators of quota reform protests has legal irregularities written all over it. The six were finally released on Thursday afternoon, after nearly a week since being picked up between last Friday and Sunday. All through this period, top law and police officers defended it by using words that seemed carefully scripted. Even on Thursday, the law minister claimed that the six were kept in custody for their own security, and that it was they who had sought protection. But no one is buying it anymore. Legal experts have clarified that the safety claim, putting the onus on the detainees, is a cover for what was actually an abduction by police, which is illegal and unconstitutional. Citing the Appellate Division's guidelines, they said any detainee must be produced before court within 24 hours, which was not done in this case.

We have seen a similar legal manoeuvring in the case of the teenager detained in connection with the death of student protester Abu Sayed. The 16-year-old, Alfi Shahriar Mahim, was apparently not even present at the site of the killing. But police still arrested him for murder, leading to him being held in Rangpur jail for 12 days. The manner in which police approached the whole issue—from bringing false charges against a minor to inflating his age in case documents to preparing a First Information Report (FIR) that totally contradicted with independently verified footages of police repeatedly shooting Abu Sayed, despite the victim posing no threat—indicates that they may go to any lengths to cover their tracks and absolve themselves of any responsibility for the nationwide killings that occurred since July 16.

Reportedly, Shahriar Mahim has now been released, even though he hasn't been cleared of the charges against him. Elsewhere, there has been a conspicuous silence from the otherwise vocal student leaders throughout their detention and afterwards (the only statement they made was through an alleged two-day hunger strike that preceded their release). What does their plight tell us about the integrity of the law enforcement officials? What does it say about the future of the nearly 11,000 people arrested in 673 cases across the country over the last 14 days? These mass arrests and the tenuous legal justifications provided for them make a mockery of our justice system. They also show that, despite recent government claims about being open to a fair and thorough investigation into the killings of so many people in quota-related clashes, the authorities are still unwilling to pursue accountability where it is most needed: its own security forces.

This has to stop. Legal manoeuvring can no longer hide ugly truths or delude citizens. While we want accountability for the destruction and damage caused to public infrastructure by some elements, we believe the investigative focus must singularly be on establishing accountability for those tragic deaths at the moment. And the higher authorities must prove their sincerity by immediately stopping the pointless mass arrests, releasing all victims of legal harassment, especially students and political activists, and aid in the process of investigating the role of security forces during the violent events of July 18-21.

Education suffering like never before

Its impact on the nation's future may be devastating

The ongoing disruption to school and university education and the resulting cancellation of public and school exams are deeply concerning. The government shut down all schools, colleges, and universities on July 16 as tensions began to mount following the crackdown on student protesters by members of ruling party affiliated groups and law enforcement personnel. However, activities at public universities have remained halted since July 1, when teachers went on work abstention to demand reinstatement of their previous pension scheme, followed by students against quota discrimination taking to the streets. As a result of these closures, the academic lives of students across the country have become mired in uncertainty.

It should be recalled that education across the board had been greatly affected for more than a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Experts say the setback suffered during that time is yet to be made up for. On top of that, during the first half of this year, classroom activities had already been disturbed because of heatwaves, flooding, and elections. Educationists have repeatedly expressed the need for the authorities to put greater emphasis on recovering from the learning loss caused by the pandemic. But even before that could be done, recent developments have hindered education again.

Admission tests for the cluster of nine agricultural universities for this academic year, scheduled to be held on July 20, have been postponed, along with admission procedures at other universities. And the same has happened in school admissions, too. The HSC and all equivalent exams, scheduled between July 18 and August 1, have had to be suspended. Similarly, half-year exams at secondary schools could not be held on time, along with other important activities, throwing the whole academic calendar into disarray. The education loss that is occurring as a result, coupled with the uncertainty being brought to the lives of young people, are simply impossible to measure. However, their long-term implication for the nation would likely be devastating.

Therefore, the authorities urgently need to create an environment in which schools and universities can reopen, ensuring the safety of all students. This will require all forms of harassment, intimidation and use of violence against our students to stop. Having done that, the government should consult with educationists and experts and figure out a way to recover the huge learning loss that students have had to suffer from since the beginning of the pandemic. Moreover, the government should also talk to the protesting teachers, and ensure they return to classes as soon as possible.

Mindless killing changed everything

Blinded by unquestioned power, the government is refusing to accept the new reality

THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam
is the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

MAHFUZ ANAM

The prime minister and several ministers keep on asking: since the quota reform has already been implemented, why are the students still demonstrating? The repetition of this question only proves how blind to facts and disconnected with the people the government and Awami League leaders are. They are denying or seem to be oblivious to the fact that over 200 killed—the government itself admits to 150—and thousands injured by the indiscriminate firing by the police and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has totally changed the situation. In one eye hospital in Dhaka, during the violence, nearly 400 people who sustained eye injuries were treated, 300 of whom had to be admitted, and 250 had to undergo eye surgery. The majority of them had pellet (a particular type of ammunition used by police during the recent violence) wounds in one or both eyes. Imagine what the total figure could be like. We have no count yet of how many will have to amputate one or both arms or legs due to gunshots, and how many more will have to be operated upon. How many will really return to normal life? Everything points to mindless violence that cannot be termed as police action to quell unrest that emanates from usual demonstrations in our part of the world. The evidence is of a mindset of "shoot at sight," as announced by an AL leader.

Today's issue is seeking justice. Justice for the massacre of students and other citizens, the unleashing of a killing machine that the police and BGB turned out to be, the large-scale arrests, the "block raids," the house-to-house search, the false cases, and the insults of terming the demonstrators in general to be agents of destruction and anti-Bangladesh forces.

The all-encompassing issue that has alienated the students and enraged the people is the atmosphere of fear under which all students, youth, politically involved citizens, and people in general are having to live. (A father called this author and said, "I have a school-going son. I become tense with every sound of a car stopping near my house at night".)

The killings definitely stand as the most brutal retaliation by a government on any civic movement in the post-liberation Bangladesh history—and may be that of the subcontinent.

POLICE
BGB
BGB

It must be investigated as to what led to such a large-scale killing in the hands of law enforcers.
PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

We shudder at the thought of how a civilian government could allow its law enforcers to attack its own people with such brutality. The killing was not just an event, but one that took place over several days. Wasn't there any reflection, any afterthought and reassessment at the end of the first, second or third day that such heartless and continuous killing of one's own people must stop?

What brought the party that led us during the Liberation War to this? Over 15 years of unaccountable power, greed, cronyism, wealth accumulation, abuse of authority, and the attitude that they are above the law.

Of all the deaths, the most heart-rending is perhaps the story of Riya Gope, a six-year-old in Nayamati, Narayanganj, who was playing on the rooftop of their four-storey building. On July 19 afternoon, when police started firing on the demonstrators on the street near her house, her father Dipak Kumar Gope rushed to the roof to get her; he was carrying his daughter back to their flat when a bullet struck the child's head. She died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) on July 25. How could a bullet hit someone on the roof of a four-storey building unless the police took an aim to do so? Was Riya a threat? The explanation will most likely be that it was an accident. But can that be acceptable when she was in her father's arms on the roof of a four-storey building?

Use of helicopters to fire sound grenades and tear gas shells is a new element we saw in crowd-handling by the law enforcers this time around. However, there are disturbing accounts from the public, reporters and especially photographers that rifle shots were fired from these helicopters upon demonstrating crowds. On July 18 and 19, around mid-morning, helicopters hovered over Mayor Hanif Flyover, Shanir Akhra, Kajla and Signboard areas, sometimes sweeping down as they flew and fired on the crowd gathered below. These helicopters were clearly marked with the insignia of our law enforcers.

The case of Sumaiya Akter in Narayanganj adds credibility to this claim. She was 20 years old and the mother of a healthy two-month-old daughter. Hearing the sound of the helicopter and that of the clashes going on outside, following her mother, Sumaiya ventured out to the veranda of her sixth floor apartment to see what was going on. She got hit by a live bullet and died soon after. Where could the bullet come from? Given the height and the location of the apartment, the most likely possibility is that the shot came from a helicopter, as claimed by her family. This gives substance to claims by many others that they saw gunshots coming from helicopters.

How can a protesting crowd be fired upon from the air by their own government? Firing from helicopters is known to occur only when operating in an "enemy" territory or a location captured by armed terrorists. How can our own BGB or Rab or police fire upon our own people in such a manner?

We demand a credible and thorough investigation on the use of helicopters and their firing on demonstrators. While the judicial investigation to probe all deaths should continue, a separate and fast-track probe must be conducted to reveal the truth on this specific matter.

It must also be investigated as to what led to such a large-scale killing in the hands of law enforcers. Who made the threat assessment, and how? At what stage were they allowed to open fire on demonstrators, and who gave the orders to shoot? The rifles used were all modern and sophisticated. BGB used weapons meant to protect our borders. How could they be allowed to tackle student demonstrators with the same weapons? The investigation should also consider whether or not excessive force and disproportionate firepower were used against the demonstrators, none of whom have so far been seen to carry firearms. They were all carrying sticks and iron rods.

It is our considered view that the government and the ruling party continue to live in their own bubble and underestimate the depth of the people's grievances that has resulted from the killings of students and the public. We also feel that peace will not return to the campuses and the streets until justice is done and convincingly seen to be done. Force can be used to "calm" the situation, but it will be temporary. The lengthier the period of uncertainty, the more grievous will be its impact on our economy and the country's international acceptability.

Those who are used to using power to get their way are usually not aware of its limits. We have used Ansar, police, Rab, BGB and even the army, and an extreme measure like curfew. What has been the result? Yes, brutality, death, arrests and harassment can be further ratcheted up. But all that will generate more resentment, deeper hatred, and critical desperation. Such use of force may, at best, show a superficial show of calm, but will never solve our real problem of "power corrupting and absolute power corrupting absolutely" (adopting Lord Acton's time-honoured observation).

We urge the government to no longer hide behind convenient narratives that stand totally contradicted by facts. We further urge them to examine the brutality with which the demonstrators have been treated and the death and injuries that ordinary students and the people have had to suffer, and respond to the call for justice. We also urge them to stop befooling themselves as facts are in people's hands due to modern technology. Yes, there could be a lot of false news and videos in the digital sphere. But there are many credible ones too. Wisdom should compel the government not to brush them aside, which it will do only at its own peril.

Are we failing to understand Gen Z?

Mamun Rashid
is chairman at Financial Excellence Ltd.

MAMUN RASHID

The generation of people born from 1995 to 2010 are commonly called Generation Z (Gen Z), following the alphabetical naming of their predecessors two generations prior, Generation X (Gen X). These young people are characteristically blunt and more aware of their rights with regards to what the market or society has to offer. Gen Z has long held a reputation for being attached to the virtual screen. In fact, for most Gen Z parents, screen time has been a growing concern as uncontrolled exposure to media has resulted in a disconnect from reality—or so we thought.

These "screenagers" have held a principal role in the quota reform movement. They have been successful in mobilising the entire nation's student body, the Bangladeshi diaspora, the generational parents and even the rickshaw pullers in fighting for their cause. So, maybe it's for us to take a fresh look at the Gen Z.

These young people have been using social media platforms, most notably Instagram, TikTok and YouTube from a much earlier age than their previous generations. In fact, 58 percent of surveyed teenagers expressed that they could not stay more than four hours without the internet, while older generations can stay up to 24 hours. This statistic makes internet reliance seem like a weakness for Gen Z, but upon close examination, the habits developed out of this excessive rate of internet usage can be appreciated. With the advent of social media and the generation that has adapted to it, discourse has increased, alongside awareness. This is important because, unlike previous generations, Gen Z uses the internet as a bidirectional platform, where you not only consume but also create. They use this bidirectionality to their advantage by promoting their chosen narrative.

The ability to quickly create content that caters directly to their chosen audience was once a skill that only marketing professionals had. The rise of TikTok and Instagram reels has transferred this skill to every Gen Z member with a mobile phone. Gen Z Bangladeshis have used this specific ability to draw attention to their campaign and bring in international actors to the discourse. Their growing familiarity with internet resources allows them to find relevant contacts, write relevant emails and generate responses when necessary. Hence, their activism has taken a far different shape and can reverberate throughout the population far quicker than before. They also receive and process information faster, which has both its advantages and disadvantages.

The biggest disadvantage is the creation of echo chambers where like-minded Gen Z come together to support each other and increase the strength of their opinion which is hard to breach. The advantage is that when this opinion becomes incredibly strong, it pours out of the echo chamber and takes the form of a movement like the quota reform movement. The constant access to information not only keeps them informed but also motivates them.

> **The biggest disadvantage is the creation of echo chambers where like-minded Gen Z come together to support each other and increase the strength of their opinion which is hard to breach. The advantage is that when this opinion becomes incredibly strong, it pours out of the echo chamber and takes the form of a movement like the quota reform movement.**

Gen Z has now developed their own form of communication, including new words that remain largely foreign to older generations. This creates a disconnect between them and older generations—including lawmakers, politicians and people in power. But it cannot be avoided that this generation appears to be more informed and more actionable in their own right. So, their concerns surrounding different matters cannot be taken lightly. In fact, their insights might prove to be most useful in future development-related decisions.

Gen Z in Bangladesh and worldwide have expressed deep concerns with regard to issues such as mental health and climate change, both of which need to be taken seriously. They are already mobilising policy discourses on social media through activist groups that create discussion online without requiring a physical organisation or entity. The marketing world and even policymakers across the developed world are increasingly taking cognisance of their emerging choices and priorities. The same should be happening in Bangladesh.

This generation also has a fresh take on established ideas, such as creating work-space cafes to motivate student's learning which can take on conglomerates such as leading coffee chains in the near future. Their predominantly risk-taking nature has allowed them to introduce upcycling and thrifting culture in Bangladesh, which was previously unheard of in the country. Most notably, this risk-taking nature is not simply a characteristic that fades as the generation ages, which is more apparent than ever. In fact, backed by experience and good judgement, their ideas are worthwhile investments.

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Politics has to change to cure Bangladesh of economic ills

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BISHAKHA DEVNATH

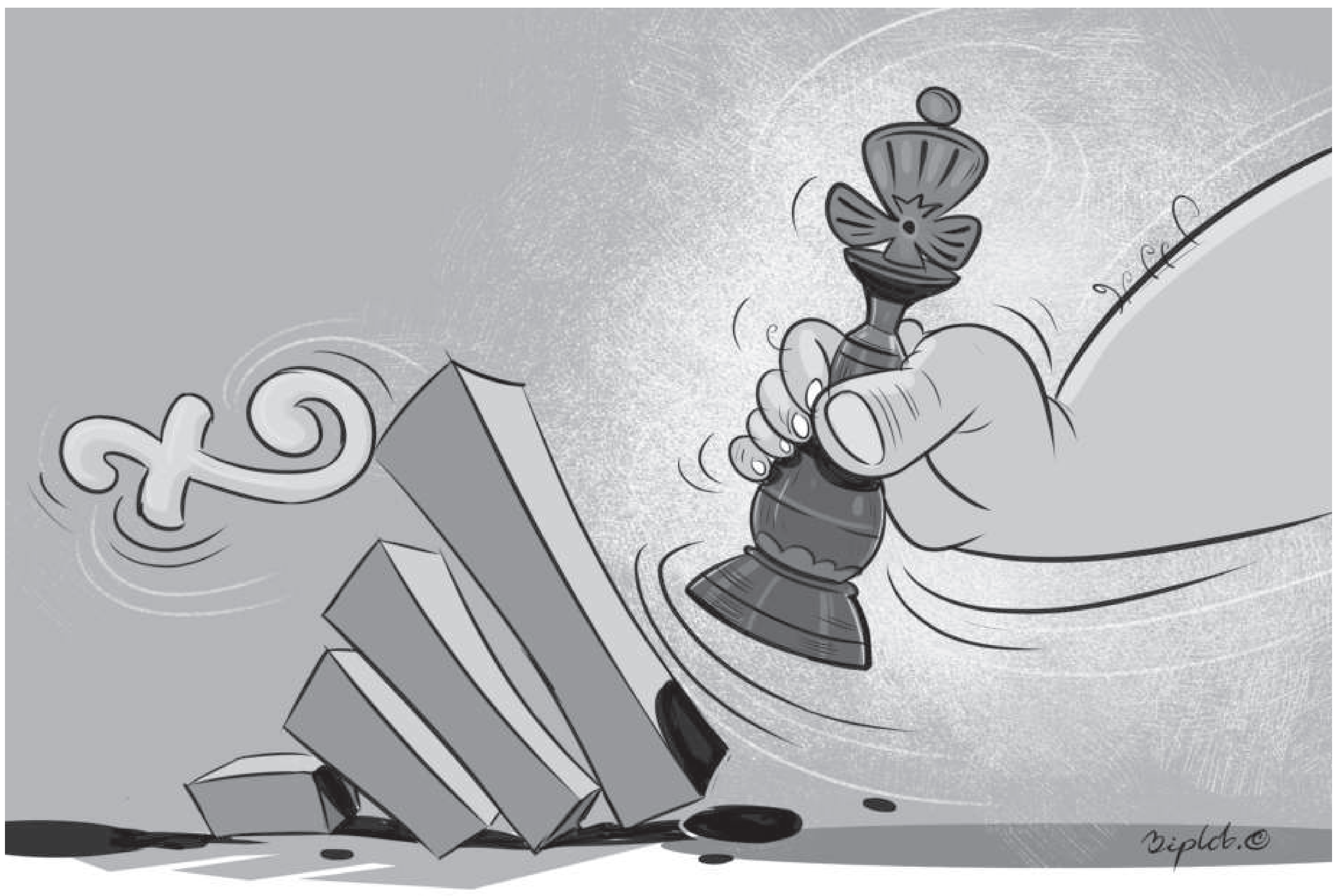


ILLUSTRATION: **BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY**

What is good politics for a party, or any party, may not result in good economics. The ruling class in Bangladesh will ridicule this concern, referring to the remarkable economic growth the country has boasted for more than a decade. If the growth in GDP is all that matters, then the discontent shown on the streets and social media platforms is hard to explain. The privileged, who have been exploiting the status quo and would like to ensure it never ends, have an explanation though. They say those who are aggrieved are a small group of opponents of national development.

Is that so? No. Since the demonstrations of disagreement on politics, as it is now in Bangladesh, and policies adopted to regulate everything from politics, law and order, and economy, have been directly or indirectly punished, whenever tracked down, people seek out alternative routes to let out their anger. That is why students, who still have years before joining the workforce, and adults who have long passed the age to apply for government jobs, joined the protesters demanding reforms to the quota system in public recruitment. That's how they became part of the mass rather than people who could be singled out.

However, anyone living in the cocoon of power should have felt the heat of public discontent, if they wanted to, long ago. It is just around the corner at roadside tea stalls in conversations between people worried about income prospects, soaring living expenses, and threats of losing everything to the unfair and biased system.

Prof Anu Muhammad once said the money spent on roads, bridges, and flyovers also drives up GDP, but that may not be translated into better economic well-being of the people. An economy is only successful when the growth in economic output touches all equally, irrespective of their social statuses and connections to political, legal, and economic institutions of the country.

Is this the case in Bangladesh? The answer lies in the corruption status of the country revealed by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in January this year. It earned a score of 24 on a scale of 100, according to the Corruption Perception Index 2023. The score is the country's lowest in 12 years and the second worst after Afghanistan in 2023. TIB says that the state institutions responsible for curbing corruption are "under political and bureaucratic influence."

The misuse or abuse of power has a manifestation almost in every small and big industry, the equity market, and even in kitchen markets. The market overall seems to have gone under the control of a few who can influence the state machinery and political and economic institutions to their benefit.

Hence, the government's zero-tolerance-against-corruption stance reiterated in almost every public speech seems nothing but phoney.

Now what happens when those who are being ruled do not trust the ruler? They do not invest their capital to launch or expand a business, fearing everything will be taken away by those who can exercise power. Those who do not have capital feel hopeless about any prospects of elevating their living standards without access to political power. So, they do not consider exploring opportunities, if there are any, to improve their skills, because better skills mostly go in vain when bribery and lobbying play a bigger role in employment and entrepreneurship.

This is the context against which hundreds of thousands of people are leaving this country through illegal sea channels to reach the shores of the European nations, the Middle East, Malaysia, China, and the US, though the risks are well-known, as they are extensively reported by the media, NGOs, and INGOs. In fact, in 2023, the number of such migrants to European countries surged 10 percent to 337,008 from the year before, and in 2022 it escalated 58 percent year-on-year, according to The European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

Illegal migration spiked at a time of praiseworthy GDP growth.

There are reasons, such as climate change and lack of jobs, but those who are giving Tk 5 lakh to Tk 10 lakh, sometimes even more, to migration rackets, by selling ancestral properties or borrowing from unconventional sources at sky-high interest rates, could also think of opening a small business in their upazilas, districts or cities. They don't. The risk of crossing the Mediterranean Sea does not seem as great as overcoming the barriers put in place by law enforcement agencies and relevant authorities to get clearance for a small business. And then the regulatory bodies would keep on twisting the arm of the small investors to get whatever they want.

There are blatant examples within our range of visibility. We, residents of Dhaka, are so familiar with small roadside shops being vandalised every few months, but that is not done to free roads but to extort money before vendors return to the same place with new unofficial permits. One fruit vendor once told me he was tired of setting up his business again and again. So, he decided to try his luck in the Middle East.

People like him fall victim to exploitation again when looking for jobs overseas, by the people who have power, connections, and who can get away with any wrongdoing. The victims do not get justice because the legal system is also under the influence of those who have money and power. As TIB said, the allegedly corrupt keep enjoying unabated protection and even get rewarded.

The migrants become the lifeline of Bangladesh's economy while most of them leave their families behind, not to find a better life but to survive with deep resentment for the unjust political and economic institutions back home. However, the institutions want them to play their due role so they can thrive without any constraints.

Given a chance, though, migrants would just look away and would be busy building their lives elsewhere in another part of the world. Those who can afford that do that, but those who have loved ones, languishing in the corrupt system, send money home.

The government's rhetoric about its development works does not change the reality. The growth has catered to the greed of a small segment of the people, living at the top of society. Those in the middle have got a slice of the pie when those at the top used them to their advantage. The rest have acted as spectators in the game.

This has to change. Unfair economic growth is not sustainable without the participation of the larger population. Signs of that have already emerged. The flow of remittance through legal channels has shrunk, foreign direct investments have plummeted, and money laundering has escalated—by those who would like to park up their illegally-earned money somewhere safe and also by those who fear expropriation of their hard-earned money.

All of these are inimical to national growth in a real sense. For that, politics and economics, dominated by politics, have to change. Fair political and legal systems are prerequisites for fair economic institutions that would support everyone to grow within their potential and abilities. Unless and until that happens, the voices of the repressed would only amplify, may get subdued at times by pressure of state machinery, but would flare up again on the path to culmination.

Surrealism and dark arts: Leaving citizens behind

Dr Geof Wood
is a development anthropologist and author of several books and numerous journal articles, with a regional focus on South Asia. He is also emeritus professor of international development at the University of Bath, UK.

GEOF WOOD

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Keir Starmer pledges to stabilise UK as Labour win huge majority on July 5, 2024.

The British Labour Party has just won an important parliamentary election in early July more by careful targeting of seats than popular acclamation, reinforced by despair with the Tories' record, enabling the Tory-lite Liberal Democrats to pick off Tory-safe seats, while the Tory anti-immigrant, ultra-right (the newly formed Reform Party) appealed to lingering xenophobia from the Johnson-Sunak era. Full disclosure: I am a member of the British Labour Party, concerned about its pre-election trimming of principles, opting for pragmatism in order to give hope a chance. It has been a conflicted place to be in—for example, over Gaza and capping the number of children of poor families who can receive benefits.

Those of us to the left of British politics have had a torrid 14 years since Autumn 2010. The fragility of social democracy has been exposed by the variegated forces of the established ultra-right, which have tempted the British public into their conspiratorial dreams of individuated freedoms. Trump's Project 2025 in the US is similar.

The cultural prerequisites of populism en route to fascism have been evident across our walks of life. Restless egotists, having personally accumulated via underregulated banking, corrupted capitalism, rent-seeking on a grand scale through preferential state contracts and tax evasion (significantly off-shore), seek to consolidate their newfound privileges via the temporary necessity of winning popular support until they do not have to bother any more. The winning of that support entailed finding an enemy of the people, othering them and heaping upon them the causes of all ills. In Britain, these restless egotists, acting straight from the fascist playbook, have not yet fully settled upon their bête noire. For a hidden some, it is still the Jews—a disguised target of the inherent racism of the right though falsely attributed by the right to the inclusive left.

Additionally for the right, all Muslims are tagged as militant Islamicists. Asylum seekers and immigrants are cast in the same light. The definition of "extremism" was continuously widened by the Tory government and used as the basis of exclusion from policy forums and crackdowns on protesters, forgetting that the Tory party has its own share of extremists, racists, and misogynists. Another potential target was anyone who, being relaxed about others' identities, was labelled as members of the woke culture. These targets for othering continue to be "tested" in the marketplace, with the owners and controllers of populist media hard at work experimenting with what trope will work best with a poor and insecure populace.

We resembled the Weimar Republic: our polity daily fragmented into millenarian factions seeking the support of the desperately alienated with nowhere to go. The mobilisation of hatred and blame. Brexit became an amalgam of othering. A lumping together of ghosts and shadows, like Don Quixote tilting at windmills with the support of Sancho Panza, more concerned about his next meal, just like a significant proportion of the UK population. Devotees of a freedom, but only for those who ironically desire to oppress others via negative labelling and violence—culture wars. The comfortable patrician and officer classes making way for the boorish corporals, as the new line of defence for Ponzi capitalism—beer in public, champagne in private. In the Weimar Republic, people stood quietly by, hoping their time as a target of such hate would not come, but it did. And as it will again in the US if a "wounded" Trump pulls off the election in November. That discourse remains in the UK, too, as we cower and listen to the latest oral atrocities of the Reform Party—our latest incarnation of the uber-right.

The Tories persisted with dark arts until their collapse at the polls, announcing another budget last spring. Facing the prospect of defeat, in how many ways could they sabotage the future over which the Labour Party might preside? Who cares about the people? On the back of rising inequality and poverty, the votes of those frightened but clinging to exploitative work matter: so, bring in the "appearance" of tax cuts for such "working" families while taxes and mortgages have actually risen.

During the election, the Tories accused Labour of seeking to increase income tax, having themselves raised it to its highest point historically. This "tax scare" tactic was used throughout the election through the honeyed words of "hard-working families" needing more of their own money, while duped voters flounder as public services are further cut despite warnings even from the neo-liberal IMF. With Labour long signalling the removal of non-dom tax avoidance to divert 3.6 billion pounds to the NHS and school meals, the Tories then parked their tanks on Labour's lawn with their own non-dom proposal riddled with loopholes in order to fund populist tax cuts, even though the polls indicated the maintenance of public services is preferred. With such cynicism, no wonder support for the Tories came down to 24 percent of a low turnout, itself the dangerous sign of an alienated society.

Free and fair elections are no longer sacred in the UK either. The Tories worked hard on voter suppression within the UK by insisting there is widespread fraud, especially among Labour-voting Muslim areas apparently, thus requiring formal ID in the polling booth, which inhibits the poor—an estimated 400,000 denied the vote. Meanwhile, they extended the franchise to three million overseas expats who seek to escape UK taxes, banking on their bizarre pro-Brexit preferences!

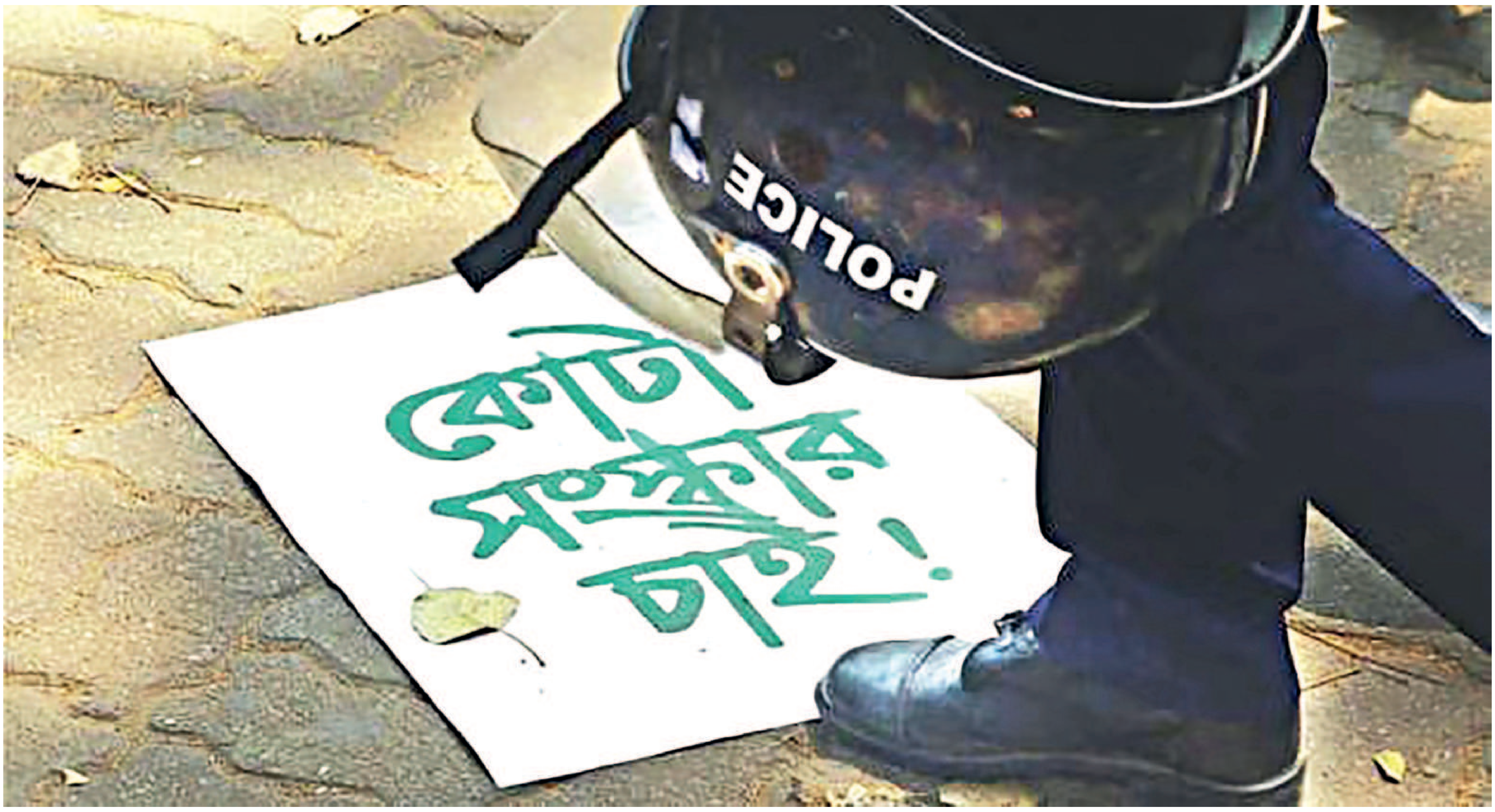
During Covid, the Tory leadership behaved like Italy's Christian Democrats and the mafia in the past by fast-tracking PPE contracts through personal "VIP lanes" for their mates to make millions and then contribute as donors to Tory election coffers. Before this, they attempted to bypass the parliament by illegally proroguing it in order to use a statutory instrument for the hardest version of Brexit.

Strangely, these advocates of sovereignty had no compunctions of undermining it when it suited. And when the UK Supreme Court ruled on the illegality of their manoeuvre, supporters in the tabloid press owned by Tory donors headlined the judges as "enemies of the people." Also, they sought to extract the UK from international human rights treaties (some originally drafted by the UK) in order to remove asylum seekers to Rwanda as a deterrent to UK entry, and to separate families of visa seekers and to remove citizenship from long-term residents, e.g., from the Caribbean, without appeal. Meanwhile, such asylum seekers were corralled into camps, denied an opportunity to work and, ironically, to pay taxes. When challenged, the Tories used their "elected dictatorship" to legislate that Rwanda is a safe haven with a good human rights record (so not a deterrent then?) in defiance of another Supreme Court judgment! The laws to quash protests, e.g., environment, have become draconian. This list of activity from neo-fascist playbook can be extended. How should we think about it?

Some observers have referred to 14 years of Tory policy as planned penury, shifting more of the population to insecurity and reliance on voluntarism. Some concluding facts for the day of the election (July 4): the UK government debt was highest as percent of GDP since the 1960s; eight million waiting for health treatment for 18-52 weeks; four million children in poverty households; lowest rate of aggregate economic growth since 1948 and worse per capita; business investment almost 10 percent lower than the rest of G7 countries; fall of UK goods trade below G7 since Brexit by 15 percent; UK tax revenues as share of GDP highest since World War II; real average weekly earnings in 2023 below their 2003 peak (under Labour); almost three million food bank parcels given out in a year up to March 2023 (higher now); high economic inactivity including a surge in long-term sickness now to a record high of 2.8 million; inflation up to 11 percent last year, reduced to two percent for the election and likely to rise again; mortgages on family homes up by hundreds and even thousands of pounds a month; energy prices at record highs; local government authorities filing for bankruptcy, at least seven so far, due to cuts in central funding for statutory adult and child care; local council tax to rise by 4.5 percent, funded at the household level by alleged tax cuts on income; reduction in capital gains tax (i.e., for the rich) down from 28 to 24 percent (Labour now revising this); increase in licences for North Sea oil and gas extraction (now revoked, though a disastrous "pipeline" of agreed projects remains); new gas-fired power stations approved, and Tories fighting off a protest against a new coal mine; completion of new rail infrastructure in London, while cancelling links to England's northern cities; and a drastic reduction in UK overseas aid.

Only space prevents me from continuing this litany of failure, which sustains the Tory need for othering racial and ethnic minorities and immigrants alongside its "culture" wars.

I simply ask: in what sense was the UK, under the Tories for the last 14 years, a role model for anywhere? Believe it or not, it remains a rich society, the sixth richest economy globally. But only for its top two quintiles. Under the Tories, the emperor lost its clothes—if it ever had any. Its international rhetoric of "leave no one behind" is a hollow slogan at home. And now a Tory leadership race is seeking to leave more of the UK population behind.



RIGHTS WATCH

On the disproportionate use of force on protests

Especially when an unarmed or lightly armed person is killed, it is deemed to be disproportionate. Furthermore, it needs to be remembered that right of self-defence is not a right of the attacker but rather of the victim, which does not apply to the law enforcement agencies in most situations.

RAFID AZAD SAUMIK

The reason we have law enforcement agencies in modern states is to protect the rights of the citizens. However, when disproportionate force is used against the citizens by states using these agencies, the very same rights are violated. Below is an analysis keeping the quota reform movement in the background.

Freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are fundamental rights as per our Constitution under articles 37 and 39, and also under our international obligations *e.g.*, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Restrictions may be imposed on such rights but they have to be reasonable, objective, and proportionate.

Under section 128 of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898 (CrPC), the law enforcement agencies may disperse an assembly by force. However, the amount of force needs to be proportionate to the circumstance of each particular case (*Queen-Empress* v *Subba Naik And Ors*, 1898). Evidently, if a protester is shot (even with a rubber bullet) when he/she is keeping his/her arms open expressing anger towards the inhumane response of the law enforcement, it cannot be regarded as a proportionate response.

The law enforcement agency may argue that they are justified in using such force as self-defence. However, the fourth paragraph of section 99 of the Penal Code 1860 (PC) clearly emphasises the requirements of necessity and proportionality. Especially when an unarmed or lightly armed person is killed, it is deemed to be disproportionate (*State of U.P.* v *Ram Swarup*, 1974). Furthermore, it needs to be remembered that right of self-defence is not a right of the attacker but rather of the victim, which does not apply to the law enforcement agencies in most situations.

Additionally, police may use force to effect arrest of the protesters, which is allowed under section 46 of the CrPC. However, judicial interpretations of this provision again shows that the actions of the police need to comply with the requirements of necessity and proportionality (*Dakhi Singh* v *State*, 1955). Section 46(3) also prohibits the causing of death while using such force unless the person is accused of an offence punishable with death or imprisonment for life. It needs to be noted that the Police Regulations Bengal 1943 (PRB) in regulation no. 154, 155 mention similar requirements.

Next, coming to the question of criminal liability and legal defences, criminal charges under sections 302, 304, 323, 325, etc of the Penal Code can be brought against law enforcement officers for causing deaths and injuries to peaceful protesters. Section 132 of CrPC makes the job difficult as it restricts the option to initiate prosecution against such person without the sanction of the government. Even if prosecution is initiated against the responsible officers, the same provision mentions the 'good faith' and 'superior order' defences. As for the good faith defence, it requires due care and attention, and as for the 'superior order' defence, it cannot be pleaded when the order is manifestly illegal.

Moreover, the legal defences under sections 76 and 79 of the PC of 'believing in good faith to be bound by law' and 'believing in good faith to be justified by law' also do not apply when the law enforcement agencies could not have reasonably believed that they were obligated to or justified in using such disproportionate force that result in deaths (*Jahir Mia and Islam Howlader* v *State* 13 DLR 857).

But only putting all the blame on the subordinate police officers is unfair and ineffective. The superior police officers who enable and allow such acts can be held responsible as well as abettors. The legal defences for them should fail when the acts that cause large number of deaths and injuries are not the result of a mere mistake of fact in good faith but rather utter disregard to the principle of proportionality.

At times, attacks and use of force befall on protesters from non-state individuals or political activists. Needless to mention that there is absolutely no legal justification of such attacks when attackers are not part of the law enforcement force and have no authority to interfere with protests and assemblies. Furthermore, attacks, killings and human rights violations often also come as results of continuous dehumanisation, incitement to violence, and acts of abetment in the online sphere. Such acts clearly constitute offences under sections 25, 31, etc. of the (infamous) Cyber Security Act 2023 and other laws.

Lastly, in addition to criminal remedies, constitutional remedy is also available under Articles 44 and 102 of the Constitution. Indeed, for violation of Article 32 (fundamental right to life and liberty) the state has been asked to provide compensation in an array of cases.

The writer is the Law Desk Assistant of the Daily Star.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The new quota scheme

LAW DESK

Positive discrimination or affirmative action schemes are permitted under articles 28(4) and 29(3) of the Constitution of Bangladesh. The preamble to the constitution envisions an egalitarian and exploitation-free society where there is fundamental freedom and dignity.

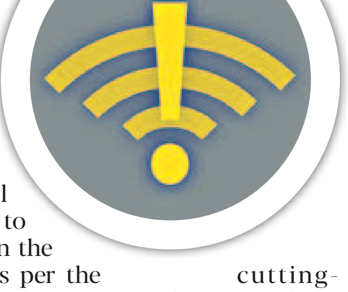
Indeed, quota reform is a policy decision, however, policy decisions are always to be guided by the fundamental principles enshrined in our constitution. In order to do 'complete justice' under the tenets of article 104 of the constitution, the Appellate Division (AD) of the Supreme Court went on to resolve the contention and also recommend specific percentages of quotas, while acknowledging the government's prerogative to revise the same as/if needed. After the AD overturned the decision of the High Court Division, the government circular was made in the same light. The new quota scheme is applicable to all government jobs across all grades.

As per the circular, this new quota scheme is applicable to all governmental, semi-governmental, autonomous, semi-autonomous, self-governed and statutory authority (*shoshashito* and *shongbidhiboddho kortripokkho*). Overall, seven per cent quotas are now reserved within the scheme. Five per cent quotas are reserved for the children of freedom fighters, martyred freedom fighters, and Beerangonas. One per cent quotas is reserved for the indigenous community and one per cent for persons with physical disabilities and *'Tritiyo Lingo'*. The circular also says that if the quota seats are not filled, the seats will be filled from people who have no quota. Except this seven per cent, rest of the seats are now open for all based on merit. The new circular will come into effect immediately.

While this is certainly a welcome move on part of the government, we ought to still reflect on how things could pan out, had there been meaningful dialogue between the government and the protesting students early on.

RIGHTS ADVOCACY

Internet outage and OUR RIGHTS



At present, internet is no more a luxury, rather a day-to-day necessity for our survival. Internet not only keeps us in touch with the world at large, it also works as a medium to exercise an array of civil and political rights of the citizens (ranging from freedom of speech and expression to the right to use and impart information).

Our Constitution enshrines a range of civil and political rights which are subject to reasonable restriction. The international human rights instruments also are mindful to the necessity to put reasonable restrictions on the exercise of rights and freedoms. However, as per the cutting-edge jurisprudence on human rights, such restrictions cannot be imposed in a way so that the 'minimum core' of concerned rights get infringed.

Evidently, the digital divide makes it a challenge for everyone to use internet on par. However, its absence affects almost everyone in a globalised and internet-based economy where transportation of basic goods and services depend on how internet function. Moreover, internet outage tends to have a disproportionate impact on people who are otherwise marginalised and depend on uninterrupted services of internet for basic monetary transactions to live on.

It is true that internet may also work as a medium for spreading mis- and disinformation. However, it is important that any measure taken to tackle such spread is necessary in a democratic society and is informed by fundamental human rights of all. Furthermore, any measure to tackle such spread also has to be proportionate to the risk or threat sought to be evaded. We also need to be mindful that absence of internet too may create a convenient breeding ground for mis- and disinformation to spread.

In sum, internet has its own share of boons and banes. However, in today's world, internet plays a major role in keeping necessary services accessible. In any case, the absence of internet strikes at the root of many of our lives, livelihood, and exercise of rights.

Star SPORT
DHAKA FRIDAY AUGUST 2, 2024, SRABAN 18, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

T Sports
Sri Lanka vs India
First ODI
Live from 3:00 PM
Global T20
Montreal vs Toronto
Live from 9:00 PM
Surrey VS Vancouver
Live from 2:00 AM
(Saturday)
The Hundred (Men's)
Invincibles vs Northern Superchargers
Live from 12:30 AM
(Saturday)
Sports 18
Olympics
Live from 11:30 AM

LEGENDARY LEDECKY in pursuit of more history

AFP, *Paris*

American great Katie Ledecky remains on course for enriching her greatness but admitted it is not "getting easier" after powering to the Olympic 1500m freestyle title yesterday, adding an eighth gold medal to her glittering collection.

The 27-year-old was untouchable, surging home in 15min 30.02sec, an Olympic record and more than 10 seconds ahead of France's Anastasiia Kirpichnikova in second. Germany's Isabel Gose won bronze.

The win elevated her as the first woman swimmer to win gold at four Olympics.

Among men, only fellow Americans Michael Phelps and Ryan Lochte have achieved the feat.

It was also her 12th medal overall after adding a bronze in the 400m freestyle behind Australian winner Ariarne Titmus.

Ledecky will also swim the 800m freestyle in Paris in the afternoon today, with Titmus standing in her way of winning a fourth straight title.

Should Ledecky manage to make it to the 800m freestyle final, she will have a chance to climb a step higher in her already storied career as she will be vying for a ninth Olympic gold, a feat only achieved by gymnast Larisa Latynina of the Soviet Union.

But so far for Ledecky, landing an eighth gold was a reward for three more years of hard toil after she claimed the title in Tokyo.

"It's not easy, it doesn't get any easier so I do try to enjoy it each year," she said.

"There's different perspective that I have different years. Different challenges that you face each year in training and as you get older.

"I definitely appreciate it a lot and have a lot more perspective than I did back in Rio or London."

In the 1500m freestyle Thursday, Ledecky went out hard and was a body length clear after 100m with her lead growing to five seconds at the halfway mark.

She never relented, her advantage continuing to build as she reinforced her reputation as the greatest distance swimmer the sport has seen.

The result was never in doubt with Ledecky setting the last six world records and now holding the fastest 20 times ever swum.

"My mind wandered a lot," she admitted. "I was thinking about my teammates that I train with back home."

A rivalry to spice up Olympics football

AFP, *Paris*

There is no love lost between France and Argentina on the football field these days and their quarterfinal meeting in Bordeaux on Friday will add spice to the men's Olympic tournament.

The last-eight clash between the rivals is in many ways exactly what was needed for a competition lacking in star names.

It will be the first meeting of the nations since Argentina players were recorded singing racist chants about their French counterparts as they celebrated winning the Copa America in mid-July: a video posted by Argentina's Enzo Fernandez featured a song sung by some members of the squad about France's players of African descent.

FIFA announced that it would investigate the chants, which targeted France's star striker Kylian Mbappe among others, and included racist and homophobic insults.

Argentina players have already been booed by rival fans during the Olympic tournament and can expect another heated welcome from the French crowd.

"With everything that has happened recently, everyone in France was affected, so we will see what happens in the quarterfinals," warned France's Crystal Palace striker Jean-Philippe Mateta after the hosts finished the group phase with three wins out of three.

Friday's showdown will also be the first between the sides since the 2022 World Cup final in Qatar which Argentina won on penalties after an epic 3-3 draw.

Only two members of Argentina's Olympic squad, Nicolas Otamendi and Julian Alvarez, played in the 2022 game, and none of France's.

That perhaps removes a little of the edge, but in purely footballing terms it will still be a fascinating contest.

Argentina are chasing a third Olympic gold after triumphing in 2004 and in 2008, the latter with a young Lionel Messi in their ranks.

France are going for football gold on home soil 40 years after taking the title at the 1984 Games in Los Angeles.

Both sides do have legendary coaches, however -- France with 1998 World Cup-winner Thierry Henry, Argentina with his fellow former Barcelona star Javier Mascherano, who won Olympic gold as a player in Athens and in Beijing.

Whoever prevails will advance to a semifinal in Lyon next Monday against either Egypt or 2004 silver medallists Paraguay, who meet in the last eight in Marseille.

It will be the first meeting between Argentina and France since Argentine players were recorded singing racist chants about their French counterparts as they celebrated winning the Copa America in mid-July.

This will also be the first face-off between the sides since the 2022 World Cup final in Qatar which Argentina won on penalties after an epic 3-3 draw.

Pan's 'unreal' swim ignites debate

AFP, *Paris*

Australian Olympian-turned-swimming coach Brett Hawke questioned the legitimacy of Pan Zhanle's record-breaking 100m freestyle world record.

Teenager Pan secured Olympic gold on Wednesday with a time of 46.40 seconds, surpassing his own world record of 46.80 seconds set in February, winning by a body length.

Hawke, a former Australian Olympic sprinter who coached Brazil's Cesar Cielo, the first man to break 47 seconds, asserted that Pan's record time was "not humanly possible."

"I am angry at that swim... for a number of reasons," he said in an Instagram video.

"That's not real, you don't beat those guys -- Kyle Chalmers, David Popovici, Jack Alexy -- by one full body length in 100 freestyle. That's not humanly possible, okay," added Hawke.

The victory occurred amid a doping controversy involving the Chinese swimmers.

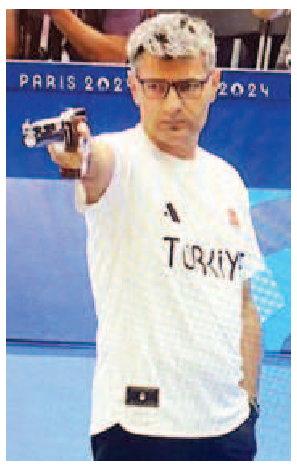
"I was tested after the race and we will see the result," said Pan.

Silver medallist Kyle Chalmers, who won 100m gold in Rio and silver in Tokyo, accepted Pan's performance without question.

Asked if he thought the record was clean, he Australian replied: "... I trust that he's done everything he possibly can to be there and he deserves that gold medal."

Dikec's silver with casual style gains viral fame

SPORTS DESK



Turkish shooter Yusuf Dikec has become a viral sensation for his laid-back style and nonchalant attitude on his way to winning a silver medal in the 10-metre air pistol mixed team event of the Paris Olympics.

On Wednesday, Dikec turned up in a plain t-shirt, wearing standard spectacles, without any specialised optical gadgets or noise-cancelling headphones like his contemporaries and took aim with his left arm inside his pocket.

The 51-year-old, a former non-commissioned officer of the Turkish Gendarmerie, later gave a simple explanation behind his unique shooting style, "I did not need special equipment. I'm a natural, a natural shooter," Dikec reportedly told Turkish media after winning the medal.

He and his partner Sevval Ilayda Tarhan made history together, winning Turkey's first ever medal in shooting. The duo came close to winning the top prize, but lost 16-14 to the Serbia's Zorana Arunović and Damir Mikec in the final.

However, social media cared little, as it exploded over the images and clips of Dikec casually shooting his way to an Olympic medal.

Many social media users have also joined in the fun, with memes referencing popular characters from movies -- calling him "Turkish John Wick" for instance -- and video games.

This is the fifth Olympic appearance for Dikec, who has been competing in every edition since Beijing 2008.

Dikec has won several medals from World and European Championships in various pistol events, including gold medals in ISSF World Cup and European Championships.

"Happy isn't enough to describe how I feel," said Zheng Qinwen after she stunned top seed Iga Swiatek in straight sets (6-2, 7-5) in Paris yesterday, becoming the first Chinese player to reach an Olympic Games tennis singles final.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Star batter Virat Kohli was all smiles with coach Gautam Gambhir, with whom he has had multiple on-field altercations in the past, a day before playing his first match under the new coach when India take on Sri Lanka in the first ODI of a three-match series at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo today.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Sabina, three others set to play in first AFC Champions League

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's football team captain Sabina Khatun, Maria Manda, Monika Chakma and Ritu Porna Chakma have been offered contracts from Bhutan's Royal Thimphu College SC to play for them in the preliminary stage of the inaugural AFC Women's Champions League on August 25-31.

"During the two FIFA friendlies against Bhutan last week, Royal Thimphu approached us to allow Sabina, Ritu, Maria and Monika to play for them in the upcoming AFC Women's Champions League," said Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) women's wing chairman Mahfuza Akhter Kiron.

"We initially denied to release players for the sake of their preparation for the upcoming SAFF Women's Championship, but later agreed to release them after consulting with head coach Peter Butler."

Royal Thimphu College have been pitted against Iran's Bam Khatoon and Hong Kong's Kitchee SC in group stage of the 13-team competition, devoid of any Bangladesh club.

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

ARCHERY
Mixed Team
8:43 PM
ATHLETICS
Men's 10000m
Saturday, 1:20 AM
BADMINTON
Mixed doubles
6 PM
DIVING
Men's Synchronized 3m Springboard
3:00 PM
EQUESTRIAN
Team Jumping
6:00 PM
FENCING
Men's Team Épée
Saturday, 12:30 AM
JUDO
Women's +78kg
8:48 PM
Men's +100kg
9:06 PM
ROWING
Men's Pair
3:30 PM
Women's Pair
3:42 PM
Lightweight Men's Double Sculls
4:02 PM
Lightweight Women's Double Sculls
4:22 PM
SAILING
Women's Windsurfing
7:33 PM
Men's Windsurfing
8:08 PM
SHOOTING
Women's 50m Rifle Three Positions
1:30 PM
SWIMMING
Men's 50m Freestyle
Saturday, 12:30 AM
Women's 200m Backstroke
Saturday, 12:36 AM
Men's 200m Individual Medley
Saturday, 12:43 AM
TRAMPOLINE
Women's Trampoline
5:50 PM
Men's Trampoline
11:50 PM
TENNIS
Mixed Doubles
09:00 PM

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Quader now says no shoot-on-sight order was issued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the directive to "shoot on sight was misinterpreted", and that the order was not given to law enforcers.

He said this while speaking at a press briefing at the party president's Dhanmondi office.

However, he did not clarify who was misinterpreting the order.

On July 20, Quader announced the government's decision to impose nationwide curfew and deploy armed forces.

He also mentioned at the time "shoot-on-sight" order while talking to journalists after a meeting of the AL-led 14-party alliance at the Gono Bhaban.

He, however, did not say who gave the order and to whom.

Hours after that announcement, the home ministry issued a gazette notification imposing a nationwide curfew and deploying armed forces to assist the civil administration in ensuring national security and protecting lives and properties.

But the government did not issue any gazette notification regarding the "shoot-on-sight" order.

The Daily Star yesterday looked into the websites of the home ministry and BG Press, but found no such gazette notification there.

Yesterday, Mohammad Ali Arafat, state minister for

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Rickshaws wade through a waterlogged street in Chattogram city's Muradpur around noon yesterday after downpours inundated parts of the city. A truck is stranded after it broke down on the flooded street. The port city experiences waterlogging during monsoon every year due to poor drainage.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

QUOTA PROTEST

Another dies from pellet wounds

Death toll rises to 201

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more person, who suffered shotgun pellet wounds during the recent clashes centring the quota protests, died at Popular Hospital in the capital's Dhanmondi area yesterday.

Selim Talukder, 31, a factory worker in Narayanganj, was shot in the Rampura area on July 18.

According to his family, Selim was on his way to the office from his residence in the capital's Middle Badda when he was caught up in a clash between the police and protesters.

Selim's sister said that her brother suffered at least 56 pellet wounds in his chest and 18 in his head and underwent treatment in the intensive care unit of a private hospital for 14 days.

With this, at least 201 lives have now been lost since July 16 in clashes centring the protesting seeking

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

QUOTA REFORM MOVEMENT

Free all detainees within 24 hours

Demands eminent citizens' platform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the detainees, particularly the students who staged quota reform protests, must be released within 24 hours, a group of eminent citizens demanded yesterday afternoon.

Speaking at a human chain, they said although the six coordinators of the quota reform movement have been released, many people, including students, teachers and ordinary citizens, are still in police custody.

The programme was organised under the banner of Aggrieved Citizens' Society in front of the office of the DMP's Detective Branch on Minto Road.

"The people of Bangladesh pay taxes. Using guns and bullets bought with taxpayers' money, police personnel shot people, including students," said Debapriya Bhattacharya, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

He demanded probes by international organisations like the United Nations into the recent killings of people, including students and children.

He said educational institutions must be reopened after the withdrawal of all law enforcement and security agency personnel from the campuses.

Prof Asif Nazrul of Dhaka University's law department said, "We want justice for the killings. We want those who ordered the killings to be brought to book."

He said three out of the six coordinators of the quota reform protests were tortured by a state agency before being picked up from a city hospital. Those involved in their illegal detention should face abduction charges, he added.

Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said all law enforcement agencies, including the DB, have "resorted to lying and cheating to deceive the people".

The repeated deception has fostered a belief among the law enforcers that they can act with impunity indefinitely, he said.

"Admit the truth that you have shot students indiscriminately, detained them without any cause, and wronged many, including students and teachers, depriving them of their rights."

Mentioning the arrest of a 16-year-old boy over the killing of Abu Sayed in Rangpur, Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), said, "Didn't we see how Abu Sayed was killed?"

She said students have been picked up by law

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

SAYED MURDER CASE

16-yr-old Alfi gets bail after 13 days in jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Alfi Shahriar Mahim

The 16-year-old boy, Alfi Shahriar Mahim, who was arrested in the murder case of Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed on July 18, got bail yesterday after languishing in jail for 13 days.

Mostafa Kamal, judge of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1 of Rangpur, granted him bail after a short hearing, said Alfi's lawyer Jobaidul Islam.

The lawyer said the case, which was filed with Tajhat Police Station under Rangpur Metropolitan Police, was transferred to the children's court as the accused was underage. The hearing was scheduled to be held on August 4 after Alfi's father filed a bail petition on July 30, said the lawyer.

He added that the hearing was held yesterday as police took the step.

Alfi's father Md Shahjalal confirmed that his son walked out of Rangpur Jail at 5:18pm.

On July 19, Alfi was produced before a Rangpur court that sent him to jail, said the lawyer.

Alfi, an HSC first-year student at Rangpur Police Lines School and College, is 16 years and 10 months old,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Israel claims killing Hamas military chief

Hamas neither confirms nor denies Deif's death; 35 more Palestinians killed in Gaza strikes

REUTERS, *Jerusalem*

The head of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Deif, was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Gaza last month, the Israeli military said yesterday, a day after the group's political leader was assassinated in Tehran.

"The IDF (Israel Defence Forces) announces that on July 13th, 2024, IDF fighter jets struck in the area of Khan Yunis, and following an intelligence assessment, it can be confirmed that Mohammed Deif was eliminated in the strike," the military said.

Hamas neither confirmed nor denied the killing of Deif, but one official, Ezzat Rashaq, said any word on deaths of its leaders was its responsibility alone.

Mohammed Deif

The Israeli announcement came as crowds gathered in the Iranian capital for the funeral procession of Hamas' leader Isamil Haniyeh.

Iran and Hamas have blamed Haniyeh's killing on Israel, which has neither denied nor confirmed a role in the assassination. It did however confirm it killed a senior commander of the Lebanese Hezbollah movement in Beirut on Tuesday.

Yesterday, Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri said Haniyeh's death would not weaken the group's fighters in Gaza.

But his death was the latest in a series that has targeted the group's leaders. Haniyeh's deputy, Saleh al-Arouri, was killed in a drone strike in Beirut in January. In March, Israel said it had killed Marwan Issa, Deif's deputy.

But now on the 300th day of offensive in Gaza, hopes for a hostage deal and ceasefire have dimmed.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said that at least 39,480 Palestinians have been killed in the Israeli offensive. The toll includes 35 deaths in 24 hours, according to ministry figures.

Yesterday, the Israeli military said it struck against dozens of Hamas targets in Gaza, including fighters and infrastructure. At least 13 people had been killed in the Israeli bombardments across the enclave, Gaza medics said.

An Israeli missile that hit a vehicle at the entrance of Al-Maghazi district in central Gaza killed six people and five more were killed in a strike on a house in nearby Nusseirat, medics said, while an airstrike in Gaza City killed two others.

East of Al-Maghazi, residents said tanks were firing as they tried to push deeper into the area.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday reiterated appeals for an end to fighting. He said achieving peace "starts with a ceasefire" and called on "all parties" to "stop escalatory actions".

NATIONWIDE DRIVES

Some 11,000 held in last 15 days

674 cases filed so far over violence during quota protests; Rizvi placed on remand

STAR REPORT

At least 179 more people were arrested in the capital and elsewhere in 36 hours till 6:00pm yesterday as the nationwide crackdown on alleged saboteurs as well as protesters and opposition parties continues.

Of them, 63 were arrested in the capital, and 116 in 27 districts, said police.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police produced those arrested in the capital before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka yesterday.

The court sent most of them to jail and placed some of the arrestees on remand.

According to the latest count, at least 10,947 people, including students, BNP, and Jamaat-Shibir leaders and activists, have been arrested in 674 cases filed in the capital and 51 districts over the last 15 days since July 18.

Several thousand named and several hundred thousand unnamed individuals have been accused in these cases.

The cases were filed, mostly by police, with different police stations over violence, vandalism, arson, and killings.

The country witnessed violence on an unprecedented scale after the peaceful demonstrations for quota reform turned deadly on July 15 when Chhatra League attacked the protesting students on different university campuses.

Among those arrested in 27 districts in the 36 hours till 6:00pm yesterday, 11 each were held in Khulna, Rajshahi, and Pabna; nine in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Ecuador's Brian Pintado holds his country's flag after clinching the gold medal in the men's 20km race walk with a time of 1:18:55 at the Paris Olympics yesterday, marking Ecuador's second Olympic title in the event and only its fourth gold medal overall. Pintado, wearing a scarf given by his grandmother and a necklace depicting his son running beside him, dedicated his historic win to his family back home.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Spotlight on American sprint duo

AFP, *Paris*

Brash, brazen, brilliant. American sprint duo Noah Lyles and Sha'Carri Richardson will look to live up to their billing as Olympic 100m favourites when the track and field programme at the Paris Games starts on Friday.

The reigning world champions are the stars of a recently-released Netflix docuseries entitled "Sprint", giving an up-close and personal view into their lives on and off the track.

At the Stade de France -- with those cameras still turning for season two -- the debate will be whether Lyles, who won three golds at last year's Budapest world championships, can beat defending champion Marcell Jacobs of Italy and go on to be crowned as the rightful successor to sprint king Usain Bolt.

The other hot topic is

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

WALTON
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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Two killed in fresh violence

Worker dies during clash in Habiganj, policeman beaten to death in Khulna

STAR REPORT

After nearly two weeks of eerie calm, violence erupted again yesterday as police aided by ruling party members clashed with protesters in the capital and several other districts, leaving at least two dead and almost 150 injured.

In Habiganj, a labourer died after he was caught in the middle of a clash while police said a constable died after he was assaulted by protesters in Khulna.

Clashes took place in Uttara in the capital, Sylhet, Khulna, Narsingdi, Chattogram and Noakhali during processions of the "student movement against discrimination".

> **Clashes broke out in the capital's Uttara, Sylhet, Khulna, Narsingdi, Chattogram and Noakhali during processions of the "student movement against discrimination".**

Thousands of students, cultural activists and the general public took part in yesterday's programme defying rain to press home their demand for justice for the recent killings centring the quota reform protests and immediate release of detainees.

The country witnessed violence on an unprecedented scale from July 16 to July 21 as agitators and law enforcers, Border Guard Bangladesh members, and ruling party activists clashed. Over 200 people were killed and thousands injured, many with gunshot wounds.

In Khulna yesterday, Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mozammel Haque said a constable named Suman Gharami died after agitators beat him up. Police members found him with a serious head injury in Gallamari in the evening.

They rushed him to the nearby Khulna City Medical College Hospital, police said.

The hospital authorities said Suman was pronounced dead after he was brought there.

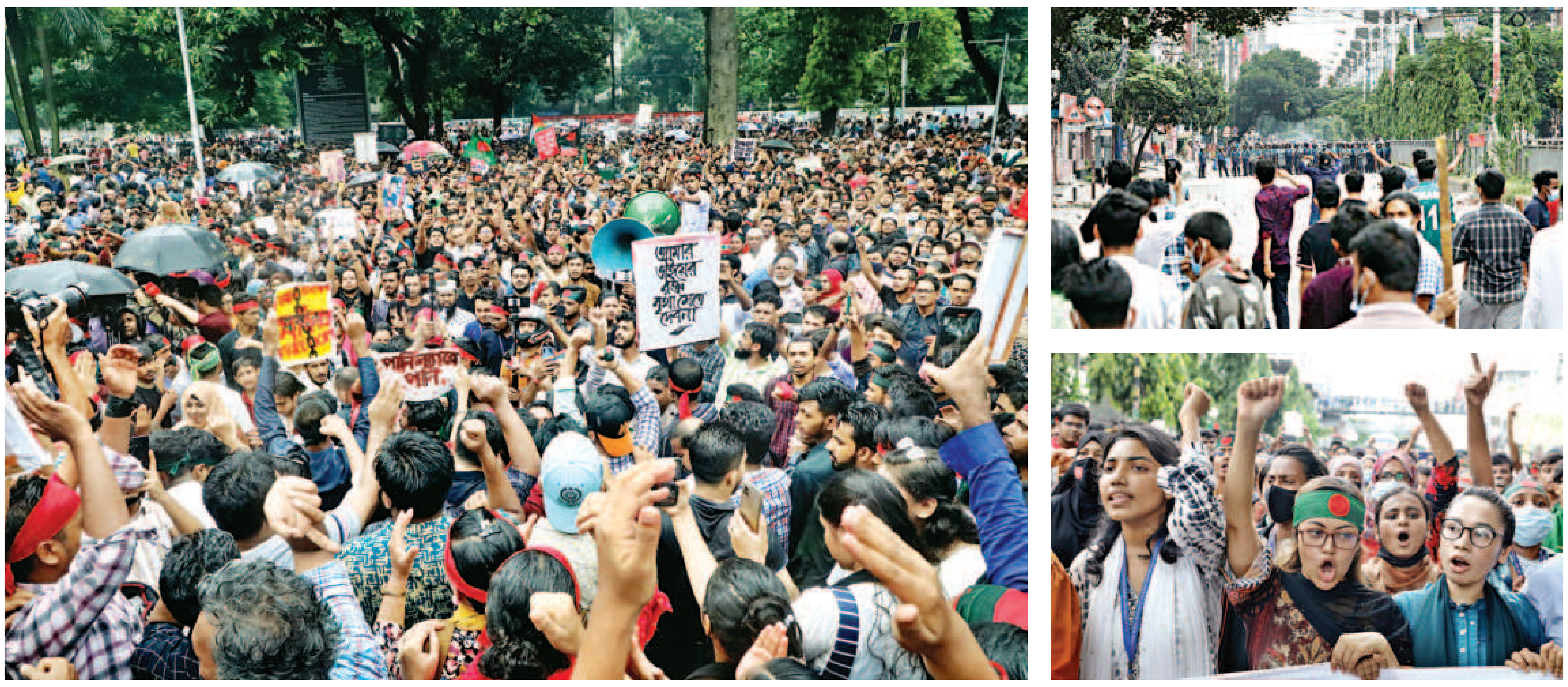
Three other policemen -- Mazharul Islam, Sohanur Rahman Sohag and Soumen -- are being treated there.

In Habiganj, Mostaq Ahmed, a 24-year-old labourer, died after he was caught in a clash between protesting students and police in the afternoon.

Locals said Mostaq, who was from Sylhet Tuker Bazar area, was shot when went to the town to buy shoes.

Moyeen Uddin Chowdhury, resident medical officer of Habiganj 250-bed Hospital, said Mostaq died at the hospital due to excessive bleeding from his arm.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Protesters throng the capital's Central Shaheed Minar yesterday afternoon demanding justice for those killed during the quota reform protests. *Top right,* police block the Garib-E-Newaz Avenue in Uttara to stop the demonstrators from moving towards the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway. *Bottom right,* students chant slogans as they march in a procession at the Science Lab intersection.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN, ANISUR RAHMAN**

Protesters take to the streets across country

Demand justice for killings in recent violence over quota protests, release of the detainees

STAR REPORT

Thousands of people from a wide spectrum of life demonstrated in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country demanding justice for those killed in the recent violence and release of the arrestees and detainees.

Students, teachers, guardians, lawyers, doctors, cultural activists, and citizens staged protests as part of the mass procession calledby the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

Protesters blocked roads in the capital's Uttara, Science Lab and Mirpur-10 intersections, Aftabnagar and Shahbagh.

Several thousand people, chanting slogans demanding resignation of the government, took out a massive procession from in front of the Jatiya Press Club after holding a brief rally around 3:00pm. The procession ended at the Central Shaheed Minar after marching through different streets.

Protests were also held in Chattogram, Khulna, Sylhet, Habiganj, Barishal, Bhola, and several other districts. Demonstrators blocked highways in Tangail, Bogura, and Pabna.

> **Demonstrators blocked highways in Narsingdi, Tangail, Bogura and Pabna.**

In Dhaka, a group of students, teachers and parents held a protest rally in front of the Rajuk Uttara Model College around 10:00am.

Speaking at the programme, HSC examinee Sajjadur Rahman said, "What offence had been committed by my brother Mughdho? What was the fault of that girl child who was standing on the balcony? Why did so many innocent people die? Why were they killed brutally? We want justice for every single murder."

Hundreds of protesters gathered at the Science Lab intersection around 2:00pm and blocked a lane of the Mirpur Road for about an hour. They marched between the Science Lab intersection and Shahbagh.

Several hundred students and ordinary people blocked the Mirpur-10 intersection after Juma prayers, causing disruption in traffic for about an hour.

Students demonstrated in ECB Chattar of Kalshi in the afternoon demanding justice for the recent killings and release of the detained teachers and students.

Students of East West University took out a procession at Aftabnagar around 11:30pm. The procession

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Thousands join march for justice

Call for govt's resignation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

They came in thousands. From students to teachers, guardians with children, lawyers, civil society members, and political activists -- all gathered to join "Droho Jatra" in front of the Jatiya Press Club seeking justice for those killed during the recent violence.

Braving rain and holding placards, they shouted anti-government slogans.

They also announced a mas procession at 3:00pm tomorrow to press home their one-point demand -- resignation of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

At the press club, Prof Anu Muhammad, a former teacher of Jahangirnagar University, addressed a huge gathering.

"...We don't want anything from this government. We must hold the government accountable and ensure justice. Those who were arrested must be freed, and the filing of cases and suppression must stop, and the curfew must be withdrawn."

"To ensure these, the government must resign. People have to take back the control of the country. Now the main agenda is how to make the democratic transition. People from all walks of life must unite and work to ensure this."

The "Droho Jatra" was called by a group of students and teachers, cultural organisations, and civil society

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

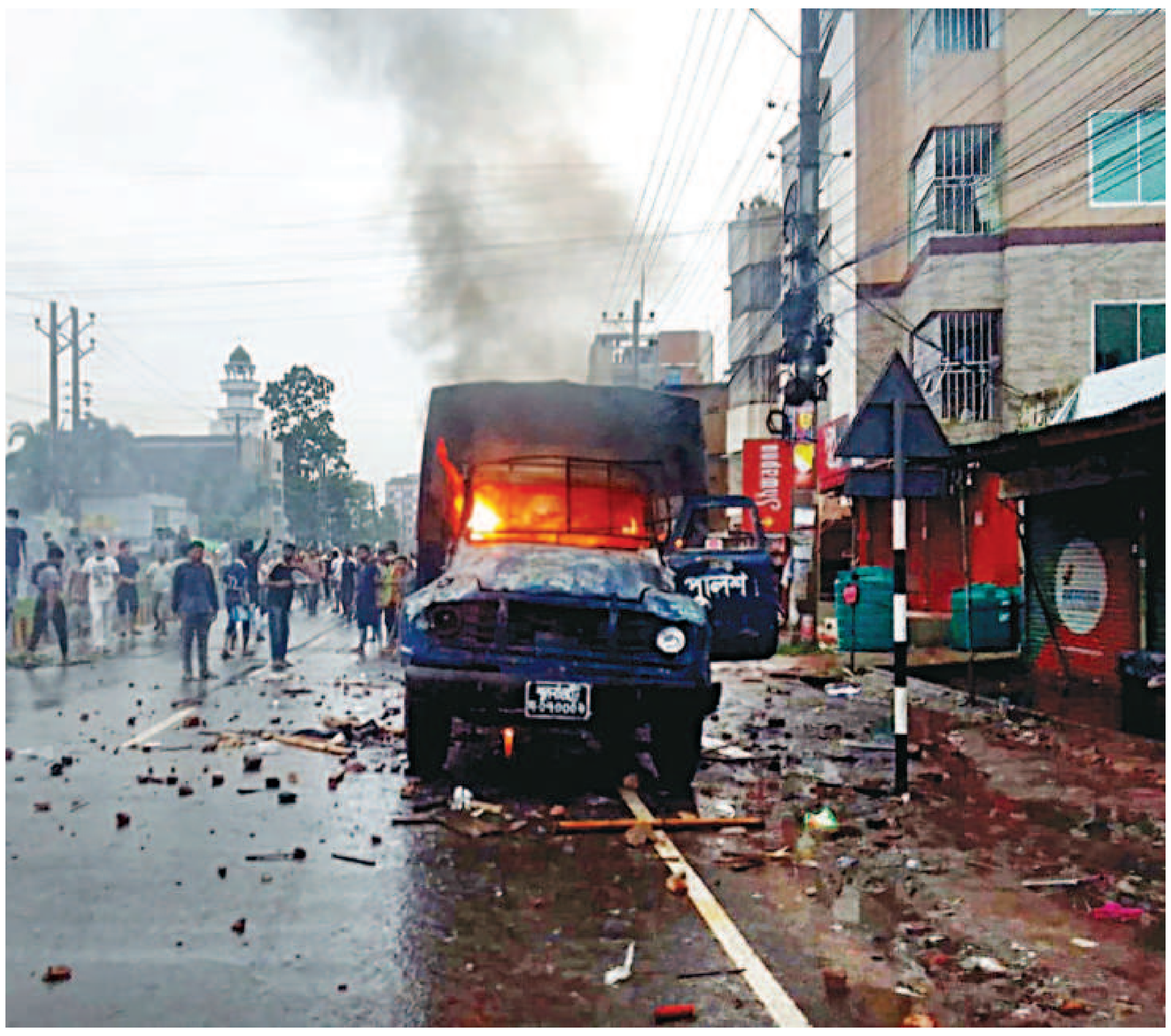


PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

A police vehicle in flames in Khulna city's Gallamari area yesterday evening after a clash broke out there between police and quota reform protesters. The clash left a cop dead and at least 10 other people injured.

Protesters call for non-cooperation movement

To stage demo across the country today

DU CORRESPONDENT

The organisers of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, who spearheaded the quota reform protests, said yesterday that they will go for a countrywide non-cooperation movement starting tomorrow, to protest the recent killings and press home their nine-point demand.

They will also stage demonstrations across the country today.

Mahin Sarker, one of the coordinators of the platform, announced the programmes via a WhatsApp message around 8:00pm.

The platform urged all to join their programmes to make them successful.

Minutes after uploading the statement, Mahin said they would make some corrections to the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Today is the 11th Death Anniversary of
Sobera Ahmed Rizvi (Rita)

We request all relatives, friends and well-wishers to remember her in their prayers and to pray for eternal peace of her soul

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MYANMAR CONFLICT

Junta airstrikes on border hospital kill 10

AFP, *Bangkok*

Myanmar military airstrikes hit a hospital in a city controlled by an ethnic minority armed group close to the China border killing 10 people, local media reported yesterday.

Military planes carried out at least two air strikes on Laukkai city, normally home to some 25,000 people, late on Thursday night, a resident told AFP, requesting anonymity for security reasons.

Local media quoted one resident as saying 10 civilians were killed in the strike.

Myanmar's northern Shan state has been rocked by fighting since late June when an alliance of ethnic minority armed groups renewed an offensive against the military along a major trade highway to China.

The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) group have held Laukkai since January after more than 2,000 junta troops surrendered there in one of the military's biggest defeats in decades.

MNDAA spokesman Li Jiawen told AFP a military airstrike had hit a hospital in Laukkai, but he had no information yet on casualties.

Protesters take out a procession from the Jatiya Press Club area yesterday afternoon. The "Droho Jatra" procession was organised seeking justice for those killed during the recent violence. *Top right,* demonstrators gather near New Market intersection in the afternoon after bringing out a procession from Anderkilla in Chattogram city. *Bottom right,* a protester being beaten up allegedly by an Awami League activist near upazila intersection in Narsingdi town around 2:20pm when the quota reform protesters were going towards the district press club to hold a sit-in there.

PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN, RAJIB RAIHAN, JAHIDUL ISLAM**

Protesters take to the streets across country

FROM PAGE 1

ended in front of BRAC University after parading through different streets near the Rampura bridge.

A group of performance artists, singers, poets, authors, researchers, and photographers demonstrated in front of the Abahani playground in Dhanmondi. Holding placards and red cards, they condemned the killing of protesters and repression of the young demonstrators.

The protest started with artists painting pictures of demonstrations on red canvas. The performance artists staged a street drama depicting how the protesting students, including children, were shot by the law enforcers.

A group of urban planners formed a human chain at Banglamotor protesting the recent killings while medical students and doctors demonstrated at the Central Shaheed Minar around 10:00am.

Authors, poets, and publishers formed a human chain in front of the Bishwo Shahitto Kendro under the banner of "Poets and Writers against Countrywide Arrests and Oppression".

Authors Shahidullah Faraezi, Mohammad Nazimuddin, and Shudipto Salam, Dhaka University professor and researcher Mohammad Asaduzzaman, poets Tokon Thakur, Bokul Ashraf, and Kajol Shahnewaz, among many others, took part in the protest.

Speaking at the programme, Tokon Thakur said, "We are speechless seeing what has happened centring the quota reform protests. We express our solidarity with the students. We must speak out now. We condemn the brutal killings."

Some teachers and rights activists under the banner of "Pratibad Mancha" formed a human chain in front of the press club.

Addressing the programme, Dhaka University professor Robaet Ferdous and rights activist Nur Khan held the government responsible for the recent killings.

Meanwhile, 626 faculty members of BRAC University yesterday expressed solidarity with the ongoing protest.

In a statement, they said they were deeply shocked by the recent violence that led to the loss of lives and serious injuries. The teachers demanded those responsible be held accountable.

"As educatorscommitted to fostering a just, democratic and inclusive society, we stand by the rights of students to peaceful and legitimate protest. We are deeply concerned that this right has not been respected, and profoundly disturbed by the ongoing harassment that many students continue to face."

DEMO OUTSIDE DHAKA

In Chattogram, protesters took out a procession from Andarkilla area after Juma prayers. The procession marched different roads, including in the New Market area.

In Khulna, students held a protest in front of Khulna University. Protesters also gathered in Shonadanga bus terminal area. They took out a procession that marched towards Gollamari.

In Pabna, students demonstrated on the Dhaka-Pabna highway in front of the Pabna University of Science and Technology in the afternoon. They chanted slogans protesting the killings, torture and arrests of the demonstrators.

In Bogura, several thousand protesters held a demonstration in the district town's Satmatha around 3:00pm, halting traffic on the road for about two hours.

In Tangail, protesters, mostly students, blocked the Dhaka-Tangail highway in Tangail Town Bypass area for about an hour from 4:00pm.

In Barishal, demonstrators from Government Brojomohun (BM) College took out a procession after Juma prayers. The procession paraded through some streets in Nathullabad Central Bus Terminal area.

In Sylhet, demonstrations were held in front of the Mount Adora Hospital in the city's Akhalia area and near the entrance to Shahjalal University of Science and Technology.

In Habiganj, hundreds of protesters took out a procession from Jorapukur area of the district town after Juma prayers.

Students staged a demonstration in front of the Narsingdi Press Club. Protesters also blocked the Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Narsingdi's Bhelanagar area for about an hour from 4:30pm.

Turkey arrests 99 suspected IS members

AFP, *Istanbul*

Turkey's interior minister said yesterday that 99 suspected members of the Islamic State jihadist group had been detained in recent raids across the country.

The arrests were made mainly in Ankara and in Izmir in the west, as well as in the centre, east and south, Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya posted on X.

"99 suspects have been arrested in the GURZ-4 operations over the past three days," Yerlikaya said.

"We will not tolerate any terrorist," he added.

Turkish authorities have made several mass arrests of alleged IS members in recent years, most recently a roundup of 147 people announced in March.

After those arrests, Yerlikaya said police had detained a total of 2,919 people suspected of links to the jihadist group.

Two of the assailants who massacred 145 people at the Crocus City Hall in Moscow last March, an attack for which IS claimed responsibility, had spent several weeks in Turkey before heading to Russia, according to local authorities.

Two killed in fresh violence

FROM PAGE 1

Witnesses said students began demonstrating in front of the Board Masjid in Habiganj after Juma prayers while Chhatra League activists took position in Town Hall area.

At one point, locals and activists of different political parties joined the students and started marching. Chhatra League members intercepted the procession and a clash began. Police then used firearms and teargas, leaving at least 50 wounded.

The agitators also threw brickbats and stones at the residence of Habiganj-3 lawmaker Abu Zahir.

In the capital's Uttara-11, at least three people were injured by rubber bullets in a clash between protesters, police and ruling party activists in front of Zamzam Tower around 4:15pm.

The clash broke out when ruling party supporters attacked marching students.

Police fired rubber bullets, threw stun grenades, and used tear gas shells to disperse the crowd, according to sources.

A witness said, "Some people in helmets shot at the students... Coming under attack, the students ran to different alleyways."

Another witness told this newspaper that a student named Tahmid Huzaifa had taken treatment at an Uttara hospital after being hit by rubber bullets.

A nurse at Uttara Adhunik Hospital, requesting anonymity, said they treated two students, who suffered rubber bullet wounds.

Tohidul Islam, additional deputy commissioner (Uttara) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the protesters set fire to a training school of Special Branch in Uttara.

"We brought the situation under control by 5:30pm by using teargas and sound grenades," he added.

In Khulna, police fired rubber bullets, used teargas, and charged batons as students marched in front of Khulna University around 3:00pm. At least 50 protesters were injured.

Students later gathered near the Sonadanga bus terminal and marched towards Gollamari.

As police swooped on them, they took positions near the local Met office and Zero Point areas.

Mozammel Haque, commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star that police were tolerant. But they had to fire teargas shells to save themselves from brickbats hurled by the students.

Sumon Roy, resident medical officer at Khulna Medical College and Hospital, said that as of 7:30pm yesterday, one student with rubber bullet wounds and nine others sick from teargas were admitted to the hospital.

In Sylhet, Mithu Das Joy, bureau chief of Daily Kalbela, a child, seven policemen and 25 others were injured in clashes.

Around 4:00pm, law enforcers attacked protesters in front of Mount Adora Hospital in Sylhet's Akhalia area, resulting in clashes that lasted for over four hours.

In Chattogram, a police box was torched at Wasa intersection as protesters marched after Juma prayers. They demonstrated on Laldighi-Rifles Club road.

Meanwhile, several thousand protesters, mostly students, blocked Dhaka-Tangail Highway in Tangail Town Bypass area around 4:00pm.

As the BGB and police tried to clear the highway, the demonstrators threw brickbats at them. Then the BGB and police retreated.

The protesters left the area around 4:45pm.

In Narsingdi, Chhatra League, Jubo League and Mahila League members attacked a procession in the Court Road area around 2:30pm.

At least 12 people were injured in the attack.

In Noakhali, 10 people were injured as students and Jubo League and Chhatra League activists clashed near Chawkbazar Masjid around 2:00pm.

At least eight protesters and two BCL activists were injured, said locals.

Yasin Faruk Majumder, officer-in-charge of Lakshmipur Model Police Station, said police brought the situation under control.

Thousands join march for justice

FROM PAGE 1

members, demanding an end to mass arrests, justice for the "July massacre", release of arrested students, withdrawal of curfew, reopening of educational institutions, and the resignation of the government.

Earlier around noon, people started thronging the press club area with banners and posters. By 2:00pm, the street was filled to the brim with demonstrators.

Protesters held placards with slogans such as "Step Down Hasina," "Chhatro Hottar Bichar Chai [We demand justice for the killings of students]," and "Bullets May Hit, But We Won't Quit".

Members of cultural organisations, including Udichi Shilpi Goshti and Charon Sangskritik Kendra, and several cultural personalities recited poems, sang songs, and staged street dramas expressing solidarity with the protest.

After offering Juma prayers at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque, several hundred people joined "Droho Jatra". Before that, they paraded through different streets.

The protesters then marched towards the Central Shaheed Minar.

Around 3:40pm near the Kodom Foara, a group of protesters painted the windshield of an armoured police vehicle red. They also wrote "Khuni [killer]" on the vehicle.

At 3:42pm, a group of protesters staged a sit-in on the street and showed police posters with slogans like "Khuni [killer] Police", and "Dalal [subservient] Police".

At Shaheed Minar, more people joined the protesters.

Twelve-year-old Probha Mitra came with her brother and parents.

"I am here to express my solidarity, we don't want any more discrimination," Probha told The Daily Star.

Trader Abu Taleb and his tenth-grader daughter, Nowshin Tabassum, came all the way from Keraniganj to join the protests.

Abu Taleb said, "More than 200 people, including students, were killed. We want justice for them. My daughter could have been killed. I joined the protest so that no such incidents [killings] take place in future. The government must take responsibility for the killings and resign immediately."

At the end of the programme, Rageeb Nayeem, president of a section of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, announced tomorrow's mass procession.

Tunisia women jailed for buying candidate endorsements

AFP, *Tunis*

Tunisia has sentenced four women to jail after convicting them of buying signatures of endorsement for a would-be challenger to President Kais Saied in upcoming elections, a court spokesman said yesterday.

Candidate registration for the October 6 presidential election began on Monday and closes at 5:00 pm (1600 GMT) next Tuesday.

Saied critics from across the political spectrum have complained that new, tougher endorsement requirements are making it nearly impossible to get on the ballot paper.

To be listed, candidates are required to provide signatures from 10,000 registered voters, with at least 500 voter signatures per constituency.

"The court sentenced three women to two-year sentences, which they began serving immediately, and another, who was tried in absentia, to four years," said Alaeddine Aouadi, spokesman for the court in the northwestern town of Jendouba.

Protesters, mainly Houthi supporters, hold posters of Hezbollah senior commander Fuad Shukr, who was killed in an Israeli strike, and assassinated Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh, at a rally to show solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, in Sanaa, Yemen yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Protesters call for non-cooperation movement

FROM PAGE 1

statement. As they did not make any corrections, a correspondent of this newspaper contacted him around 11:50pm. Mahin responded by saying that the statement stands as it is and that they will not make any corrections.

Asif Mahmud, one of six coordinators of the quota reform protests who was in the custody of Detective Branch, also shared a message identical to Mahin's.

Meanwhile, Abdul Hannan, another coordinator, said in a live stream on Facebook, that, on behalf of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, they are announcing countrywide demonstrations for today.

"An all-out non-cooperation movement will be observed from Sunday. No taxes will be paid to this government. No utility bills will be paid. The secretariat and all government and private offices will be closed, no vehicle will be allowed to enter Gono Bhaban or Bangabhaban."

"No one will cooperate with this government."

He urged all to participate in these programmes so that the government could no longer function.

Contacted, Hannan also confirmed their programmes for today and tomorrow.

Their nine-point demand includes an apology from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and the resignations of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, Law Minister Anisul Huq, State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat, and State Minister for Post, Telecommunications, and Information Technology Zunaid Ahmed Palak.

Andaleeve Partho denied bail, sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a bail petition of Bangladesh Jatiyo Party (Manzu) Chairman Andaleeve Rahman Partho and sent him to jail in a case filed over vandalising and setting Setu Bhaban in Dhaka on fire on July 18.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam passed the order after Abu Sayeed Miah, an inspector of the Detective Branch (DB) of Police and also the investigation officer in the case, produced him before it on completion of his three-day remand in the case.

The court, however, directed the jail authorities to provide him with first class division in jail as per the Jail Code after his lawyer submitted another petition in this regard.

In the forwarding report, the IO said Partho gave important information about the incident which was being verified. So the IO appealed to the court to confine him to jail until the investigation is completed.

While the defence submitted an application seeking bail for Partho on grounds that their client was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him politically.

Moreover, another accused garment exporter KM Rezaul Hasanat David, also chairman and CEO of Viyellatex Group, was earlier granted bail in the case. So, his bail petition should be granted.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

'Stop mass arrests, release students'

Artists, people join together in protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds gathered in front of Dhanmondi's Abahoni field yesterday as part of a demonstration organised by Gonohottya O Nipironbirodhi Shilpi Shomaj (Artists Against Genocide and Oppression).

The event saw a diverse group of artists rallying against what they claim is "mass murder of protesters and continued oppression of the youth".

The protesting artists presented three key demands: halting the mass arrest of protesting students and common people and releasing all detained protesters, restoring normalcy and freeing educational institutions from the control of law enforcement agencies and ruling party affiliates, and the immediate resignation of the government for the deaths of the protesters.

They also carried various anti-government placards and red cards.

The gloomy weather and heavy rain did not stop them from raging on.

Artist Shaon Chishti said, "We are displaying red cards to express our distrust of the dictatorship and our support for the masses."

The demonstration began with group painting sessions, where artists depicted protest scenes on red canvases.

This was followed by a street drama titled "Astha-Onastha (Trust-Distrust)," illustrating the brutal reality of law enforcement agencies shooting protesting students, many of whom were children.

The performance drew numerous passers-by who spontaneously joined the demonstration.

Following the drama, artists and attendees formed a long human chain, chanting slogans against state persecution of young protesters.

An emotional moment ensued when the names of those killed by law enforcers were announced, with the crowd shouting, "I am present, we are present."

Artists recounted the circumstances of each victim's death, leading many participants to break into tears while shouting slogans like "Down with the Dictatorship" and "Distrust the Dictator, Trust in the People."

Singers and poets performed protest songs and poems, expressing solidarity with the student protests.

Several participants delivered speeches, including rights activist and author Rehnuma Ahmed, who said, "The regime has not published the actual number of people they have killed yet. So far we have learned about

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

'At least 32 children killed in violence'

Says Unicef regional director for South Asia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sanjay Wijesekera, Unicef regional director for South Asia, recently visited Bangladesh for a week, where he observed the ongoing violence and mass arrests.

After returning to Kathmandu, Nepal, he issued a statement based on his observations on the situation.

"I am deeply concerned about the impact of recent violence and ongoing unrest on children. Unicef has now confirmed that at least 32 children were killed during July's protests, with many more injured and detained. This is a terrible loss. Unicef condemns all acts of violence. I extend my heartfelt condolences to families mourning the loss of their sons and daughters. Children must be protected at all times. That is everyone's responsibility," read the statement.

"I am [also] aware of reports that children are being detained, and remind authorities that for a child, coming into contact or conflict with the law can be very frightening. In line with international human rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Bangladesh is signatory, and based on research into the effects of detention on

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

> **In my meetings with [the] government..., I emphasised that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises the right of children to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly. Children and young people are the future of Bangladesh. They should be protected when they speak up.**

MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

A 25-year-old student shot dead in Uttara. A 38-year-old office assistant died from bullet wounds in Mirpur. A 22-year-old employee fatally shot in Narayanganj. A 19-year-old student shot dead in Mohammadpur. Another student gunned down in Chattogram. At least 202 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are sons, husbands, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of five such names among these tragic numbers. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

A promising life cut short by bullet

Mugdho, 25, died after getting shot in the head

MASHFIQ MIZAN

Water, water, who needs water?

In a video shared on social media by Mir Mahbubur Rahman Snigdho, his twin brother Mir Mahfuzur Rahman Mugdho, 25, was seen distributing water to protesters after law enforcers fired teargas shells to disperse them in Azampur of Uttara on July 18.

Merely 15 minutes later, he was gone. A bullet hit his forehead and pierced through his right ear after law enforcers opened fire.

He was already dead when his friends brought him to Crescent Hospital.

"Babumoshai, zindagi badi honi chahiye, lambi nahi" was the caption of his profile picture on Facebook. It can be roughly translated to -- life should be meaningful, not long.

Mugdho did live a meaningful life.

He joined the protest on July 18 to help students, who he believed were fighting for a just cause, said his elder brother Mir Mahmudur Rahman Deepto.

From a young age, Mugdho always spoke up against injustice. He was a unit leader in the Armed Police Battalion Scout group and achieved the "National Service Award" from Bangladesh Scouts for his role in rescuing and evacuating people during the 2019 Banani fire, Deepto added.

After completing his undergraduate degree in the Mathematics department

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

They shot my son in the chest

Says mother of Palash, 38, who was killed in Mirpur 10

MIRZA SHAKIL, *Tangail*

Firoz Talukdar Palash, 38, an office assistant of a chemical company in Dhaka's Mirpur 12, left his rented house on July 19 to go to Tangail.

It was Friday, so his office was closed, allowing him a brief scope to visit his mother in Ghatandi village under Tangail's Bhuanpur upazila.

He phoned his mother and said, "Ma, ami ber hoyecchi (Mother, I am on the way)".

Soon afterwards on the way, he found himself in the middle of a clash between protesters and police in Mirpur 10, where he was hit by a bullet in his chest.

Some people took him to a private hospital nearby, where doctor declared him dead.

Informed about her son's demise, a bewildered Benu Begum immediately called her son's wife, Reshma, who went to the hospital and identified the body.

Palash's body was taken to the family's home in Tangail on the same night, and was buried there on the next day.

Reshma later returned to Dhaka with their seven-year-old daughter a few days after Palash's burial, said relatives.

This correspondent visited the family in Ghatandi village recently.

The family lives in a dilapidated tin-shed house.

Benu Begum, still shell-shocked after her only son's death, was seen looking blankly at Palash's photo while tear rolled down her cheeks.

"My son called me and said 'Mother,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

My son hasn't called me. He never will...

Says mother of 22-year-old Rabbi who died after being shot in Narayanganj

SAHIDUL ISLAM NIRAB, *Jamalpur*

Rabbi Miah, 22, was the brightest hope for his family.

Hailing from the impoverished Panchashi village in Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila, Rabbi was steadily carving a path to a better future. His father, Abdur Rahim, a rickshaw-puller, struggled to afford the education of his two sons.

Despite these hardships, Rabbi's older brother, Antor Miah, had recently completed his post-graduation in political science and was actively seeking a government job. To support the family, he taught at an English-medium school in Dhaka's Gulshan area.

Rabbi was also contributing to the family while pursuing his own dreams. He worked as a junior officer at Walton Base Point in Narayanganj and was a second-year Electrical and Electronics Engineering student at Southeast University. With aspirations of studying abroad, he was preparing for the IELTS exam.

The two brothers had come so far, driven by their hard work, dedication, and the shared hope of lifting their family out of poverty.

However, on July 20, that hope was extinguished by a bullet.

Rabbi was at his home on the fourth floor of a building in Painadi Natun

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Police killed my brother. Should we go to them for justice?

Asks sister of 19-year-old Soikot who was shot in Mohammadpur

MD ABBAS

On July 19, Mahamudur Rahman Soikot, 19, was shot in the head when law enforcers opened fire to disperse quota reform protesters on Mohammadpur's Nurjahan Road.

Since that day, Soikot's father has been a familiar figure on Nurjahan Road, often seen standing silently at the spot where his son fell.

The place where Soikot's body once lay in a pool of blood has become a site of silent mourning for a father who can find no words to express his grief.

He stands there, day after day, lost in the memories of his beloved son, as the city moves around him.

"My father now frequently visits the place where Soikot was shot and stands there," said Sabrina Afroz Sabonti, Soikot's sister.

After offering Juma prayers on July 19, Soikot went to open their family's confectionery shop.

His father was away in their native village, Sandwip, leaving Soikot in charge.

Shortly after opening the shop, he returned home and informed his mother, who was in the midst of her prayers, that he had closed the shop because one of his friends had sustained a bullet injury.

"He left the house immediately to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

He aspired to be a teacher

Says sister of Wasim who died during clashes in port city

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, *Ctg*

"My brother had aspirations to become a teacher, and was working hard with his studies and preparations for the job. But a bullet took his life...," said Shabrina Yasmin, sister of Mohammad Wasim Akram.

Wasim, a third-year student of the social science department of Chittagong College, died after coming in the line of fire during a clash of protesters demanding quota reform in government jobs with activists of Jubo League and Chhatra League, in Muradpur area of Chattogram city on July 16.

Hailing from South Mehernama area under Pekua upazila of Cox's Bazar, Wasim was second of five siblings. His father, Shafiul Alam, and elder brother, Arshad Alam, live and work in Saudi Arabia.

They could not see his face for the last time as they are abroad.

"My brother loved me a lot. He used to study from a hostel in Chattogram city since 2019, and visited the family in the village once a month," said Shabrina, a 10th-grader at a local school in Pekua upazila.

During a visit to their house, this correspondent saw Wasim's mother Josna Begum holding his portrait. She kept asking who killed her son.

His uncle Zainal Abedin said she was not in a state to talk to anyone.

"The family's financial condition is not good. Wasim's father and elder brother are working in Saudi Arabia without a valid work permit there," he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Mohammed Faruque's death anniv

STAR REPORT

The 25th death anniversary of Prof Mohammed Faruque, former chairman of Bangla department at Jahangirnagar University and Karachi University, will be observed today, said a press release.

To mark the occasion, his family members will hold a daylong programmes -- including Qurankhwani, milad mahfil and special prayers at mosque.

Besides, cooked food will be distributed among the destitute at orphanages. All relatives, friends, students, and well-wishers of Prof Faruque have been requested to pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

HC to resume

FROM PAGE 5

fixed July 31 for further hearing and passing order on the matter.

But the bench could not hold hearing on the matter on July 31 and August 1 as Justice SM Masud Hossain Dolon, the junior judge of the bench, did not attend office because he was on leave due to physical illness.

Although the six organisers of quota reform movement were released from the DB's custody on Thursday, writ petitioners' counsels said they will raise question about the legality of keeping them detained before the HC during next hearing of the petition.

"Our question is why and under which law they (six organisers) were kept detained for six days in custody and who will take the responsibility for this action. There is no provision in the law for keeping anybody in the custody [of detective branch] in the name of safe custody. What is the meaning of safe custody? All these questions must be resolved," Barrister Sara Hossain, a lawyer for the writ petitioners, told reporters at a briefing on the Supreme Court premises on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

An inundated road in Bagerhat. Rainfall since Wednesday night has submerged various areas in the district. *Inset*, incessant rain has triggered flash floods in Cox's Bazar, affecting over one lakh people and marooning around 31,000 residents. The photos were taken yesterday .

FLASH FLOODS, WATERLOGGING

31,000 marooned in Cox's Bazar, parts of Bagerhat inundated

STAR REPORT

Over a week of incessant rain has triggered flash floods in Cox's Bazar district, affecting over one lakh people and marooning around 31,000 residents. Roads, crop lands, and households across five upazilas -- Ukhiya, Ramu, Eidgaon, Chakaria, and Kutubdia -- are submerged under water.

The Rohingya refugee camps have also been impacted, with many refugees relocating to higher ground.

Jahangir Alam, the district relief and rehabilitation officer, reported that despite the severe flooding, no one has yet needed to move to shelters.

He expressed hope that if the rain stopped by Friday, the water levels would soon recede.

Bibhisan Kanti Das, the additional deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar, announced immediate relief measures, including 47 tonnes of rice and Tk 5 lakh for the flood-affected people.

In Ukhiya's Haldiapalong union, 20 villages with around 10,000 residents remain marooned. Chairman Imrul Kayes Chowdhury said residents are facing severe scarcity of freshwater. Food has been arranged for 500 people over the last three days, though the two-tonne wheat allocation from the district administration is insufficient.

Additional Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner Samsuddauza confirmed that many Rohingya refugees have been moved to higher ground due to the floods.

Meanwhile, rainfall since Wednesday night has inundated various areas in Bagerhat district.

Major roads in Bagerhat town, including Sadhana Intersection, Shaltala, Kharadar School Road, District Hospital Intersection, Khan Jahan Ali Road, Rail Road, PTI Intersection, and areas around the district post office, have been submerged in ankle- to knee-deep water.

Low-lying areas in Morrelganj, Sharankhola, Mongla, Rampal, and Kachua upazilas face similar conditions. Several fish enclosures have reportedly been washed away, causing significant losses for local fish farmers.

The flooding has caused immense suffering for commuters, with few vehicles available and many forced to wade through dirty water. Numerous homes and businesses have been inundated, making several areas inaccessible.

As it was a weekly holiday, many residents chose to stay indoors.

However, low-income individuals and daily earners, such as rickshaw pullers, were severely affected. Shahidul Sheikh, a rickshaw puller, expressed his struggle, saying, "I had to come out despite the rain to feed my family, but I only earned Tk 135 by 3:30pm."

Residents voiced their frustrations over poor drainage.

Rafin Hawlader from Mithapukur Paar area said, "Every road is waterlogged, forcing us to wade through knee-deep, dirty water."

Sanchita, living near the children's hospital, shared her ordeal, saying, "Water enters our home even with a little rain. I haven't been able to cook for two days as our kitchen is submerged. We are surviving on dry food."

Rezaul Haque Rizvi, assistant engineer of Bagerhat Municipality, assured that ongoing drainage development work would mitigate the waterlogging issues.

"Currently, five kilometres of drainage work is underway. Once completed, we will excavate five canals in the town to relieve the waterlogging," he said.

At least 32 children

FROM PAGE 3

children, Unicef urges an end to the detention of children in all its forms. This means that children should not be arrested or detained based on their mere presence in any location or because of their background, religion, or the acts or beliefs of their family members," it continued.

"Supporting children caught up in the violence is a priority for Unicef. I visited the Unicef-supported child helpline 1098 that has seen a 250 percent increase in demand since the violence started. I saw how trained counsellors listen to children's concerns, refer them to the appropriate support and services – and follow up with them.

"In addition, 1,100 social workers, trained by Unicef..., are providing psychosocial help for children whose mental health has been affected by the violence and curfews," he said.

"One of the best ways to help children recover from violence and to keep them safe is to reopen all schools, restart learning, and reunite children with their friends and teachers. 30 million students from pre-primary to secondary school have missed 10 days of school. These learning losses are compounded by school closures earlier this year due to heat [waves], cyclones and floods.

While Unicef welcomes the reopening of primary schools in many parts of Bangladesh from August 4, there will still be around 15.5 million school children who are unable to resume learning. The longer children are out of school, especially girls, the less likely they are to return, jeopardising their future," he continued.

Stop mass arrests

FROM PAGE 3

212 deaths, but there is no doubt that the number is much higher."

She called for a neutral investigation supervised by the United Nations to identify and bring the murderers to justice.

Women's rights activist Farida Akhter condemned the killings, saying, "Such a scale of mass murder was unprecedented since the Liberation War. The government must resign, taking responsibility for these deaths."

Former BNP lawmaker Rumin Farhana attended the demonstration to show solidarity but did not deliver a speech. "I have just come here as a participant to express my solidarity with the protesters," she said.

Prominent attendees included artist and author Imtiaz Alam Baig, singer Bithi Gosh, curator and author Amirul Rajib, poet Shehzad Chowdhury, and artist and curator Kazi Tahsin Agaz Apurbo.

Poet and activist Arup Rahee read out the three key demands on behalf of the participating artists. Convener of the demonstration, artist Mustafa Zaman, criticised the lack of democratic environment in Bangladesh, saying, "People are deprived of their voting rights and freedom of expression."

"When the students took to the streets to reform the quota system, the government killed them to suppress their just movement. We have been expressing solidarity with their movement from the very beginning, and we shall continue to do so in the future," he added.

PHOTO: ABIDA RAHMAN CHOWDHURY

A rickshaw-puller expresses solidarity with the protesters by saluting them near Dhaka University yesterday.

Police killed my brother. Should we go

FROM PAGE 3

search for his injured friend," Sabonti recalled.

Worried for his safety, Soikot's mother began calling him frantically.

Other family members joined in, trying to reach him on his phone.

Soikot answered one of Sabonti's calls, reassuring her that he was on his way home. He also spoke briefly to his father, promising to call him back soon. However, he did not return.

At 4:00pm, someone answered a phone call from Soikot's father. "Your son has been shot. You can find his body at the morgue of Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital," said the voice on the other side.

His father was miles away from the capital, helpless, he informed other family members. They hurried to the hospital where they found Soikot's lifeless body.

Soikot, an admission seeker at a public university, was the only brother of two sisters -- Sabonti and Shahrina Afroz Supti.

"I don't know how someone could shoot my innocent brother. Did his hands not shake while shooting such an innocent boy?" Sabrina asked.

Soikot, who wanted to be a cricketer in his childhood, was very calm, his sister said, adding that there were no instances where he had gotten into an altercation with anyone.

"My mother cannot sleep at night. She frequently wakes up and starts crying, recalling his memories. Soikot always told my mother that he would build a new house for her," Sabonti said.

"From whom will we seek justice? The police killed my brother. Should we go to the police who killed my brother for justice?" she asked.

Soikot was laid near his home in a Mohammadpur graveyard.

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Contact : Fazle : 01787172209, Rabina : 01714310084.

Groom Wanted
Looking for a match, for a widowed daughter of a physician father(late), permanently resident in Dhaka, (LL.M) Age36, height 5ft 3inch, fair, has 13years old daughter, interested one must be an erudite, well-set and willing to take the responsibilities, are highly encouraged to contact with the daughter.
E-mail:-sabrinhoque1@gmail.com

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka
www.police.gov.bd

Memo No. 44.01.0000.024.02.002.24.1386 Date: 01 /08/2024.

Tender Cancellation Notice

This is to inform all concerned that the invitation of tender for" Purchasing of Dog'' vide tender invitation memo no. 44.01.0000.024.02.002.24/01(2024-2025), Date 02 July 2024 published on the Daily Star and the Daily Bangladesh Pratidin dated 03 July 2024 is hereby cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances.

1/8/24
(Sarwar Murshed Shamim, BPM)
BP 7401020793
Addl. DIG (Transport)
Bangladesh Police
For Inspector General, Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka.
Phone : +88 02 223384779

GD-109

My son hasn't

FROM PAGE 3

Mohalla, Narayanganj's Siddirganj area, when he heard a loud commotion outside. Curiosity led him to the veranda, where he saw a clash between protesters demanding quota reform in government jobs and the police, who were firing at the crowd.

As Rabbi began recording the police firing on his phone, a bullet struck him in the chest, killing him instantly, said his father, quoting witnesses.

"How are we going to console ourselves, and continue to live on with our hearts burdened with this grief of losing our son?" said Rahim.

Rajia Begum, Rabbi's mother, has been unable to stop her tears even 12 days after her youngest son's untimely death.

Clutching Rabbi's portrait in her lap, she was seen weeping when this correspondent visited their home in Jamalpur on Wednesday evening.

"My son used to call me regularly and would always say that one day he would achieve success and ensure that our family would no longer live in poverty. But it's been twelve days, and my son hasn't called me. He never will..." Rajia sobbed.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 3

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

A promising life cut short

FROM PAGE 3

of Khulna University, he got admitted to Bangladesh University of Professionals this March for his MBA.

THE TWIN HE LEFT BEHIND

Among those Mugdho left behind was his twin brother, Snigdho. During the unrest, their family was vacationing in Cox's Bazar, but he and Mugdho stayed back.

Mugdho and Snigdho went to school together, and shared the same circle of friends. As is often the case with twins, Snigdho looks very similar to Mugdho, a face that now serves as a constant reminder to their family of the son they lost.

Since Mugdho's death, Snigdho has been completely traumatised.

"Please talk to my elder brother for details, I am in no condition to speak on record," he told this correspondent.

Their elder brother, Mahmudur added, "Snigdho has gone numb. He still hasn't processed what he has lost."

Snigdho was the first family member to see Mugdho's body. At first, he refused to accept that law enforcers' bullets claimed his brother's life.

For Snigdho, every moment, every memory is intertwined with his brother. It is not just the loss of a brother, but the loss of a part of himself, said Deepto.

Deepto said on the morning of July 18, they went to Cox's Bazar with the family.

"My mother had never seen the beach. Last year, Mugdho took our parents to Sundarbans for the first time. So, I took my parents to Cox's Bazar," Mahmudur said.

However, Mugdho and Snigdho did not go to Cox's Bazar. The reason was twofold -- Mugdho had plans to visit Tanguar Haor with his friends on July 20. Secondly, he wanted to participate in the quota reform protests.

Deepto received the news of Mugdho's death around 6:30pm.

After that, the family tried to return to Dhaka that very day, but were unsuccessful as no flights were available. Travelling by road would have taken too long. So, they returned to Dhaka on an early flight the next morning.

Deepto said he did not know how to break the news of Mugdho's death to their mother. Besides, their mother is a heart patient, so he had to be careful.

First, he told them Mugdho got slightly injured, then he took their phones from them, saying they might hear rumours.

Throughout the night, he prepared his parents for the news. He told his mother that Mugdho was in a hospital, then he told them Mugdho's condition was critical.

After finding out the news of his death, their mother broke down. She lost consciousness at least seven times that day. She has still not fully recovered.

"Among us three brothers, Mugdho was closest to my mother. His death has shattered her world," said Deepto.

THE FRIEND WHO SAW HIM DIE

When Mugdho was shot, his friend Zakirul Islam was by his side.

"The bullet hit him in the forehead, it exited through the right side of his head," he said.

"He died right there on the spot, in front of our eyes," he added.

"Mugdho was giving everyone water. None of us had any firearms or anything else. Yet they shot my friend like this? How can I forget this scene?" he added.

They shot my

FROM PAGE 3

I am on the way but can't find any transport. Don't worry. I will come one way or another.' He returned to me as a dead body," she told this correspondent.

"They shot my son in the chest. He was also badly injured in a leg. Why did they have to kill my son? He did not do anything," she said.

"Who will look after his wife and daughter now? Who shall we ask for justice for my son's death?" Benu asked.

He aspired

FROM PAGE 3

"While identifying the body, I saw a bullet mark a little above Wasim's waist. There was no other injury mark on the body," he further said.

"I heard Wasim was a Chhatra Dal activist, but I don't know if it's true. Our family never had any sort of political connection," Zainul added.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Farmers in Gaibandha cultivating Aman paddy on fields. Typically, Aman paddy is planted during July and August, before subsequently being harvested during November and December. The photo was taken in the Mohimaganj area of Gobindaganj upazila yesterday.

SIX ORGANISERS IN CUSTODY

HC to resume hearing of petition tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court will resume hearing and passing order on a writ petition tomorrow that challenged the legality of keeping the six organisers of quota reform movement detained in detective branch's (DB) custody for "their own security".

The petition has been included as item 10 for "order" on tomorrow's cause list of the HC bench comprising Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice SM Masud Hossain Dolon.

The petition was filed by Supreme Court lawyers Aynunnahar Siddiqua and Manzur-Al-Matin on July 29 seeking HC orders for the immediate release of the six coordinators of the quota reform protests from law enforcers' custody and stopping the use of live rounds on protesters' demonstrations.

The HC bench held hearing on the petition on July 29 and 30 amid chaos and commotion in the packed courtroom and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

SYLHET FLOOD

66,584 houses damaged in three districts

MINTU DESHWARA, *Moulvibazar*

As their house was damaged in the ongoing flood, Aftab Uddin's family has been living in Bara Maidan High School shelter for 23 days at Talimpur union in Barlekha upazila, Moulvibazar.

The floodwaters have yet to recede fully from their Murshibadkura village in the union.

Many families in this union, particularly those in the Hakaluki Haor areas, are in a similar peril.

Since the onset of the flood in Sylhet region on June 16, triggered by heavy rains and upstream waters, a total of 66,584 houses have so far been damaged in three districts, including 16,987 in Moulvibazar, 27,597 in Sylhet, and 22,000 in Sunamganj.

Unable to stay in their homes, many families sought refuge in shelters or at their relatives' houses, with the prolonged flood continuing to exacerbate their struggles.

Poor and marginalised people are particularly affected, facing severe challenges to manage their livelihoods, repairing their damaged homes, and providing for their families.

Even though the flood waters have receded considerably from most areas, many people are still unable to return to their homes due to the damages sustained to their houses.

"My mud hut was completely washed away in the flood. I have been compelled to borrow funds to repair the house as soon as possible, since my family would otherwise become homeless for prolonged time," said Satir Mia from Barlekha upazila.

Sumi Rani, district relief and rehabilitation officer in Habiganj, said they have yet to collect detailed damage reports for houses in the district and will be requesting updates from upazila officials for better assessment.

Mohammad Chadu Mia, district relief and rehabilitation officer in Moulvibazar, said they have sent a list of damages sustained in the flood to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, requesting funds for repair and reconstruction of affected homes.

Md Abdul Kuddus Bulbul, district relief and rehabilitation officer in Sylhet, said they are compiling a list of damages and preparing for rehabilitation efforts for those affected.

23 TRIPURA FAMILIES

Landslide threat looms large over them

MINTU DESHWARA, *from Habiganj*

The indigenous Tripura community has lived for generations in the Satchhari National Park of Chunarughat upazila, Habiganj.

However, the 23 families in the village now face constant fear due to landslides, a threat that has intensified over the past six years.

Relentless monsoon rains have eroded their homes and lands repeatedly, while sand and soil lifting from hill slopes in previous years worsened the situation.

Recently, five families abandoned their homes after landslides jeopardised their safety.

On July 13, the village's only bridge collapsed in another landslide, trapping the remaining 23 families.

Currently, these families live in fear as monsoon downpours continue.

"We've lived with the risk of landslides for years, but the situation has worsened. This year, the bridge collapsed, leaving us stranded," said Sumon Debbarma, a resident.

Shankar Tantubay recounted the recent landslide incident, "In the dead of night, a sudden landslide swept away a significant portion of the village and the bridge. We're now sheltered in the old forest department building."

Sand lifting, previously allowed, contributed to the rapid deterioration of the hill slopes.

"Our roads and trees have been destroyed, and life here has become unsafe," said a villager.

Village headman Chittaranjan Debbarma expressed frustration over the authorities' inaction.

"We've sought assistance from different places, but to no avail. Villagers fear losing everything if urgent action isn't taken."

In 2020, the Bangladesh Water Development Board proposed a Tk 8.21 crore project to protect 480 metres of hill slope in the village.

However, the ministry deemed the cost too high for the benefit of 28 families.

"We were born here. This place is precious to us, and we've always strived to preserve these hills," said Chittaranjan.

Ashish Debbarma, the assistant headman, echoed his sentiments.

Tofazzal Sohel, general secretary of the Habiganj unit of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, suggested constructing a guide-wall to protect the village from landslides.

Chunarughat Upazila Nirbahi Officer Ayesha Siddika said plans are underway to relocate the 23 families to a safe area within the reserve forest.

"The hill slopes are causing erosion and landslides, affecting not only the Tripura village but also other areas within the Satchari National Park. Efforts are on to protect the families and preserve their way of life amidst the challenges posed by erosion and landslides," she added.

Mother and daughter die as trawler capsizes

3 others remain missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Shariatpur*

A woman and her daughter died by drowning after a trawler capsized in the Meghna river in Magherchar area under Gosairhat upazila of Shariatpur yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Shahana Akhtar, 50, and her daughter Joli Akhtar, 26. The missing ones are Shahana's two sons Shanto and Shaon, and Shanto's friend Hridoy.

Meanwhile, at least five people were undergoing treatment at the local upazila health complex after being rescued.

Mohammad Akash, a rescued passenger, said, "Rough waves rocked the trawler sideways when a big wave suddenly hit it, causing it to sink."

The upazila administration launched a rescue operation after the incident yesterday, but had to call it off at 5:30pm due to inclement weather, said Pushpen Debnath, officer-in-charge of Gosairhat Police Station.

Quoting passengers of the trawler who survived the incident, the OC said that Shahana, a resident of Dhaka's Narinda area, was going to Magherchar with 10 others to see a prospective bride for her son and finalise the wedding date.

They boarded the trawler at Kodalpur Launch Ghat in Gosairhat around 10:00am yesterday.

Around 10:30am, the trawler capsized mid-river after losing control as strong waves due to rough weather started to rock the vessel.

Locals rescued eight persons and took them to Gosairhat upazila health complex.

Apologise and resign: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Fakhrul yesterday condemned the "attacks by law enforcement and ruling party activists" on students during their prayers and mass procession programme.

He called on the government to apologise and resign immediately.

"Law enforcement and cadres of Awami League, Chhatra League, and Jubo League carried out heinous armed attacks during today's prayer and mass procession program," he said in a statement.

Fakhrul criticised the government for shutting down various social media sites, including Facebook and Telegram, to disrupt yesterday's programme.

Vested people playing govt-vs-students game

Says Quader

BSS, *Dhaka*

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said even after fulfilling the students' demand for quota reform, a vested quarter is continuing an ill effort to gain its interest by playing the government-versus-students game.

He made the remark at a press conference held at the AL president's Dhanmondi political office.

Quader said students are not the opponents of the government in any situation.

He also said the scope of the judicial probe commission has been extended for a proper investigation into each killing.

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POLLS RESULTS

Venezuela opposition calls mass protests

AFP, *Caracas*

Venezuela's opposition leader Maria Corina Machado called Thursday for protests "in every city" in the nation today to denounce the disputed reelection of President Nicolas Maduro.

The oil-rich Latin American nation was plunged into political crisis after Maduro was announced the victor of Sunday's election -- a result that defied pre-election polls and has drawn global criticism.

"We must remain firm, organized and mobilized with the pride of having achieved a historic victory on July 28, and the awareness that to claim victory we will also go all the way," Machado said on social media.

Earlier Thursday, she wrote in the Wall Street Journal that she was in hiding and "fearing for my life" after Maduro's contested victory, which led to hundreds of arrests following deadly protests this week.

Machado reiterated her claim that opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia was the rightful winner, saying he won "67 percent to 30 percent" based on tallies obtained from most of the nation's polling stations.

VENEZUELA
LIBRE
FUERA MADURO

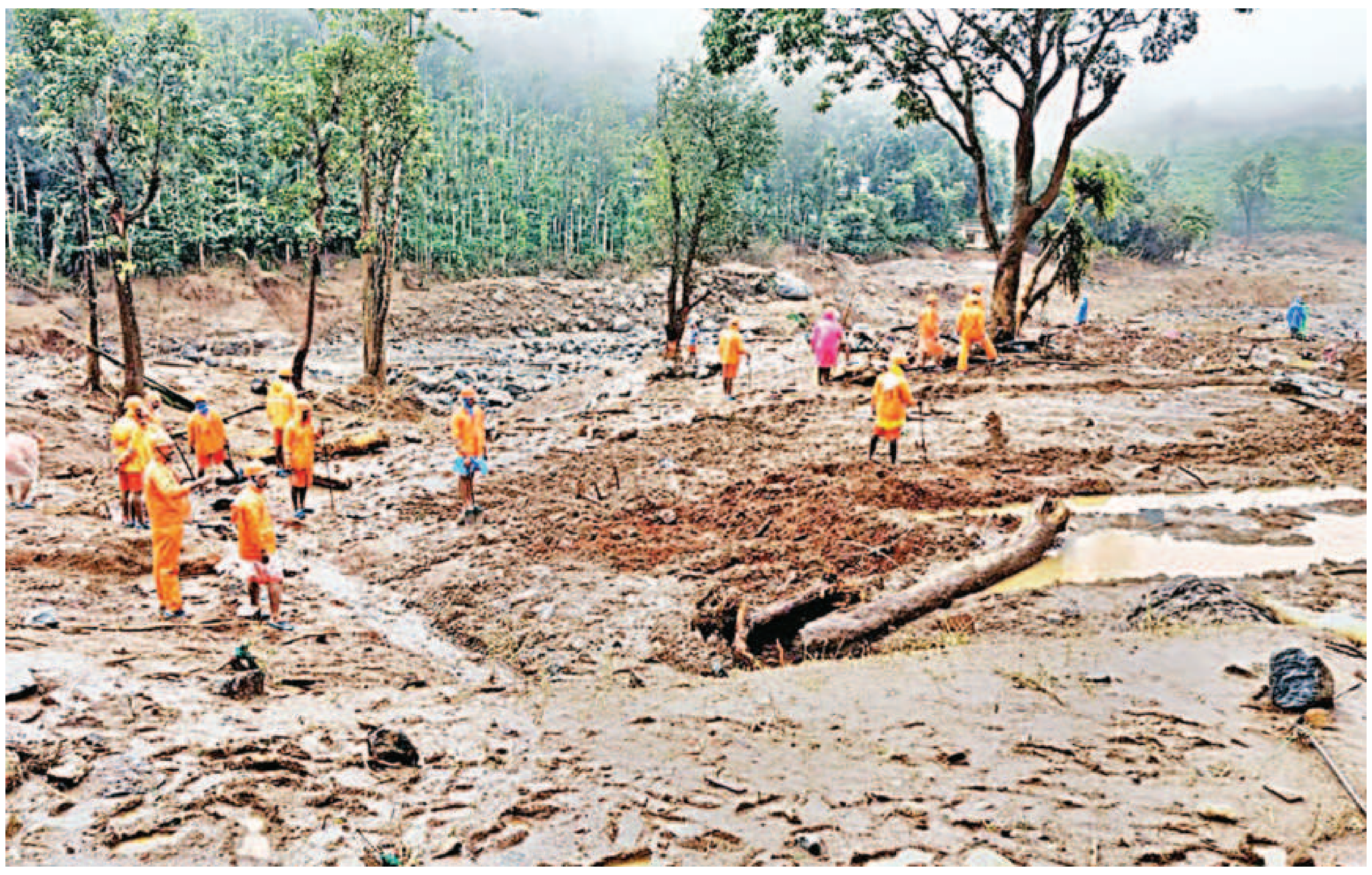
The government-aligned National Electoral Council declared that Maduro won with 51 percent of the vote. Maduro has said he has evidence of his victory and was "ready to present 100 percent of the records."

"You have blood on your hands," Maduro said Wednesday, referring to Gonzalez Urrutia and Machado. "They should be behind bars."

Machado -- who was barred from running in the election by institutions loyal to Maduro -- said most opposition figures were now in hiding.

"I could be captured as I write these words," Machado wrote, calling for "those who reject authoritarianism and support democracy to join the Venezuelan people in our noble cause."

In a message to his supporters, Gonzalez Urrutia wrote on X: "I will never leave you alone, and I will always defend your will!"



In this handout photograph taken yesterday and released by India's National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), relief personnel conduct a search and rescue operation after the landslides in Wayanad, Kerala. Army teams yesterday pushed deeper into Indian tea plantations and villages struck by landslides that killed more than 200 people, working on the assumption that nobody was left alive to rescue.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Harris secures Democratic presidential nomination

AFP, *Washington*

US Vice President Kamala Harris effectively secured the Democratic party's presidential nomination yesterday, confirming her remarkable rise to party standard bearer in November's showdown against Republican Donald Trump.

Harris, 59, was the sole candidate on the ballot for a five-day electronic vote of nearly 4,000 party convention delegates. The first Black and South Asian woman ever to secure a major party's nomination, she will be officially crowned at a Chicago convention later this month.

"I am honored to be the presumptive Democratic nominee for president of the United States," Harris said on a phone-in to a party celebration after securing enough votes by the second day of the marathon virtual vote.

In the two weeks since Joe Biden ended his reelection bid, Harris has gained full control of the party, smashing fundraising records, packing arenas and erasing the polling leads Trump had built over the president.

"I couldn't be prouder," Biden posted on X after her nomination.

The nomination milestone came with Harris preparing to hit the campaign trail next week for a swing across seven crucial election states alongside her yet-to-be-named running mate.

The Democratic Party decided on a virtual nomination process -- departing with tradition and mirroring the procedure used in the pandemic-hit 2020 election -- because of an early deadline in Ohio for submitting the names of certified candidates.

The virtual roll call marks the official beginning of the 2024 convention, with the more traditional festivities getting going when thousands of party faithful descend on Chicago on August 19.

The gathering will feature a ceremonial vote for Harris in what is expected to be a raucous celebration of her rise from California prosecutor to historic candidate vying for the nation's highest office.

Trump's White House bid was turned upside down on July 21 when 81-year-old Biden, facing growing concerns about his age and lagging polling numbers, withdrew his candidacy and backed Harris.

WAVE OF MOMENTUM

Energetic and two decades younger than 78-year-old Trump, the vice president has made a fast start, raising $310 million in July, according to her campaign -- more than double Trump's haul.

She and her running mate are scheduled to rally Tuesday in Pennsylvania -- a crucial swing state, where Democratic Governor Josh Shapiro is on the shortlist to join Harris's ticket.

Biden beat Trump in Pennsylvania in 2020 by around 80,000 votes and it is seen as the biggest prize of the closely fought battlegrounds that decide the Electoral College system.

The Keystone State is part of the so-called blue wall that carried Biden to victory in 2020, alongside Michigan and Wisconsin, two states where Harris is due to woo crowds on Wednesday.

Harris will also tour the more racially diverse Sun Belt and southern states of Georgia, North Carolina Arizona, North Carolina and Nevada as she seeks to shore up the Black and Hispanic vote that had been peeling away from the Democrats.

In a sign that the Harris campaign is thinking big, US media reported that a raft of senior advisors from Barack Obama's own historic candidacies in 2008 and 2012 have taken up top positions with her.

Heat claims over 175,000 lives a yr in Europe: WHO

AFP, *Copenhagen*

Heat kills over 175,000 people a year in Europe, where temperatures are rising quicker than the rest of the globe, the World Health Organization's (WHO) European branch said Thursday.

Of the roughly 489,000 heat-related deaths recorded each year by the WHO between 2000 and 2019, the European region accounts for 36 percent, or on average 176,040 deaths, the WHO said.

The health body noted that temperatures in the region are "rising at around twice the global average rate."

The WHO's European region comprises 53 countries, including several in Central Asia.

"People are paying the ultimate price," Hans Kluge, the WHO's regional director for Europe, said in a statement.

According to the WHO, there has been a 30 percent increase in heat-related mortality in the region over the past two decades.

"Temperature extremes exacerbate chronic conditions, including cardiovascular, respiratory and cerebro-vascular diseases, mental health, and diabetes-related conditions," Kluge said.

He added that extreme heat can in particular be a problem for elderly people and be an "additional burden" for pregnant women.

Krasikov, freed by Germany, is FSB operative: Russia

AFP, *Moscow*

The Kremlin yesterday confirmed that Vadim Krasikov, freed by Germany in Thursday's prisoner swap deal with the West, is an operative with Russia's FSB security service.

Moscow also said that the children of an undercover spy couple released by Slovenia did not even know they were Russian until they boarded the plane back to Moscow.

"Krasikov is an FSB employee," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters yesterday, adding that he served in the agency's elite and secretive "Alpha" unit.

Peskov also said that Krasikov "served with some of the people working in the president's security detail".

Krasikov was serving a life sentence in Germany for the murder of a Chechen rebel commander in a Berlin park in 2019 -- an assassination that German judges said was ordered by the Russian state.

An investigation by Bellingcat had previously found Krasikov had links to Russia's FSB, though yesterday's admission was the first time Moscow has publicly confirmed he was an FSB agent.

Putin on Thursday had hailed the return of the Russian prisoners -- some of whom he said had "a direct connection" to the military -- telling them: "The Motherland never forgot about you."

Peskov confirmed that a Russian couple released from Slovenia were also spies.

France's medals

FROM PAGE 12

as the wild acclaim for superstar swimmer Leon Marchand shows.

"The bet is off to a good start and perhaps even beyond our greatest hopes, but we remain focused on what comes next and are very clear about the difficulty," Claude Onesta, a successful former handball coach and the architect of France's high-performance sports strategy, said in radio interview on Friday.

In 2017, the year Paris was awarded the 2024 Olympics, French sports officials concluded that the country's national sporting excellence plan needed a reboot, said Yann Cucherat, a former gymnast turned sports official who will lead high performance at France's National Sports Agency after the Games.

France's strategy had not changed since one unveiled for the 1960 Olympics in Rome, and French officials had watched with a mixture of admiration and envy as the British strategy for the 2012 Games in London paid off handsomely, with 29 gold medals for Britain, Cucherat said.

"In high-performance sports, if you're stagnating, you're regressing," Cucherat told Reuters.

France came seventh with 11 golds in 2012, remained in the same spot in Rio de Janeiro with 10 golds but slipped to eighth in Tokyo in 2021 despite winning the same tally.

In 2019, France created the National Sports Agency with the Paris Games five years later as its north star, Cucherat said. Under the control of Onesta, the agency's "Blue Ambition" plan outlined a pathway to success in Paris.

French officials studied the British 2012 model, but chose not to copy it. Onesta told Le Figaro that British officials sought to inculcate sporting excellence in schools, while France sought to lift up levels in clubs across the country.

"We wanted to do it in a French way," Cucherat said.

78 HSC examinees get bail

FROM PAGE 12

take their remaining Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exams, it added.

However, these students have not been cleared of the charges brought against them, said their parents and lawyers. They demanded that the cases against them be withdrawn as soon as possible saying it would put undue pressure on the students ahead of their exams.

In Dhaka, two courts granted bail to 42 college students, who were arrested in 33 violence cases.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam granted bail to 37 examinees, while Dhaka Senior Judicial Magistrate M Mustafizur Rahman granted bail to five examinees, reports our court correspondent.

Earlier in the day, the defence filed separate petitions with these two courts, seeking bail for the 42 college students.

Of them, 37 were arrested in 29 cases filed with 14 police stations in Dhaka city, while five were arrested in four cases filed in Savar, Ashulia, and South Keraniganj.

The charges in the cases mostly included illegal gathering, rioting, assaulting police, damaging properties, and arson attacks.

Meanwhile, according to multiple media reports, two Chattogram courts granted bail to 16 HSC examinees.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Md Shahidul Islam granted bail to three students while Chattogram Metropolitan Magistrates Md Oli Ullah granted bail to 13.

They passed the order after their guardians appealed to the court, said public prosecutor Iftekhar Saimul Chowdhury.

According to court and Chattogram prison sources, more than 130 students have so far been arrested across the port city and district in violence cases.

In Satkhira, a district court granted bail to six HSC examinees.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Court Judge Md Salauddin Ahmed passed the order in the evening, said defence lawyer Abdul Mazid.

The six students were arrested along with 10 others on charges of attacking police and obstructing government work.

According to ministry press release, the law minister has directed the prosecution team (prosecutors) across the country to be proactive in granting bail to students arrested over the recent violence.

On Thursday, separate press releases from the home and education ministries stated that if any detainees involved in recent violent incidents are current HSC examinees, they would be provided legal assistance for securing bail.

Furthermore, the government would also provide legal assistance for the bail of detained students against whom there are no serious charges.

Meanwhile, the education ministry requested that any information regarding the detention of other HSC examinees be sent to helphsc24@gmail.com.

[Our Dhaka, Chattogram, and Satkhira correspondents contributed to this report.]

Facebook again blocked for 7hrs

FROM PAGE 12

Student Movement to condemn the killings and arrests of protesters over the quota reform protests.

The sources said an agency under the Ministry of Home Affairs instructed mobile operators to enforce the restrictions around noon.

Officials of mobile service operators said they were asked to lift the restrictions in the evening.

Mobile data users said they could access the Facebook and Messenger services around 7:00pm.

The service shutdown came after the government blocked social media services like Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp and YouTube across the country on July 17 amid widespread violence over the quota reform protests.

As the violence escalated further, mobile internet was shut down across the country the next day. At least 12.7 crore people use mobile internet in the country.

A day later, on July 18, broadband internet was blocked severely affecting public life and a wide range of economic activities including utility bill payments, online banking, international communications, clearance of goods from ports and digital commerce.

The government restored broadband internet on a limited scale on July 23.

Mobile internet was resumed on July 28 while social media platforms were unblocked on July 31.

Yesterday, Telegram, a messaging platform that allows users to send large files, was blocked.

The Daily Star called State Minister for Telecoms and ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak multiple times after the service disruption, but his mobile phone was unreachable.

PALAK APOLOGISES

Meanwhile, Palak at an event yesterday sought apology from the young generation for internet disruption and failure to prevent rumours on social media.

He said this while addressing a discussion organised by Singra upazila Awami League at his residence in Singra of Natore, marking the month of mourning, in the afternoon.

Palak said, "If I have made any mistakes, as a worker of Sheikh Hasina, and Awami League, I apologise publicly. I also take responsibility for the internet disruption, and failure to prevent rumours on social media. I promise to accept any punishment or decision in this regard."

Palak said it is not the students' fault for the distance created. "It is our fault. This is our responsibility... we cannot avoid this failure," he added.

"Please don't misunderstand people's leader Sheikh Hasina. If she is not safe, then Bangladesh will not be safe," he said.

Statement from DB office

FROM PAGE 12

The six were released from DB custody around noon on Thursday.

"We did not voluntarily give the video message about the withdrawal of the movement from the DB office. No decision on the anti-discrimination student movement can come from the DB office. No decision will be taken as final without the participation of all coordinators and agitating students across the country."

They said in the statement that they were forced to sit on the dining table and then the video statement was forcibly filmed.

"It was assured that we would be released, so our families were called and made to sit for 13 hours and false statements were made to the media. When our teachers came to meet us, they were not allowed to."

They said they sought safety and assurances that they would not be victims of enforced disappearances, arrested, or tortured.

"We wanted to guarantee our right to express. But we were kept in DB custody unconstitutionally and illegally. At first, we were told about security, but later they talked about the court, [that] we cannot be released without a court order."

"No one can be safe in the custody of those who shoot and kill unarmed students and citizens. We don't want this farce security from the government, we want justice for the murder of our brothers and sisters.

"Nahid Islam, Asif Mahmud, and Abu Baker started a hunger strike at the DB office on July 30 in protest of the unjust arrest of the coordinators, and arrest and torture of the students across the country. Later, Sarjis Alam, Hasnat Abdullah, and Nusrat Tabassum also joined the hunger strike."

They said that the hunger strike was kept secret from the family and the media. After over 32 hours of hunger strike, it was called off when the DB chief gave the final decision to free the six coordinators.

"In the last seven days, harassment, torture, and a drama were staged with us and our families in the DB office. We strongly condemn and protest it," they said.

"We were unjustly detained on the orders of the home minister. The government has put law enforcers face-to-face with students and citizens. The government is still continuing its repression on the students and continuing to arrest and torture of the protesting students in the country and continuing to obstruct peaceful programmes.

"The anti-discrimination student movement will continue demanding the trial of the killing of students and citizens and the release of the detained innocent people. Students and citizens across the country will be urged to take to the streets defying the government's propaganda and repression. The blood of the martyrs will not go in vain," the statement ended.

Israel's 'end getting closer than ever'

FROM PAGE 12

Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani also attended.

Senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told Reuters by phone: "Our message to the occupation (Israel) today is that you are sinking deep in the mud and your end is getting closer than ever. The blood of Haniyeh will change all equations."

105 more held

FROM PAGE 12

and several hundred thousand unnamed individuals

The cases were filed mostly by the law enforcers at different police stations over violence, vandalism, arson, and killings.

Unprecedented violence gripped the country since mid-July when students' protests for quota reform in government jobs turned violent following attacks by ruling party men on protesters. More than 200 people have lost their lives since then.

Airlines avoid some Mideast airspace

Cancel flights to Israel as tensions mount

REUTERS

Airlines are avoiding Iranian and Lebanese airspace and cancelling flights to Israel and Lebanon, as concerns grow over a possible conflict in the region after the killing of senior members of Hamas and Hezbollah this week.

Singapore Airlines yesterday appeared to no longer be using Iranian airspace for any of its routes, according to flight tracker Flightradar24. The airline did not respond to a request for comment.

Taiwan's EVA Air and China Airlines also appeared to be avoiding Iran airspace for flights to Amsterdam yesterday which previously had flown over Iran, Flightradar24 data showed.

In a bulletin, OPSGROUP, a membership-based organisation that shares flight risk information, advised traffic between Asia and Europe to avoid Iranian and Iraqi airspace, a day after sources told Reuters that top Iranian officials will meet the representatives of Iran's regional allies from Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen to discuss potential retaliation against Israel.

Many airlines, including US and European airlines, already avoid flying over Iran. Singapore Airlines' flight to London Heathrow early yesterday went north of Iran through Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, rather than crossing through Iran as it did the day before, Flightradar24 showed.

However, a significant number of airlines were still flying over Iran yesterday, including United Arab Emirates carriers Etihad, Emirates EMIRA. UL and FlyDubai, as well as Qatar Airways and Turkish Airlines.

Over the past two days, Air India AIRID. UL, Germany's Lufthansa Group LHAG.DE, U.S. carriers United Airlines UAL.O and Delta Air DAL.N, and Italy's ITA Airways said they had suspended flights to Tel Aviv.

Mourners attend the funeral of victims of an Israeli raid in the southern Lebanese village of Shama (Chamaa) yesterday. The Lebanese health ministry said four Syrians were killed in the Israeli strike on the south, where Hezbollah and Israel have exchanged near-daily fire since the Gaza offensive began in October.
PHOTO: AFP

ISRAELI OFFENSIVE IN PALESTINIAN ENCLAVE

Nearly two-thirds of Gaza buildings damaged: UN

AFP, *Geneva*

Nearly two-thirds of the buildings in the Gaza Strip have been damaged or destroyed since the Gaza offensive began in October, the United Nations said yesterday.

"UNOSAT's latest damage building assessment, based on satellite imagery... reveals that 151,265 structures have been affected in the Gaza Strip," the UN Satellite Centre said.

"Of these, 30 percent were destroyed, 12 percent severely damaged, 36 percent moderately damaged, and 20 percent possibly damaged, representing approximately 63 percent of the total structures in the region."

The assessment was based on comparing imagery from May 2023 onward with images from July 6 this year.

"The impact on civilian infrastructure is evident, with thousands of homes and essential facilities being damaged," the agency said.

Israel's campaign against Hamas has killed at least 39,498 people in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry, which does not give details of civilian and militant deaths.

UNOSAT said the total debris in the Gaza Strip generated by the conflict amounts to approximately 41.95 million metric tonnes.

The figure is up 83 percent from the nearly 23 million tonnes estimated on January 7.

The conflict has resulted in 14 times more debris than the combined total from all previous conflicts in the Palestinian territory since 2008, UNOSAT said.

The agency estimated that 114 kilogrammes (250 pounds) of debris were generated for each square metre in the Gaza Strip.

Geneva-based UNOSAT says its satellite imagery-based analysis helps the humanitarian community assess the extent of conflict-related damage and helps shape emergency relief efforts.

Meanwhile, France yesterday urged its nationals visiting Iran to leave immediately, after Tehran accused Israel of killing a leader of Palestinian group Hamas on its soil, sparking regional tensions.

"Due to the increased risk of a military escalation in the region, visiting French nationals still in Iran are invited to leave as soon as possible," the foreign ministry said.

The killing of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in a pre-dawn attack on Wednesday in Tehran has deepened fears of a regional war.

Tehran, as well as the Iran-backed Hamas and Lebanese Hezbollah movements, have blamed Israel, which has not commented.

It has however claimed responsibility for the killing just hours earlier of senior Hezbollah military commander Fuad Shukr in Beirut's southern suburbs.

Israel advanced last year the highest number of settlements in the occupied West Bank since the Oslo Accords of the 1990s, the European Union's representative office in the Palestinian territories said yesterday.

Plans for 12,349 housing units moved towards approval in the West Bank, the EU office said, warning of the impact on a potential two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Hezbollah resumes steady artillery fire against Israel

REUTERS, *Beirut*

Hezbollah forces yesterday resumed rocket and artillery attacks against Israel, ending the lull along the border following Israel's killing of the Lebanese group's military commander in Beirut.

Hezbollah said it had fired a surface-to-air missile at an Israeli warplane flying in Lebanese airspace overnight and forced it to turn back. Its forces also carried out two artillery attacks and two rocket strikes at military positions in northern Israel, it said.

The Israeli military said in a statement it had successfully intercepted an aerial target coming from Lebanon into the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire hit several villages in southern Lebanon yesterday, according to Lebanese state media, a day after an Israeli strike killed at least five Syrian migrant workers in southern Lebanon, according to medics.

The Israeli military also said it had hit two Hezbollah fighters in southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said in an address on Thursday that he had ordered calm along the border following the Israeli airstrike in Beirut on Tuesday that killed military commander Fuad Shukr out of respect for the victims and to consider what the next steps should be.

The strike on the Hezbollah stronghold of Dahiyeh in Beirut's southern suburbs also killed an Iranian military adviser and five civilians.

Trump calls US-Russia prisoner swap 'win for Putin'

AFP, *Washington*

Former US president Donald Trump said yesterday the prisoner swap between the United States and Russia was a "win" for President Vladimir Putin as he continued to offer baseless speculation over the details of the agreement.

Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, two other Americans and a green card holder are back in the United States after being freed by Putin as part of a massive, multi-country East-West prisoner exchange.

Trump set out in an interview with Fox Business why the exchange was bad news for America as he sought to downplay President Joe Biden's success in securing the deal. "The Russians made a great deal. I'm not going to criticize it, because it's good to have them home, but they got a phenomenal deal, and that sets a very bad precedent," he said, calling it a "win for Putin."

Gershkovich, former Marine Paul Whelan and Russian-American journalist Alsu Kurmasheva, along with legal permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza, were among 16 prisoners released by Russia.

Volunteers of East SOS evacuate a woman from a hospital, as Russian forces advance across the frontlines in the Donetsk region, in Kostiantynivka, Ukraine yesterday.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Firefighters struggle to contain California wildfire

REUTERS

A fast-moving wildfire has killed at least one person in the Rocky Mountain foothills of Colorado, one of a handful of blazes burning across the state, while thousands of firefighters in California struggled to contain the largest fire in the country.

The individual killed in the Stone Canyon Fire, burning about 20 miles (32 km) north of Boulder, Colorado, was found on Wednesday in one of five homes destroyed near Rocky Mountain National Park, officials said.

"We did also today discover human remains in one of the residences," Boulder County Sheriff Curtis Johnson told journalists. "So, I can confirm for you that we do have one fatality associated with the fire."

Johnson did not provide details on the individual's identity.

The Stone Canyon Fire, near Lyons, a community of about 2,000, has burned more than 1,500 acres (600 hectares) since Tuesday afternoon. It was 30 percent contained as of Thursday evening, according to Nathan Hallam, the fire incident commander on scene, who added that he hoped to see the fire begin to shrink significantly by Sunday or Monday.

Evacuation orders were lifted for all of Lyons on Thursday afternoon, along with some outlying areas to the south and west of the blaze.

Meanwhile, another fire is within about 500 yards (457 meters) of some homes in far southwest Denver.

The Quarry Fire burned 420 acres by Thursday afternoon, according to local fire officials. Firefighters were focusing on keeping the fire on the south side of a road and away from those homes.

30 killed in heavy rain, floods in Pakistan

REUTERS, *Lahore*

Floods brought by torrential rains in Pakistan caused damage that killed at least 30 people this week, authorities said yesterday, as the second-largest city of Lahore was drenched in the most rainfall it has received in more than four decades.

The arrival of the monsoon season has sparked floods and landslides across South Asia in the past week, with at least 195 killed and almost 200 missing in one disaster in neighbouring India.

Rain pummelled Pakistan's north, causing floods, building collapses and heightening the risk of electrocution.

"The 44-year-old rainfall record was broken in Lahore once again," said utilities officials in the northeastern province of Punjab, where authorities tallied six deaths and warned that flash floods were expected in the south this week.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 12 children were among the two dozen people who died in the last three days of rains and floods in the northwestern province, Anwar Shehzad, a spokesman for its disaster management agency, told Reuters.

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ভাড়ায় এয়ারকন্ডিশন্ড সিডান কার সরবরাহের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১।	এজেন্সি	:	ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানি লিঃ (ডেসকো)
২।	দরপত্রের নাম	:	ভাড়ায় এয়ারকন্ডিশন্ড সিডান কার (চালকসহ) সরবরাহ
৩।	দরপত্র নং	:	৩০/২০২৪
৪।	দরপত্রের বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং ও তাং	:	স্মারক নং: ২৭.২৪.০০০০.০২১.০৭.০৩০.২৪.১০৬৮; তারিখঃ ০১/০৮/২০২৪
৫।	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (এক পর্যায় দুই খাম বিশিষ্ট)।
৬।	কাজের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	:	ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ডেসকো)'র কর্মকর্তাদের অফিসে যাতায়াতসহ দাপ্তরিক কাজে সার্বক্ষনিক ব্যবহারের নিমিত্ত ৩০ (ত্রিশ)টি এয়ারকন্ডিশন্ড সিডান কার (চালকসহ) ২৪ মাস এর জন্য ভাড়ায় গ্রহণ। উল্লেখ্য, সরবরাহতব্য গাড়ী সমূহ ২০১৮ বা তৎপরবর্তী সময়ে বিআরটিএ কর্তৃক রেজিস্ট্রেশন করা হইতে হইবে। লট সংখ্যাঃ ০৩ (তিন) টি। *বিস্তারিত দরপত্রের তফশীলে উল্লেখ করা আছে।
৭।	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	:	১) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, e-TIN সনদপত্র এবং ভ্যাট নিবন্ধনের সনদপত্র। ২) সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠানের কমপক্ষে ০৩(তিন) বৎসর ভাড়ায় গাড়ী সরবরাহের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকিতে হইবে এবং এর স্বপক্ষে প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদি দাখিল করিতে হইবে। ৩) দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহনকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে ০৩(তিন) বৎসরের মধ্যে কমপক্ষে ০৩ (তিন) টি কার/মাইক্রোবাস/পিকআপ ভাড়ায় সরবরাহের অভিজ্ঞতা (ন্যূনতম ০৬ (ছয়) মাস ব্যাপী) থাকিতে হইবে। *বিস্তারিত দরপত্রের তফশীলে উল্লেখ করা আছে।
৮।	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	:	ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ডেসকো) এর অনুকূলে ৪,৬০০/- (চার হাজার ছয়শত) টাকার অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (ভ্যাট সহ) সংযুক্ত করে উপ-মহাব্যবস্থাপক (হিসাব) বরাবরে দাখিলকৃত আবেদনের ভিত্তিতে ডেসকো'র অর্থ ও হিসাব বিভাগ হইতে দরপত্র শিডিউল সংগ্রহ করা যাইবে।
৯।	দরপত্র জামানত	:	দরপত্র জমাদানকালে দরপত্র জামানত হিসাবে ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ডেসকো)-এর অনুকূলে প্রতিটি লটে (লট-১/২/৩) অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আলাদাভাবে ৪,০০,০০০.০০ (চার লক্ষ) টাকার পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি দরপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করিতে হইবে।
১০।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের স্থান	:	অর্থ ও হিসাব বিভাগ, ডেসকো'র সদর দপ্তর, ২২/বি, কবি ফররুখ সরণি, নিকুঞ্জ- ২, খিলক্ষেত, ঢাকা-১২২৯।
১১।	দরপত্র জমাদান/গ্রহণের স্থান	:	(১) প্রকিউরমেন্ট, ইন্সপেকশন এন্ড টেস্টিং বিভাগ, সদর দপ্তর, ডেসকো ২২/বি, কবি ফররুখ সরণি, নিকুঞ্জ- ২, খিলক্ষেত, ঢাকা-১২২৯। (২) নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী'র কার্যালয়, উত্তরা (পূর্ব) বিক্রয় ও বিতরণ বিভাগ, ডেসকো ২০-২১ শাহজালাল এভিনিউ, সেক্টর-৬, উত্তরা, ঢাকা।
১২।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	:	২৭/০৮/২০২৪ইং, বিকাল ৪:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত। উল্লিখিত তারিখের পর কোন দরপত্র তফশীল বিক্রয় করা হইবে না।
১৩।	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	২৮/০৮/২০২৪ইং, বেলা ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৪।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	:	২৮/০৮/২০২৪ইং, বেলা ০২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
১৫	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	:	প্রকিউরমেন্ট, ইন্সপেকশন এন্ড টেস্টিং বিভাগ, সদর দপ্তর, ডেসকো। ২২/বি, ফারুক সরণী, নিকুঞ্জ- ২, ঢাকা-১২২৯।
১৬।	বিশেষ নির্দেশনা	:	দরপত্র প্রক্রিয়ার যে কোন পর্যায়ে যে কোন/সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা ডেসকো কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক সংরক্ষিত।

তারিখঃ আগস্ট ০১, ২০২৪ ইং
স্মারক নং: ২৭.২৪.০০০০.০২১.০৭.০৩০.২৪.১০৬৮

প্রকৌঃ মোহাম্মদ কামরুজ্জামান
তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী (পি,আই এন্ড টি)

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Mass arrests causing mass suffering

Govt risks further alienation by continuing crackdown

We fail to comprehend what the government thinks it can achieve through its continued crackdown, which has so far seen at least 10,947 individuals arrested in 674 cases filed in Dhaka and 51 other districts between July 18 and August 1. Is it to pursue justice for the violent events of July 18-21? Is it to buttress its narrative of BNP-Jamaat orchestrating the unrest? Is it to punish students, activists, and anyone who dared to stand up against its security forces and party cadres? Is it to disabuse citizens of the notion that those security forces—including police and BGB—were to blame for the killing of over 200 people? Or is it simply an attempt, ludicrous as it may be, to force-restore public order?

Whatever it is, it is not working. It is not the right way. And it is backfiring, if the rising backlash against government handling of recent events is any indication. So far, the law enforcement focus has been mainly twofold: conduct raids and arrests for the July 18-21 events, and suppress public outbursts at the killings. Even yesterday, shots were fired during protests demanding justice for the killings, with a hearing on a writ petition seeking court order to prevent firing delayed earlier. If we are to stick to the legal measures taken by law enforcers, many disturbing trends about their arrests and case filings have also come to light.

From conducting "block raids" to illegally abducting six key coordinators of quota reform protests to bringing trumped-up charges against listed political rivals to inflating the age of minors implicated in cases to falsifying First Information Reports (FIR) to grossly violating Supreme Court guidelines for arrests and remand to allegedly engaging in "arrest business"—the list of objectionables reported in the media is quite long. This runs in the face of claims by the home minister that the arrests are being made "based on evidence," and not as part of any mass arrest campaign. We have earlier commented on how the mass arrests and block raids, often targeting students involved in quota reform protests, have created widespread panic. Now, the legal hassles facing the arrestees and their families will no doubt add to the overall environment of anger and distrust, further alienating the government.

The recent change in government tone—as evidenced by the slowdown in lamentation for destroyed public infrastructure, shifting focus to the unprecedented tragedy that accompanied it, and signalling openness to international cooperation in investigations—is still seen suspiciously by the protesters out there, and for that, ongoing legal measures by the government are largely responsible. Clearly, building trust has to start from the grounds up. The wounds from those days of reckless firing cannot be healed by reckless arresting. If the government really wants the public to keep faith in its sincerity to conduct a fair and thorough investigation into the July tragedy, it must stop these law enforcement excesses and make way for an independent probe of international standards. It must bring the light on the role of its own security forces in killings.

Take steps to clear port backlogs

Return of regular export-import activities at Ctg port is vital

The deep scars left on our economy by the ongoing curfew and five-day-long internet shutdown (along with internet disruptions that have lasted much longer) are slowly emerging to the surface. Almost all business sectors have been hit hard, including import-export. As per a report by *Prothom Alo*, international trading activities at Chattogram port, which handles 87 percent of the country's import-export activities, are yet to return to normal, causing continuous business losses and reducing government revenue collection.

For nearly a week, internet blackout hampered the customs clearance process of both export and import consignments. Although internet services have been restored of late, the backlog of activities, which came to a halt between July 20 and 22, will reportedly take at least 10 to 15 days to be cleared. Currently, cargo ships are having to wait three to five days to enter the port instead of the usual one-day delay. It's increasing the cost for importers, who have to pay $10,000 to $50,000 per day for such delays. This not only increases import costs, which are ultimately transferred onto consumers, but the late arrival of imported raw materials to the factories means a delay in manufacturing as well.

For the RMG sector, the long-term implication is failure to meet delivery deadlines and thus the risk of losing buyers to other competing countries. Previously, we warned that the government's repressive way of handling the quota reform movement and subsequent violence would tarnish Bangladesh's image as a stable investment partner. As trade activities struggle to return to normal, and businesses continue to take the hit, the fear of losing our hold on foreign markets is turning into a reality. Even retailers selling imported goods are not spared. The late arrival of a huge amount of stock all at the same time might push the price of products down. Plus, the quality of perishable goods, when released late from the port, is also bound to be compromised.

Thus, it is essential that the authorities take all steps necessary to clear port backlogs urgently. Immediate remedies may include increasing manpower not just at the Chattogram port but all other ports handling cargos, making the customs clearance process faster and easier by reducing interim steps, and increasing the capacity of customs officials. The government also must acknowledge that its ability to reduce tensions by addressing the grievances of protesters properly and to keep the economy afloat through supportive measures is being seriously questioned in the business world, too. It must rise to the occasion and take lessons from its failures for the sake of the nation's future.

Death without weeping

BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Dr Shamsad Mortuza *is professor of English at Dhaka University.*

SHAMSAD MORTUZA

We enter the mournful month of August, a time burdened with the memory of excruciating tragedy. The unseen amount of bloodshed witnessed in July has also left an indelible mark on our collective consciousness. As a nation born through the legacy of blood, violence is not unfamiliar to us. However, the recent deaths during the ongoing student protests are grotesque, marking a significant turning point. To paraphrase Lenin, decades have happened in the last two weeks that otherwise would not have happened in decades.

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, whose death alongside his family members we mourn in August, was a spearhead of many student movements that have pierced through our national history. The estimated death tolls in the Language Movement of 1952 were 12; in the 1969 Mass Uprising, it was 61; in the Dhaka University massacre of March 25, 1971, it was over 220; and in the anti-Ershad protest of the 1990s, it was around 50. In the first three instances, the perpetrators were occupying forces or outsiders, and in the last, a dictator turned against his own people. This time though, witnessing at least 200 deaths, mainly students, in two weeks at the hands of our fellow citizens adds an unprecedented layer to our sorrow. This occurred under the leadership of a prime minister who had earlier survived a devastating grenade attack that claimed 24 lives in one fatal August. The moist soil of freshly buried July victims and the earth under which the deceased victims of past violence rest highlight the urgent need for peace and stability. Enough blood has been spilt. Now we need water to wash away the sins, the guilt, and the blood.

We require compassionate individuals like Mugdho, who bravely made his way through the crowd to distribute water bottles to the protesters, asking, "Does anyone need water?" His water bottles emptied our hearts and moistened our eyes. His death, among many, urges us to escape the cycle of violence and demands a critical engagement with the triangle of violence defining this moment. To climb out of this hole, we must retrace the steps that led us here.

Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung's theory of the interconnected triangle of direct, structural, and cultural violence offers an explanation. The most visible tip of the triangle right now is "direct violence," epitomised by the police brutality leading to hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries, and numerous arrests. Despite attempts by police and government spokespersons to blame hidden forces exploiting the situation, citizen journalism empowers us to see clearly and form our own conclusions. While it is true that students became aggressive in response to police violence, this does not justify the use of live ammunition by law enforcers, hyper-incarcerations, and cyber-surveillance. Indeed, unidentified mobs vandalised state property, but real-time efforts to safeguard national property appeared insufficient. The high number of casualties in the streets underscores one brute fact: the authorities and their auxiliary forces unleashed unprecedented violence to quash these young protesters across the country.

This leads us to the unseen origin of the scourge that Galtung speaks of: "structural violence." In this context, "structure" denotes a pattern of collective social action that has achieved a degree of permanence, while "violence" signifies the suffering and injustice deeply ingrained in ordinary, taken-for-granted patterns. The Students against Discrimination movement dared to challenge the system that rendered life predictable, secure, and comfortable for a privileged few. For the majority outside the inner circle, poverty, insecurity, ill health, and violence are prevalent. For them, the only way out was through collective social action aimed at changing the system.

The allocation of 56 percent of government jobs under different quotas, including 30 percent for descendants of freedom fighters, was symptomatic of underlying structural violence. The introduction of over 100 universities and thousands of colleges over the last three decades has created a desire for upward social mobility. In an emerging economy, the myth of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, international jobs, and startups fostered the aspiration that a peasant's son need not remain a peasant. Therefore, they perceive the quota system as a hindrance to the recognition of meritorious individuals. The soaring unemployment rate exacerbates this issue. Sixty-six percent of national university students are jobless. The official unemployment rate is 3.51 percent, while the World Bank puts it higher at 4.7 percent in 2022. They see that the private sector is much more receptive to candidates with better communication skills or family backgrounds. They observe that elites send their children to English medium schools and pursue higher education abroad. The deep-seated anger is not random. That's why a rickshaw puller or a street hawker fights alongside a student for a cause that does not immediately affect them. The problem is not quotas, but rather discriminatory structural violence.

"Cultural violence," the third corner of Galtung's triangle, encompasses aspects of culture that justify or legitimise both direct and structural forms of violence. To upset the students' protest, the government is fighting a two-pronged war: direct violence and cultural violence. It is no coincidence that the manipulation of identity politics has come to light. The vilification of rightful demands for justice and equality is prevalent. The authorities employ political language to dehumanise demonstrators and rationalise their violent response. This cultural violence will perpetuate the cycle of oppression, creating a narrative that obscures the legitimate grievances of the underprivileged and normalises their marginalisation.

How do we exit this self-made hole? First, we need decency and prudence to tell the truth. Then, we need to ensure justice and reparation. Only then can we achieve reconciliation. Reconciliation cannot occur without truth-telling, accountability, and a commitment to dismantling the structures of violence that perpetuate inequality and injustice. Like the pandemic, this moment of crisis presents an opportunity for transformation. We can access change through this portal. We must seize this opportunity to build a more equitable and just society where every young person has the chance to thrive. The lives of the fallen students must inspire the change we so desperately need.

We must seize this moment to build a more equitable and just society where every young person has the chance to thrive.

FILE PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

Will a normal day ever come?

Shrobona Shafique Dipti *is an independent researcher of urban anthropology.*

SHROBONA SHAFIQUE DIPTI

After finishing her lunch, six-year-old Riya went to play on the rooftop of her family's home in Narayanganj. Tragically, her innocent moment was abruptly shattered when a bullet from a law enforcement raid struck her in the head. Similar tragedies have unfolded across Dhaka: four-year-old Ahad was shot while standing on his balcony with his parents, just as he was closing a window—everyday activities violently interrupted by the chaos of violence.

These incidents underscore how even the sanctuaries of home, like balconies and rooftops, are not immune to the reach of violence. This situation calls to mind the experiences shared by Bisan from Gaza, whose Instagram reels poignantly capture the mass-scale violence and disruption in Palestine.

Veena Das, a prominent anthropologist, offers profound insights into how violence permeates and affects everyday life. Her work emphasises that violence is not merely an event, but a process that deeply influences daily routines, relationships, and the broader social fabric.

Das explores the concept of "everyday violence," illustrating how acts of violence, whether state-sponsored or otherwise, are not isolated incidents, but rather deeply intertwined with the daily experiences of individuals and communities. In her studies, she highlights how violence can reshape the very essence of daily life, creating a climate of fear, insecurity, and disruption that affects everything from personal interactions to community cohesion.

The recent violence in Dhaka and the rest of the country has fostered an atmosphere of pervasive fear and insecurity. Students are increasingly subjected to raids, with many being rushed to hospitals with serious injuries. A recent report in *The Daily Star* highlighted the case of Mehedi, a student who was shot and injured. His father's poignant remark, "I will never tell anyone to send their kids to school again," captures the profound mistrust and anxiety that now pervade the community.

These incidents extend beyond temporary disruptions; they inflict lasting psychological scars. Veena Das's concept of "everyday violence" provides a framework for understanding this issue. She asserts that violence permeates the routine aspects of life, embedding fear deeply into the daily experience. The state's pervasive violence in Dhaka permeates the social fabric, eroding trust and safety. This atmosphere of fear significantly affects social interactions and community cohesion, making it increasingly difficult for people to feel secure in public spaces.

The frequent block raids and the mistreatment of individuals, exemplified by the unlawful arrest and brutal handling of 17-year-old Hasnatul Islam Faiyaz, who was bound with ropes, intensify this sense of insecurity. Such actions inflict immediate harm and contribute to a broader climate of fear, destabilising the sense of safety and stability in everyday life.

My room that once served as a sanctuary of personal expression, marked by yellow curtains and cherished books, is now overshadowed by the omnipresent influence of the authorities. The incessant noise of helicopters and the constant use of sound grenades, purportedly for protection, pervade our private spaces. What were once havens of safety have become zones of fear and control. The enforced immobility, isolation due to internet shutdowns, and the unyielding noise disrupt the peace and safety of our homes. Conversations with friends reveal this unsettling reality: one struggles with the rising cost of living, another cannot sleep without leaving the door open, feeling trapped and vulnerable.

This transformation is not merely physical, but profoundly psychological. James C Scott's *Seeing Like a State* provides a useful framework for understanding this impact. Scott explains how states impose their vision of order and control on society, often disregarding the complexities of local contexts. The deployment of helicopters and the relentless use of sound grenades, framed as protective measures, exemplify how the authorities' control extends to personal spaces, turning them into extensions of their surveillance and power.

Reflecting on the idea of normalcy amid this reconfigured time and space, it becomes evident that both public and private spheres are profoundly affected by pervasive violence. A return to normalcy seems increasingly unattainable. As Das notes, there is a "mutual absorption of the violent and the ordinary" in such contexts, where violence intertwines with the everyday, anchoring the event to the ordinary in specific ways. This intersection underscores how acts of violence permeate and redefine the ordinary, embedding fear and instability into the fabric of daily life.

Acknowledging these impacts is crucial for moving forward. The community requires systemic change to restore safety and normalcy, ensuring that personal spaces retain their privacy and public spaces are free from fear and violence. The act of witnessing, therefore, becomes vital—not merely as an observation but as a way to understand and address the intertwining of violence and ordinary life, seeking to unravel the pervasive influence of government-imposed disruptions.

Will this trauma ever be cancelled? Can we envision a future where such pervasive violence and control are no longer defining elements of our daily lives? How do we move from this deeply fractured state of existence to a place where normalcy, safety, and privacy can be truly restored?

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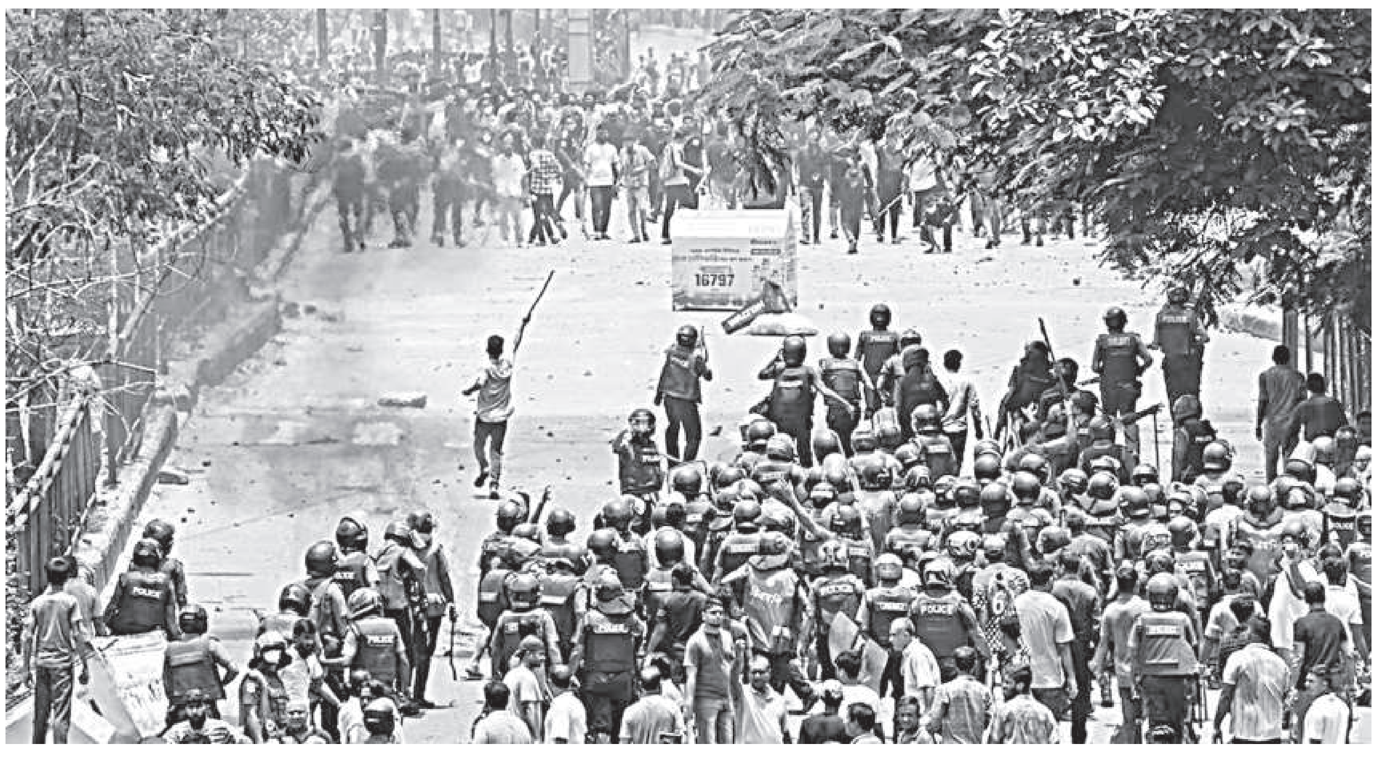

Police head towards a crowd of quota reform demonstrators in Dhaka on July 18, 2024. FILE PHOTO: **REUTERS**

When rule of (no) law reigns supreme

Mir Aftabuddin Ahmed
is a public policy columnist. He can be reached at aftab.ahmed@mail.utoronto.ca. Views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not reflect those of any organisation, institution, or entity with which he is associated.

MIR AFTABUDDIN AHMED

As the world catches a glimpse, but certainly not the full picture, of the horrors that have transpired in Bangladesh, a lack of transparency and a deliberate, disingenuous, and frankly dangerous effort by the authorities to conceal the truth has emerged. Should one be surprised? Probably not, given how this government has responded to any and all forms of civic dissent over the past decade, from any and all sources, political or not. Even for a political party that has established a track record of misusing its political activists in cahoots with law enforcement agencies to repress rather than protect citizens, this latest crackdown marks an alarming low.

The suppression of freedom of speech and expression, disregard for constitutionally protected fundamental rights, sidelining ideas from civil society on governance reform, rejection of fostering political competition between the opposition and the ruling party, and the rampant politicisation of theoretically impartial institutions of the state stand in direct contrast to the ruling party's own belief that it is the principal architect and only feasible guarantor of the country's economic stability. The economic stability storyline is progressively being rejected by a growing proportion of Bangladeshis, who are disgruntled because the developmental upshots on paper—flaunted through eye-catching infrastructural projects, rather than an innate focus on improving the average person's quality of life – are not benefiting them on a day-to-day basis.

The sheer level of wilful ignorance or, more dangerously, a defensive political posture that compels public sector stakeholders, such as law enforcement personnel, to present an embarrassingly partial or, worse, blatantly incorrect version of events can be described as authoritarian at best and as reckless at the least. This version of events places the majority of the blame on political opponents of the ruling party before any proper independent investigation and without reflecting on the government's own errors. Giving a misleading account of the chain of events that led to significant death and destruction to provide media cover for a political party that is in a crisis of its own making seems to characterise both the authorities' political and public policy reactions in the days following the deployment of the armed forces.

A narrative from both the government and some mass media outlets promotes a version of events that is far detached from the reality experienced by foreign observers, international media outlets, and, most importantly, the country's own citizens. This narrative pits the protection of the state, including vandalised public assets, against the security of the individual, contravening the very principle of the rule of law that should guide the actions or inactions of any government with an ounce of consideration for the overarching health of its relationship with its electorate. Sadly, that relationship was neither respected nor maintained when aggression, rather than reconciliation, was leveraged to tackle innocent protesters and their genuine grievances about a policy matter.

Bangladesh, long accustomed to a robust protest culture and equally forceful government countermeasures, is now experiencing a novel concoction of shock, anger, confusion, fear, and cruelty. Young people feel an extreme absence of hope regarding their individual futures and acute concerns for their own safety and that of their peers. Both the velocity and traumatic scenes of the unrest have left the country reeling, making it more dejected than it has been in a very long time. Since 2014, the Awami League has governed Bangladesh without a proper electoral mandate—anyone who argues otherwise is living in a fool's paradise—and its loss of connection with the pulse of the average voter has highlighted just how out of touch it is with the political sentiments and policy needs of Bangladeshis.

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Young people—mostly university students and their growing cohort of allies—caught in the crossfire of politically incited violence by ruling party decision-makers, combined with suppression, have borne the brunt of the turmoil. Eyewitness accounts and international media point to one underlying cause: the authorities' heavy-handed response, characterised by indiscriminate attacks on unarmed civilians and blatant violations of basic human rights under the guise of protecting national security. No amount of political cover or attempts to bury the truth through social media control and censorship will succeed.

Beyond the immediate deaths and arrests, consider the long-term psychological impact on young people. They cannot trust their government or seek accountability from the authorities. Forms of civic rebellion and an outpouring of anger, both violent and non-violent, will inevitably appear, as the authorities have turned the people they should serve into their very adversaries.

The government has only one way to improve the situation: it should exhibit humility and an apologetic tone and admit how dreadfully it mishandled a crisis that could have been resolved through reconciliatory efforts with the student protesters. Instead, the government has aggravated the dissatisfaction of a population already burdened by pent-up frustration stemming from the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, high levels of inflation, endemic public sector corruption, outward money laundering by the elites, growing youth unemployment, and the partisan monopolisation of public institutions that benefit only a few.

The experiences of those who have lived through the chaos speak volumes. Testimonials from citizens who are living through these dark days and nights challenge the sanitised versions of events presently being portrayed in the country by the authorities. The government's narrative focuses on the destruction of public assets, including a metro rail station and several government buildings — actions that are absolutely condemnable, but secondary to the suffering inflicted on Bangladeshis by those oath-bound to protect them. The value of human life has been cast aside. The desire to display unopposed and unfettered strength has overshadowed any devotion to the rule of law and the policy stances that should naturally arise from respecting it.

I want to end on a personal note. My words would be stronger and my arguments more forceful in condemning the ruling party for their actions if I were writing for an outlet operating in a functioning democracy. Bangladesh is not such a place. This newspaper, like others in the country, must exercise caution due to operational risks from tools like the Cyber Security Act and an environment where any statement perceived as a threat to the authorities can lead to legal repercussions for both the newspaper and the writer. Thus, while my analysis represents a toned-down version of my true thoughts, there is one central message that we all have: the opposite of the rule of law has prevailed in Bangladesh over the past few weeks. This is not the end, but a troubling indication of what lies ahead.

New student politics demands respect, dignity, and trust

Adnan M S Fakir
’s economics at the University of Sussex, UK.

ADNAN M S FAKIR

It is astounding how little a regime, one that has been in power for 15 consecutive years, understands the new form of student politics. Economic performance legitimacy may have satiated the post-liberation first generation who had lived through the depravities and atrocities of the Liberation War. However, the new generation aspires to more than just economic improvements, and rightfully so. Respect, dignity, and trust are the institutional cultures that speak more to the new student politics than metro rails, flyovers, or graduation to a middle-income country. And in each of these, the regime (and regimes past) repeatedly fails to deliver.

When students embarked on peaceful protests in July demanding quota reformation, it was the perceived disrespect felt after the prime minister's speech on July 14 ("If the grandchildren of the freedom fighters don't get quotas, then should the grandchildren of Razakars get quotas?") that gave the protest momentum. This show of disrespect is a tenet that seems to be repeating itself in the regime's politics. During the 2018 quota reform movement, a similar remark by the then minister of agriculture on April 9 (where she called the protesters "children of Razakars") fuelled students' anger.

Being blind to the anguish of systemic failure and corruption that led to the formation of these movements, while disrespectfully accursing the student protesters, is the first visible failure of the regime in understanding the new student politics. Perhaps this speaks more to the political culture that the people of party politics have cultivated in their ability to handle dissent. But it is this aggressive politics that instils a culture of disrespect and repeatedly rejects possibilities of peaceful, constructive negotiations. This institutional culture of indecency and disrespect is the least of the institutional failures the regime must acknowledge.

When I speak of new student politics, I am, of course, referring to the non-partisan student body—who have repeatedly taken to the streets in the past decade for their rights—not the militarised youth wings of the political bodies, whom the students associate with campus violence, rent-seeking, and corruption. It was the youth wing of the present regime, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), that incited the next step of the quota protests, fuelled again by a remark, this time by the AL general secretary (insinuating that the BCL would give these protesters a "fitting reply").

Clashes between the quota protesters and the BCL ensued the very next day; BCL wearing clads of sanctioned impunity from the regime against "unsanctioned protesters."But when the students were able to drive the BCL back, by their sheer numbers, the regime called on its trusted law enforcement agencies—the police, the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), and the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB)—to quell the students. No conversation, only dominance.

On July 16, six students were killed, including Abu Sayed, and hundreds more since then. What started with tear gas and rubber bullets transformed into a bloody campaign using automatics and blind shooting from helicopters. When the curfew was imposed, the crackdowns followed.

But it was not just the physical violence and tragic losses that we find hard to process; it was also the stripping away of the dignity of the protesters, their right to protest, their right to dissent. It was a lack of morality, an attitude of authoritarian invincibility, poor politics, and impoverished accountability. Had the regime treated the students as people worthy of dignity, perhaps it would have given them their right to protest peacefully, to vent their grievances that the regime has itself created. It is the culture of viewing people with dignity that the regime needs to adopt in its politics.

I am unsure what exactly the regime was strategising during the days of total internet shutdown and curfew, but its propaganda campaign, led by some top functionaries, backfired gravely. Loss of public trust is possibly the strongest indicator of the decline of any regime.

From the prime minister not initially acknowledging the gravity of the human tragedy as she should have, the information minister claiming that the internet was not intentionally shut down but was disrupted due to the burning of data centres and hundreds of kilometres of cables (when previously acknowledging that the regime was forced to shut down the internet), the home minister stressing that police "remained patient and only fired when they were forced to" (when there are videos of police openly firing at unarmed individual protesters), to the Detective Branch chief claiming that student protest organisers were "detained for their own safety" (when credible sources attest that they were forcibly picked up, one even from a hospital mid-recovery)—the list goes on.

Respect, dignity, and trust are the institutional cultures that speak more to the new student politics than metro rails, flyovers, or graduation to a middle-income country. FILE PHOTO: **STAR**

In the age of social media, repeating a lie does not make it the truth. Even the repeated narrative about BNP-Jamaat-led violence to justify law enforcement killings loses its weight (although, sadly, perhaps not for the staunchest of regime supporters) when so many killings of students and other civilians were caught on camera. Repeatedly, the regime keeps undermining the importance of trust-building with the new student politics. An institutional culture of "trust" is what is demanded by the new student politics.

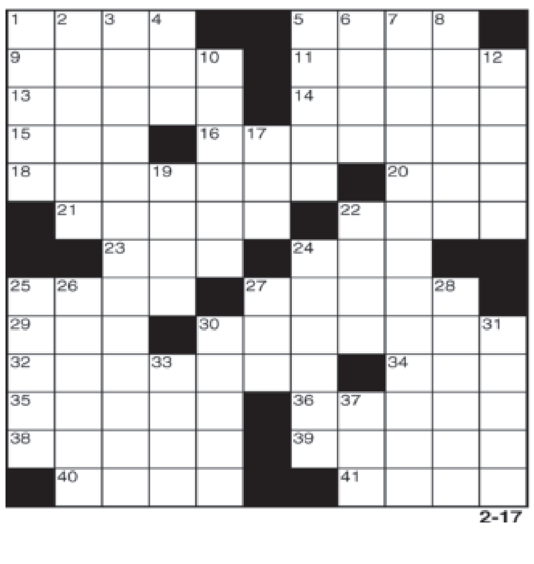
Respect, dignity, and trust. Perhaps the regime does understand the new student politics. However, unless it can reform itself to provide these basic tenets to its citizenry—to the new student politics—the regime will be unable to cater to people's needs for rights and freedom, and remain on shaky grounds. As my colleagues have mentioned in another opinion piece, "Those who claim to govern must realise that their power is on lease." The regime must acknowledge that this lease cannot be extended through economic performance legitimacy alone. But foremost, what the regime needs to do is have the courage to publicly acknowledge, apologise, and ensure justice for the martyrs of the quota movement for the nation to move forward.

The collective memory of the draconian acts suffered in the pursuit of the right to protest, without proper justice and political reformation, may lead to repeated cycles of horrors. The people of Bangladesh also need to acknowledge that the burden of transforming society cannot be shouldered by students alone. It can only be carried through by the students, alongside the peasants, the workers, and the oppressed. Let injustice never prevail.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Cuts off
5 Doily stuff
9 Mood of the people
11 Oryx's cousin
13 Make amends
14 "Otello" composer
15 Plunked down
16 Extreme
18 Like some cars
20 Wallet bill
21 Extreme pain
22 Quiche start
23 Gene messenger
24 Rascal
25 Thin board
27 Luminous glows
29 Femur's upper end
30 Fitting
32 Takes a breath
34 Crude abode
35 Annoyance
36 More than plump
38 More certain
39 Less common
40 Sibilant summons
41 Org.'s kin

DOWN
1 Minimum amount
2 Parliament city
3 Shot takers
4 Heir, at times
5 Burton of "Roots"
6 Pub brews
7 Mapmakers
8 Finish
10 Arizona city famed for its red rocks
12 Chops up
17 Singer Orbison
19 Warning word
22 Franc's replacement
24 Screen sight
25 Armada makeup
26 Roster
27 Orangutan, e.g.
28 Drunks
30 Not drowsy
31 Boat back
33 Birds, to biologists
37 Sheep call



THURSDAY'S ANSWERS

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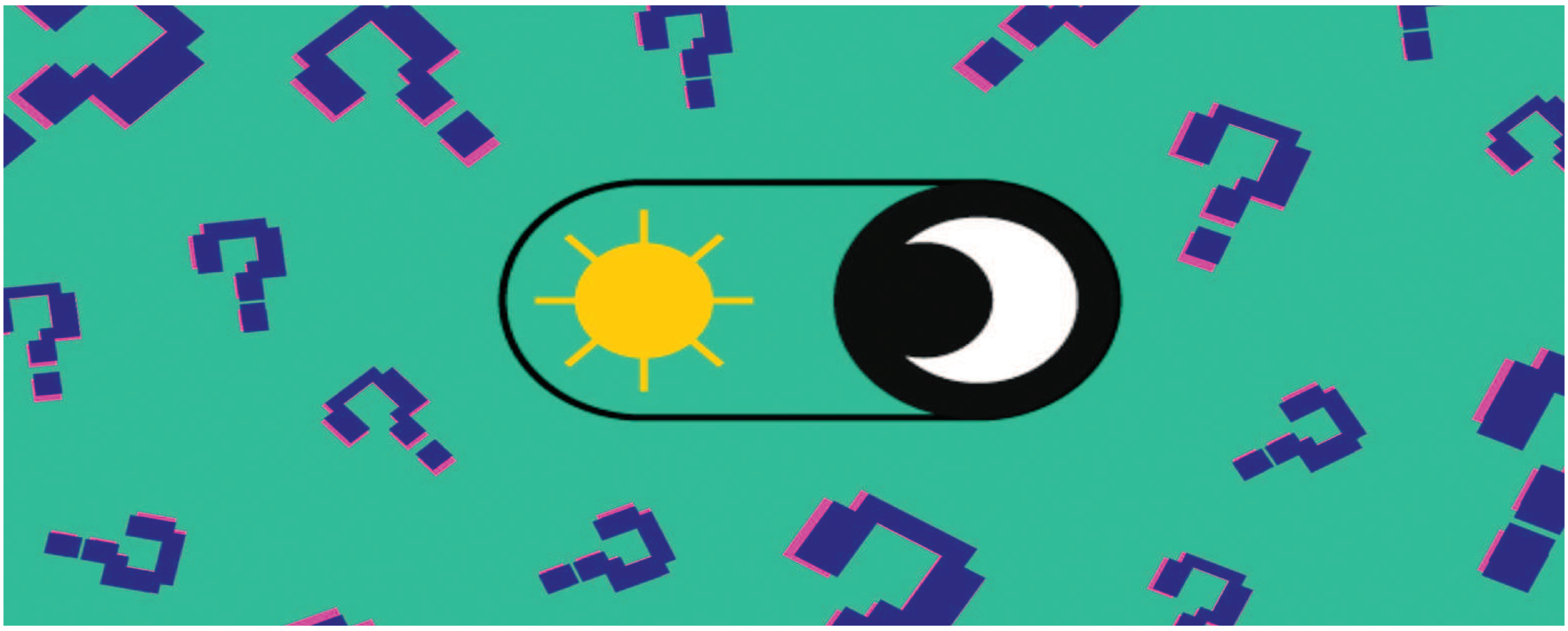


ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

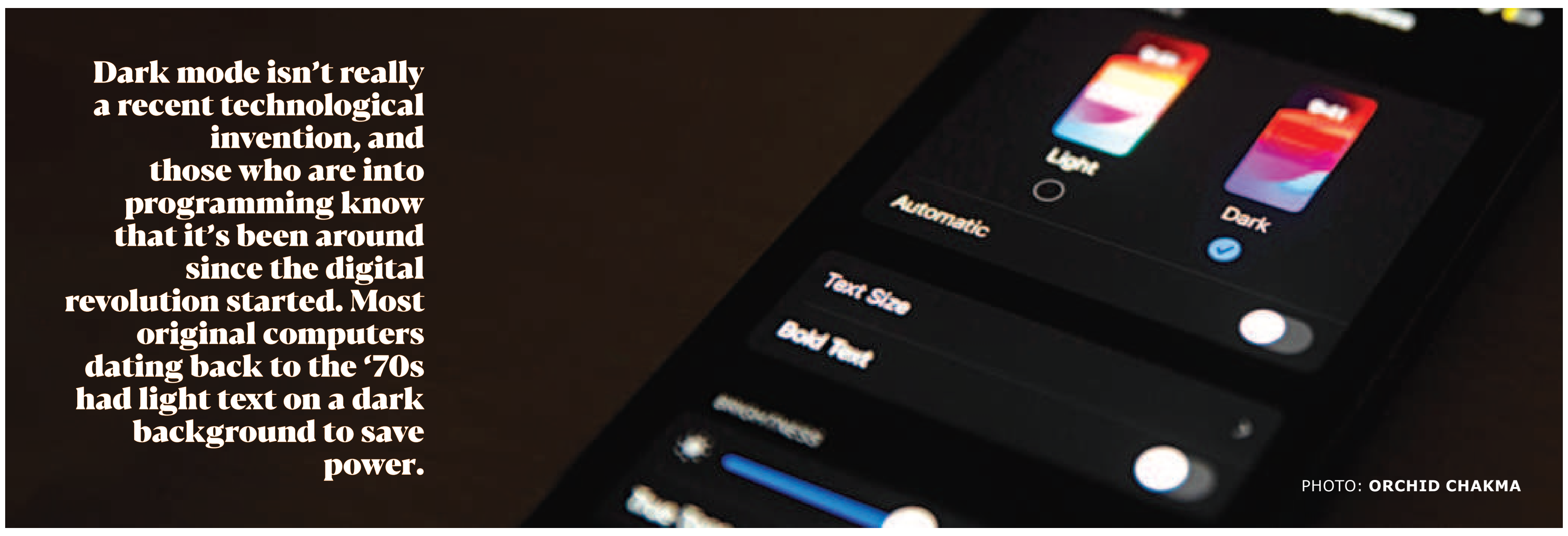
DEBUNKING THE MYTHS
surrounding dark mode

LAKUM MURSALUN

Since its adoption into regular social media apps, the dark mode setting has been a popular screen choice for users of different demographics, particularly young people. Initially known as "night mode", this shadowy-themed feature was initially designed to be used depending on the lighting conditions. However, due to the perceived addictive nature of the alternative along with aesthetics and acclaimed benefits, people have opted to use the dark mode. But, aside from aesthetics, how credible are said benefits?

Dark mode isn't really a recent technological invention, and those who are into programming know that it's been around since the digital revolution started. Most original computers dating back to the '70s had light text on a dark background to save power. Moreover, they used Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) monitors, which were not sophisticated enough to light up the entire screen at once.

Later, to make them conventional and more user-friendly, black text on a white background was introduced. And now, almost 25 years into the 21st century, dark mode has made a comeback with claims such as the feature providing better legibility and improved focus while saving significant battery and reducing eye strain.



Dark mode isn't really a recent technological invention, and those who are into programming know that it's been around since the digital revolution started. Most original computers dating back to the '70s had light text on a dark background to save power.

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

Starting with legibility, the claim is that dark mode increases readability and gives you better visual acuity. But vision research says it's actually harder for the eyes to read white text on a dark background. Human eyes are biologically designed to work in daylight. Thus, bright backgrounds with contrasting darker elements are more suited for our vision. Therefore, bright mode is recommended for optimal reading experience and longevity.

Visual acuity, on the other hand, refers to the ability to clearly see the smallest details. When you stare at black writing on a light background, your pupils shrink or narrow down so that you can have clearer eyesight. Oppositely, when you set your eyes on a lighted text with a dark background, your pupils dilate or become wider to allow more light to enter. And vision experts say this makes it harder to focus on the text and even harder for some people with certain eye conditions like myopia and astigmatism.

It is also widely claimed that dark mode saves significant battery life. But in contrast, scientists from Purdue University have found that dark mode saves up to only three to nine percent of battery on OLED screens in average brightness. However, in maximum brightness this can increase to about 39 to 47 percent. So, unless you are using your phone in broad daylight, you won't be saving a whole lot.

Another commonly cited claim is that adopting to dark mode minimises blue light consumption, which helps in falling asleep. However, blue light may not be the culprit that distorts your sleep schedule as this claim lacks credible scientific proof. Researchers believe that the discomfort people experience after staring at displays for too long is due to reduced blinking rather than brightness and suggest that the real solution to better sleep is to not use screens altogether before going to bed.

Research also suggests that dark mode can lead to negative emotions such as depression and gloomy mood because of its encompassing dark aura. Furthermore, dark mode gives comfort in low-light surroundings and reduces eye strain making its users prone to screen addiction. Twitter has revealed that dark mode has made users spend more time on the app than usual.

So, maybe the claim of greater concentration could be true to some extent, but only in terms of keeping individuals hooked on those apps for a longer period – giving users more reasons to be glued to their smartphones. On the contrary, everyone's experience with dark mode is different. Dark mode might bring comfort to people with issues like migraine, headaches, and certain eye conditions, but in general, it might bring more disadvantages than benefits in the end.

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The need to recognise propaganda in pop culture

This issue of overt biases toward specific cultures and alignment with the existing power structure's agenda is not limited to Hollywood. Rather, it can fundamentally be found in every culture.

FARIHA LAMISA

Back when I was in high school, I found myself surprised and shaken after reading Elif Batuman's memoir, *The Possessed*. The memoir, written in the form of an essay collection, borrowed its title from Fydor Dostovyosky's classic of the same name. It recounts Batuman's journey as a graduate student, pursuing her PhD in Russian literature at Stanford University.

While reading the book, I found myself astounded by the rich tradition of Russian literature, which depicts human complexity maybe in its finest form. The more I read, the more I realised that my pre-existing notion of Russia as an autocratic dictatorship was developed through my predominant consumption of Hollywood. Russia and its history, just like any other country, cannot be captured in a binary depiction of good and evil. Rather, it requires adequate nuance in its portrayal, and the country of Pushkin and Dostoevsky cannot get a proper representation in the shadow of the governance of Vladimir Putin and Soviet-style communism.

This issue of overt biases toward specific cultures and alignment with the existing power structure's agenda is not limited to Hollywood. Rather, it can fundamentally be found in every culture.

Fatima Bhutto, in her book about the growing popularity of Asian pop culture titled *The New Kings of the World*, pointed out that since the 2014 general election of India, which brought Prime Minister Narendra Modi into power, Bollywood collectively shifted towards adopting a right-wing hyper-nationalist narrative, resulting in films that otherise the Indian-Muslim population. Although, not in equal proportion, the Bangladeshi cultural industry too has largely, if not completely, failed its minority community by hardly representing them in the cultural scenario. It would be difficult to find films or series that did an authentic portrayal of minority communities, be it ethnic or religious.

Popular culture is a product of its time, representing the politics and ideas of a specific era. Often, films and television that challenged existing power structures have faced crackdowns from autocratic governments. During the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War, people who challenged power through art were silenced, which includes Zahir Raihan. Raihan, an acclaimed film director who supported the Bengali nationalist movement against the Pakistani authoritarian government, ended up disappearing and never being found.

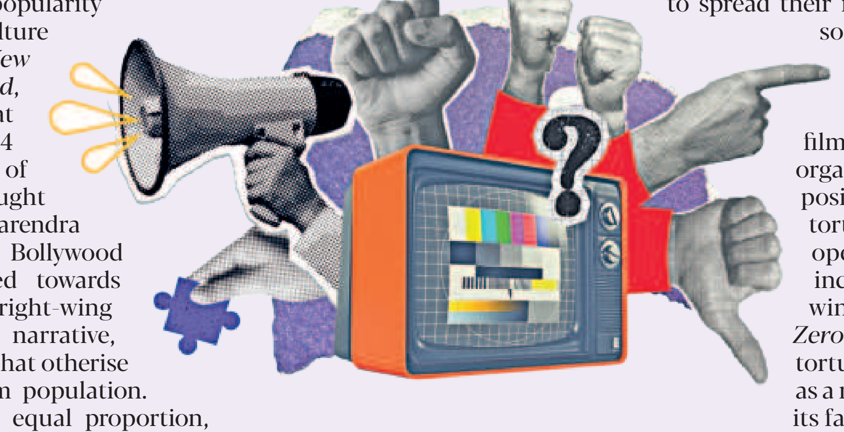

ILLUSTRATION: **FATIMA JAHAN ENA**

When brutal suppression is in place, ruling parties maintain their grip on popular storytelling sources to spread their narratives in a more sophisticated fashion. For example, the CIA has actively funded Hollywood films to portray the organisation in a positive light, justifying torture in its military operations abroad. This includes the Oscar-winning 2012 film *Zero Dark Thirty*, where torture has been justified as a necessary evil despite its factual inaccuracy.

Needless to say, the dominant power structure has always made it difficult to narrate the tale of the oppressed. Elites across the globe have tried with all their might to keep the popular mediums of storytelling to fit their narrative. It would not be wrong to say that they do often succeed due to superior resources. However, we need to question who is producing the narrative and what purpose it serves.

In the age of rapid technological advancement where the battle of narrative is intense, it is important for us to make ourselves digitally literate and to question what we see and recognise its ideological orientation. It is not wrong to adopt and promote a specific ideology. However, doing that at the cost of truth is vile. As a result, we need to question and corroborate what we see. By the mere act of identifying the rhetoric behind what we consume, we may effectively end up recognising when we are trying to be dictated against our interest and when we are being fed propaganda.

Fariha Lamisa *is a struggling student who is currently majoring in English at East West University. Consider sending your well-meaning advice and consolation to her through email: flamisa2020@gmail.com*

Star SPORT
DHAKA SATURDAY AUGUST 3, 2024, SRABAN 19, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
The Hundred
Birmingham Phoenix vs Southern Brave
Live from 4:30 pm
Trent Rockets vs Welsh Fire
Live from 12:30 am (Sunday)
GT20
Mississauga vs Brampton
Live from 9:00 pm
Toronto vs Vancouver
Live from 2:00 am (Sunday)

It was a brilliant final tournament. Obviously, it's not the perfect ending. It would have been amazing to have won a medal. But I feel good. I'm happy with how it's finished. I'm glad that I got to go out here at the Olympics and finish on my terms, because at times in the last few years, that wasn't a certainty.

ANDY MURRAY
after losing his last professional match

Alcaraz ready for 'special' Olympics tennis final

AFP, *Paris*

Carlos Alcaraz said it will be a "special moment" for him when he will be bidding to add Olympic gold to his four Grand Slam titles at Roland Garros on Sunday.

On Friday when Alcaraz thrashed Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-1, 6-1 in just 75 minutes, the 21-year-old became the youngest man to reach the final since tennis returned to the Olympics at Seoul in 1988.

He will meet Novak Djokovic in Sunday's gold medal showdown if the top-seeded Serb overcomes a knee injury and Italy's Lorenzo Musetti in the second semifinal.

"The final is going to be a really special moment for me, in my life, in my career, so I'm going to try and enjoy this moment," said Alcaraz.

"It's going to be difficult, but it's also going to be special. I will try to be focused on myself and try not to hear all this, all the fans, all the people that say 'I'm going to win'.

"I just want to give 100 per cent my best tennis and hopefully I reach my goal to get the gold."

Spanish star Alcaraz, playing on the same Roland Garros court where he won a maiden French Open in June, broke the 19th-ranked Auger-Aliassime three times in the first set, racing away with six consecutive games.

Alcaraz broke again in the fourth and sixth games of the second set on his way to claiming a fourth successive win over the Canadian having lost the first three of the pair's series.

Wimbledon champion Alcaraz is the fourth Spanish man to reach the Olympic men's final after Jordi Arrese at Barcelona in 1992, Sergi Bruguera in Atlanta four years later and Rafael Nadal who won gold at Beijing in 2008.

He now can also become the youngest men's champion since tennis returned to the Olympics in 1988.

PARiS 2024

Done in 46 seconds, but debate goes on

AFP, *Paris*

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif's 46-second win at the Paris Olympics on Thursday sparked a furious row about gender eligibility rules.

Italian boxer Angela Carini retired hurt and shrugged off attempts by Khelif to shake her hand, before collapsing to her knees and sobbing uncontrollably in the middle of the ring.

Khelif advanced to the quarterfinals of the women's 66kg category after unloading two strong punches to the face of Carini, who had blood on her shorts and was unable to carry on because of a badly hurt nose.

"My nose started dripping (with blood) from the first hit," said the distressed Carini, who also broke down in tears when talking to reporters.

The 25-year-old sobbed: "I fought very often in the national team. I train with my brother. I've always fought against men, but I felt too much pain today."

Khelif and Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting, who was set to fight on Friday at 57kg, were disqualified from the 2023 world championships in New Delhi run by the International Boxing Association (IBA) but deemed eligible to box in the women's competition in Paris.

Both boxers also competed at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago.

The IBA, in a statement on Wednesday, said Lin and Khelif were disqualified from the world championships as "a result of their failure to meet the eligibility criteria for participating in the women's competition".

"The athletes did not undergo a testosterone examination but were subject to a separate and recognised test, whereby the specifics remain confidential," it added.

The International Olympic Committee is running the boxing in the French capital because of governance, financial, and ethical issues at the IBA.

IOC spokesman Mark Adams told reporters this week that they "are women in their passports and it's stated in there that they are female".

With a host of public figures, including Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and US presidential candidate Donald Trump, weighing in on the matter, the debate seems to go on as Khelif is set to return to the ring on Saturday.

While Meloni said the fight was "not on an equal footing", Trump declared on his Truth Social network: "I WILL KEEP MEN OUT OF WOMEN'S SPORTS!"

Lyles to kick off double dream in 100m

REUTERS, *Paris*

American Noah Lyles will bring his "main character energy" to the Stade de France on Saturday as he begins his quest for the Olympic sprint double in the men's 100 metres heats.

He failed to qualify for the shorter sprint at the Olympics three years ago and won bronze in the 200 - his signature event - before embarking on a period of self-reflection.

Lyles clocked 9.81 seconds to win at the London Diamond League meeting in his final Olympic tune-up event last month, a promising sign for American fans.

While most bookmakers would put him as a strong favourite in the longer sprint - he has not lost a 200 metres race since Tokyo - he could face a tougher road in the 100, as he takes on young challengers from the United States' archrival Jamaica.

Oblique Seville handed him his only 100 loss of the season in Kingston in June and Kishane Thompson set the world leading mark of 9.77 at the Jamaica team trials. That duo will be hungry to get their country back to the top of the podium eight years after retired great Usain Bolt last took the gold.

While the defending Olympic champion would typically command a decent share of the spotlight, Italian Lamont Marcell Jacobs has rarely been a factor on the track following a series of injuries since his shock win in Tokyo three years ago.

Instead, Kenyan Ferdinand Omanyala appeared on everyone's radar when he won his national trials in 9.79, while Lyles' compatriots Kenny Bednarek and Tokyo silver medallist Fred Kerley remain perennial contenders.

BILES, ANDRADE poised to soar

AFP, *Paris*

US gymnastics great Simone Biles will likely have to bring out the "big guns" again on Saturday as she vies for her third gold medal of the Paris Olympics in a women's vault final that again pits her against defending champion Rebeca Andrade of Brazil.

Biles shook off a sub-par uneven bars routine to edge Andrade for all-around gold on Thursday, two days after she and her USA teammates captured gold.

One difference-maker for Biles was her signature Yurchenko double pike vault, which has a difficulty score so high that even with an imperfect landing she out-scored Andrade. "I wasn't planning on it," Biles said of opting for the double pike in all-around.

"But I just knew how phenomenal of an athlete (Andrade) is. So I was like, 'OK, I think I have to bring out the big guns this time."

To retain the vault title she won in Tokyo, where Biles withdrew from multiple events because of the mental block gymnasts call the "twisties," Andrade might have to up her own firepower.

The Brazilian edged Biles for the vault world title last October and has indicated she could unveil a never-before-seen triple-twisting Yurchenko vault. If she pulls that off it would carry a difficulty score of 6.0 -- closer to the 6.4 of the double pike version now known as the Biles II.

After her close call in the all-around, where Biles trailed for the first time since the halfway point in Rio, Biles quipped that Andrade was making her life too stressful. "I don't want to compete with Rebeca no more. I'm tired!" Biles said. "It's way too close."

But she added: "I knew if I did my work, it would all be fine."

Playing on his PSG home ground, Morocco captain Achraf Hakimi put on a player-of-the-match performance as his side outclassed the United States on Friday to reach the semifinals of the Olympics men's football. Hakimi was among the scorers as Morocco, who will play either Japan or Spain in Monday's semifinal in Marseille, dispatched the USA 4-0 in front of a packed crowd. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Cricketers to undergo fitness test today amid unrest

SPORTS REPORTER

With a watchful eye on the ongoing unrest in the country, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has decided to go ahead with the previously scheduled physical assessment test of the cricketers in the Test fold at the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS) today.

"We are observing the situation and are in communication with the management. Our prime focus is to ensure everyone's safety, not just the players," BCB cricket operations in-charge Shahriar Nafees told The Daily Star on Friday.

"We will take the final decision after observing the entire day. But as of now, everything is on track," he added.

The players will complete a 1.6km time trial at the BNS between 6:00 AM to 7:30 AM under their strength and conditioning coach Nathan Kiely before moving to the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur for a gym session and other fitness tests, scheduled from 8:30 AM.

Kiely and other coaching staff including head coach Chandika Hathurusingha have already reached Dhaka ahead of the Tigers' preparation camp for their two-match Test series against Pakistan.

Spin-bowling coach Mushtaq Ahmed, who will oversee the spinners during the Pakistan series, was the last member of the coaching panel to arrive in the city on Friday night.

The preparation will get underway with the fitness test and the players will begin training in Mirpur on Sunday.

Some members of the Test fold, who recently returned home from their Australia tour with the High Performance Unit where they played two four-day matches against Pakistan Shaheens, will not take the fitness test.

Earlier, several members of the Test fold had played two intra-squad practice matches during their camp in Chattogram last month.

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto missed the practice matches as he travelled to Thailand for a medical check-up while head coach Hathurusingha and some other members of the coaching staff failed to join the side due to travel issues.

The first Test in Rawalpindi will take place on August 21-25 while Karachi will host the second Test on August 30-September 3. The series will be part of the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25 cycle. The Tigers are expected to fly to Pakistan on August 17.

However, some players like Mushfiqur Rahim and Mominul Haque will travel to Pakistan on August 6 as part of the Bangladesh A team to feature in their opening four-day game against their Pakistani counterparts, scheduled on August 10-13.

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

ARCHERY
Women's Individual
6:46 PM
ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS
Men's Floor Exercise
7:30 PM
Women's Vault
8:20 PM
Men's Pommel Horse
9:16 PM
ATHLETICS
Men's Shot Put
11:35 PM
Women's Triple Jump
Sunday, 12:20 AM
4x400 Relay Mixed
Sunday, 12:55 AM
Women's 100m
Sunday, 1:20 AM
Men's Decathlon 1500m
Sunday, 1:45 AM
BADMINTON
Women's Doubles
8:10 PM
CYCLING ROAD
Men's Road Race
3:00 PM
EQUESTRIAN
Dressage Team Grand Prix Special
2:00 PM
FENCING
11:00 PM
Women's Sabre Team
Sunday, 12:00 AM
JUDO
Mixed Team
9:24 PM
ROWING
Women's Single Sculls
2:18 PM
Women's Eight
2:50 PM
Men's Eight
3:10 PM
Men's Single Sculls
2:30 PM
Shooting
25m Pistol Women's
1:30 PM
Skeet Men's
7:30 PM
SURFING
Men's
Sunday, 2:00 AM
Women's
Sunday, 3:12 AM
SWIMMING
Men's 100m Butterfly
Sunday, 12:30 AM
Women's 200m Individual Medley
Sunday, 1:08 AM
Mixed 4x100 Medley Relay
Sunday, 1:58 AM
TABLE TENNIS
Women's Singles
6:30 PM
TENNIS
Women's Singles
4:00 PM
Men's Doubles
4:00 PM

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‘Statement from DB office was not voluntary’

Say six organisers about the withdrawal of programmes

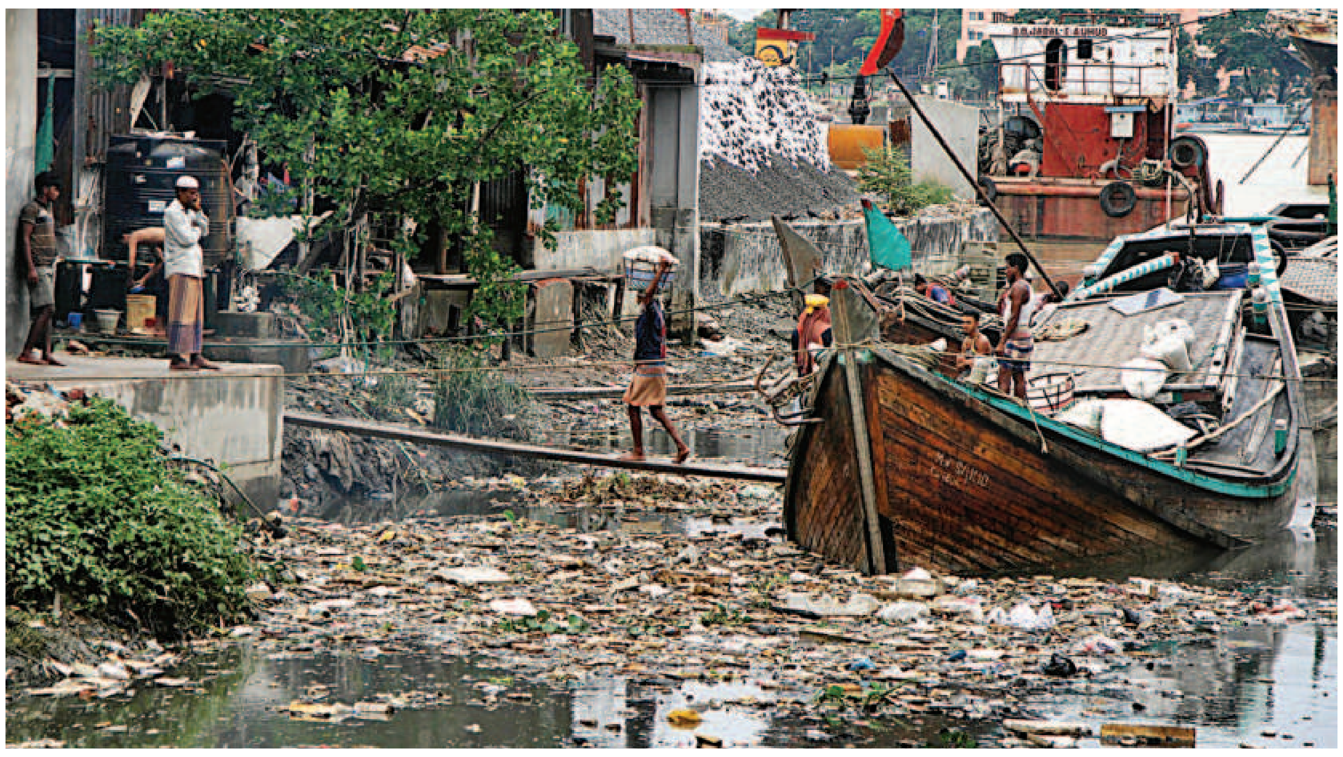
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The six key organisers of the quota reform movement yesterday said they did not voluntarily issue the statement to withdraw their movement and that it was forcibly filmed during their detention at the Detective Branch (DB) office.

"Since July 19, the coordinators of the anti-discrimination student movement have been missing, arrested, tortured, and harassed to foil the movement. Subsequently, six coordinators were detained in DB custody for seven days in the name of 'security'. Although the home minister and the DB chief talked about security, they kept us in DB custody to isolate us from the movement," the statement said.

The statement was signed by Nahid Islam, Sarjis Alam, Hasnat Abdullah, Asif Mahmud, Nusrat Tabassum, and Abu Baker Majumdar.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



Workers unloading salt from a boat on Gulzar canal in Chattogram city's Majhirghat area. Waste thrown into the canal from factories, markets, and homes ultimately ends up in the Karnaphuli river, polluting both the water bodies. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

78 HSC examinees get bail

They were arrested in cases over violence centring quota protests

STAR REPORT

A total of 78 HSC examinees, who were arrested over the recent violence centring quota reform protests in Dhaka, Chattogram, and Khulna divisions, secured bail yesterday.

Among them, 55 students got bail in Dhaka division, 14 in Chattogram division, six in Khulna division and three in Rangpur division.

Despite being a weekend, the courts convened on Friday at the special initiative of Law Minister Anisul Huq, a ministry press release said.

The initiative was taken considering that those who were arrested still had to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

105 more held in nationwide drives

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday arrested at least 105 more people as the nationwide crackdown on alleged saboteurs as well as quota protesters and opposition activists continues.

Of them, 28 were arrested in the capital, and 77 in seven districts, said police. At least 52 were held in Noakhali, 17 in Rajshahi, and eight in Laxmipur, Madaripur, Bogura, Natore and Barishal.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police produced those arrested in the capital before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday. The court sent most of them to jail and placed some in custody.

At least 11,052 people have been arrested since the drives began on July 18. The arrestees include students, BNP, and Jamaat-Shibir leaders and activists.

Numerous cases have been filed accusing several thousand named

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Israel's 'end getting closer than ever'

Says Hamas after its leader Haniyeh buried in Qatar

REUTERS, *DUBAI*

Hamas' top leader Ismail Haniyeh was buried in Qatar yesterday following his assassination in the Iranian capital Tehran as senior officials of Hamas and other mourners said their fight against Israel would intensify.

His death was one in a series of killings of senior Hamas figures as Israel's offensive in Gaza nears its 11th month and concern grows that the conflict is spreading across the Middle East.

Haniyeh was laid to rest in a cemetery in the city of Lusail after a funeral ceremony at the Iman Mohamed Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab Mosque in Qatar's capital Doha.

His coffin, draped in the Palestinian flag, was carried in a procession past hundreds of people along with the casket of his bodyguard, who was killed in the same attack in Tehran on Wednesday.

Mourners at the ceremony included Khaled Meshaal, who is tipped to be the new Hamas leader. Other senior Hamas officials and Qatar's

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Facebook again blocked for 7hrs

Palak apologises to the youth for internet disruption

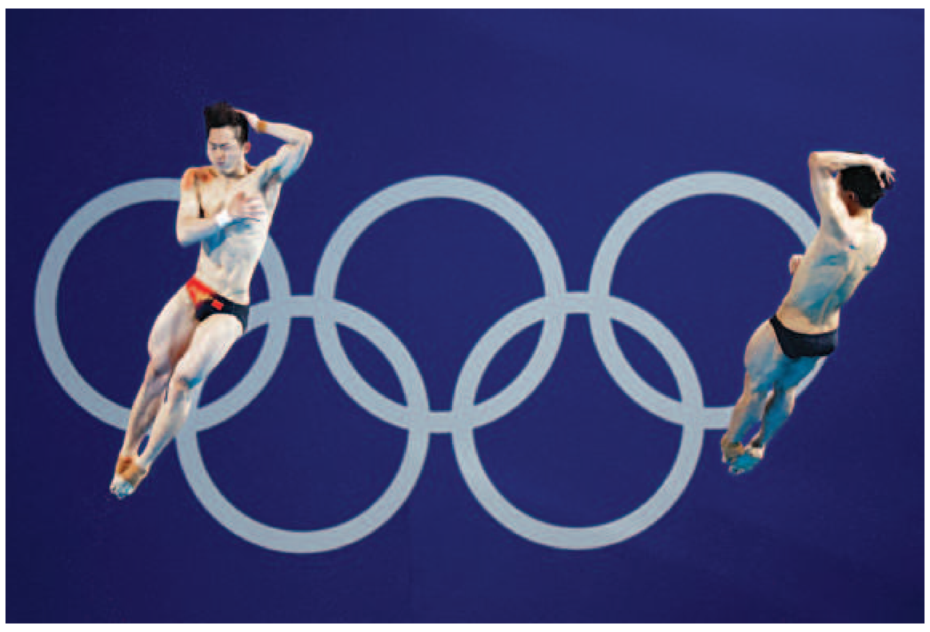
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mobile internet users were unable to access their Facebook and Messenger accounts for approximately 7 hours yesterday due to a government-enforced shutdown of the services.

The restrictions on the social media services began around noon and continued around 7:00pm, said sources with knowledge of the development.

The decision coincided with today's nationwide programme announced by the Anti-Discrimination

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



China's Long Daoyi and Wang Zongyuan compete in the men's synchronised 3m springboard diving final at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Aquatics Centre in Saint-Denis yesterday. The duo won the gold as China continued to lead the medals tally with USA in second and Great Britain in third position.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Adv. Sigma Huda

October 10, 1945 – July 17, 2024

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the death of our beloved mother, Advocate Sigma Huda, who passed away (Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un) on July 17, 2024, at United Hospital, Dhaka.

She was a devoted mother, cherished sister, a wonderful wife, trusted friend and an unwavering champion and pioneer of Justice and Human Rights in Bangladesh. Among her many roles, she was appointed as the first UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children.

We seek your blessings and prayers for our mother.

Antara Huda & Srabanti Huda

France's medals strategy paying off

REUTERS, *Paris*

A French strategy to boost its medal count after years of sporting underachievement has begun to pay dividends at the Paris Olympics as rapturous home crowds propel its athletes up the medals table, although keeping up the pace may prove hard.

One week into the Paris Games, France has won eight golds and 27 medals in total. Since Atlanta in 1996, France has averaged 37 medals per Olympics, a Reuters calculation shows.

France's early improvement is the fruit of a seven-year plan that it hopes will position it as a long-term Olympics heavyweight.

It is based on promoting excellence in sports clubs and federations and zeroing in on medal hopes, as well as bringing families closer to the action, providing more performance support teams and capitalising on home advantage -

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

বিসমিল্লাহির রাহমানির রাহীম

২৫তম প্রতিষ্ঠাবার্ষিকী

আজ ৩ আগস্ট ২০২৪ ইং । আমাদের ২৫ বছর পূর্তি । দীর্ঘ ২৫ বছরের পথচলায় আমাদের সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের সহযোগিতা ও নির্ভরতা আমাদের সাহস যুগিয়েছে । এক্সিম পরিবারের প্রায় পাঁচ হাজার মেধাবী জনবলের প্রাণের সঞ্চার এবং আমাদের অতিপ্রিয় সম্মানিত গ্রাহকদের আন্তরিকতায় সমৃদ্ধ হয়েছে এক্সিম ব্যাংক । আমাদের সকল সহযোগীদের সহায়তায় আমরা আজ দেশের বেসরকারি ব্যাংকের মধ্যে এক অনন্য উচ্চতায় অবস্থান করতে পেরেছি ।

আমাদের সকল সহকর্মী এবং সেই সাথে সমগ্র বাংলাদেশের অসংখ্য গ্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক, শেয়ারহোল্ডারবৃন্দ এবং শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের একান্ত প্রচেষ্টা ও উদ্যোগের ফলেই আজকের এই অভূতপূর্ব সফলতা । এদিনে আমরা আপনাদের সকলকে জানাই আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন ও শুভকামনা ।

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The main touristy appeal is the backwaters of Barishal, an incredible labyrinthine system of intersected canals, which makes for an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experience. PHOTO: TITU DAS

Fishermen unload wicker baskets full of hilsa at the river ghat in Barishal. The wholesale market in the city's Port Road buzzes with activities during hilsa season.

Barishal, a serene escape amid nature's bounty

> **"Now with Padma Bridge, it has become possible to go on day trips to Barishal. I started at 6:00am and reached Barishal by 10:00am. I booked a room at a local hotel and allowed my driver to rest, while I hired their colourful tempo and went sightseeing."**

RAFFAT BINTE RASHID

Surrounded by tall coconut and betel nut trees, picturesque ponds, and lagoons -- the green countryside makes Barishal a great city for local tourism. This mid-southern part of Bangladesh, with an amazing diversity in aqua-nature, is an unpolluted, tidy city that is lush all over.

As soon as you turn left, past the Dhaka-Bhanga Expressway, you fall on the Bhanga-Barishal-Patuakhali highway and you are welcomed by a canopy of old trees lined on both sides of the road leading to the city. Traffic on these roads is not much, so the noise and air pollution in cities like Barishal, and Faridpur are at a minimum level; at least for Dhakaites, that is.

Not only the highway, even roads, lanes, and thoroughfares inside the city are lined with old rain trees or "rendi" as the locals call it. Amazingly, each tree is covered in a lush growth of epiphytic plants like wild ferns, orchids, hoya, and moss, hugging the trunk with their green leaves and flowers cascading and dangling down, co-existing most harmoniously, lending a dreamy feel to the whole ambiance of this laid-back city.

Barishal is truly beautiful.

"Now with Padma Bridge, it has become possible to go on day trips to Barishal. I started at 6:00am and reached Barishal by 10:00am. I booked a room at a local hotel and allowed my driver to rest, while I hired their colourful tempo and went sightseeing," says Rosie Ahmed, who was a resident of the city during her childhood.

"I went looking for my old house, my first school, and the Guthia mosque, an amazing architectural feat surrounded by manicured gardens, guarded by a big flock of swans. The Baitul Aman Jame Masjid Complex commonly known as Guthia Mosque, is inspired by Islamic architecture, the mosque complex stands on 14 acres of land, with 20 domes, and there are three lakes surrounding the mosque in a manner that reflects the whole mosque from different angles.

"Several calligraphies of Ayatul Kursi and Surah Ar-Rahman are inscribed around the mosque walls. It envelopes you in a spiritual calmness, as you sit in the corridors," Ahmed, 76, says.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Not only the highway, even roads, lanes, and thoroughfares inside the city are lined with tall trees.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Bibir Pukur, right in the middle of a busy thoroughfare, is a well-known historical place in Barishal city.

The Baitul Aman Jame Masjid Complex, commonly known as Guthia Mosque. PHOTO: STAR

Moving through the backwaters of Barishal, one surrenders to nature, the heavy silence in these deep areas is only interrupted when the boat's oar slowly moves the water or when a bird chirps. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Durga Sagar, a vast lake with a total area of about 25 hectares (62 acres). PHOTO: TITU DAS

"We feasted on a lavish lunch of hilsa in mustard paste, and thick lentil curry and headed towards the hilsa 'arodh' [wholesale market]. Our reason for this day trip was to bag the big Padma hilsas. Then, we started our return to Dhaka around 4:00pm and reached the capital by 10:00pm. It was an amazing adventure," Ahmed relays the details of their trip.

If you plan to spend a weekend in Barishal, The Grand Park Hotel ensures a five-star stay with well-designed suites, a lavish breakfast spread, swimming pool with steam and sauna facilities. Their hospitality will want you to go back again.

"The main touristy appeal is the backwaters of Barishal, an incredible labyrinthine system of intersected canals, which makes for an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experience. You can take a dinghy boat and row your way through narrow canals, which are just wide enough for the boat to maneuver. For the wider canals, you can hire motorised trawlers," says says Zahidul Haque Babul, who has his roots in Barishal but lives in Dhaka for his businesses

"This is a great source of entertainment for the young residents and tourists, they play the latest Bangla and Hindi hits, blasting through the big loudspeakers. They just dive and frolic in the canals to cool off, their happiness is contagious. The main attraction of these rides is the floating guava and lemon market. There is also a boat market," he added.

The moist mud along the canals is perfect for the local variety of guava, hog plum, and lemon. The fruit orchards extend a minimum of two miles around the canal system and the trees almost bend down on the side and you can reach out for the fruits from your boat.

The biodiversity of the backwater of Barishal is an astounding, complex clockwork of nature. A man surrounded by thick green vegetation and an aquatic ecosystem makes for an interdependent living. Each household has basket fishing traps, which are dipped into the river with its open end, when it is lifted, the water drains off and the catches are picked.

This makes for a scrumptious lunch with taro and other greens that grow in abundance on their homestead. The bamboo fences or machas are full of hanging seasonal vegetables like kakrol or teasel gourd and other leafy greens; dead betel nut tree trunks make their shako or makeshift bridge placed across the narrow canals to go from one house to another.

"Living in this remote place is stress-free, locals make do with whatever nature provides. In these rural households, life is as organic as it can be. Moving through the backwaters of Barishal, you surrender to nature, the heavy silence in these deep areas is only interrupted when the boat's oar slowly moves the water or when a bird chirps. The silence is so intense that it gets to you at one point," quips Chompa Hossain, a student who resides on the banks of a canal. She was perched up on a pier, selling green coconuts from her smallholding.

From hand-churned butter to roshgollas, from hilsa wholesale markets to Arabian restaurants like Huma Hum [which means feasting together] serving the best Arabian rice dish called khabsa, a weekend in this city can be joyful.

THE MUCH-FREQUENTED PLACES

Barishal has its healthy share of rich history, being one of the oldest municipalities and river ports of Bengal. It was said that the economy of Bengal was dependent on the economy of Barishal because its fertile land, consisting of silt, was excellent for agriculture and was thus considered the granary of Bengal.

As history and folklore point out, the city, located on the north bank of the Bay of Bengal in southern Bangladesh and surrounded by many rivers, was once called the Venice of the East.

Famous tourist attractions include the Durga Sagar -- a sanctuary for birds, and a haven for fishing -- a vast lake with a total area of about 25 hectares (62 acres).

Bibir Pukur, right in the middle of a busy thoroughfare, is another well-known historical place. The pond is named after Jinath Bibi, who had the pond dug in 1908 to give relief to the locals from the suffering of water shortage.

Zilla school, the vertically huge structure of Barisal Medical College, and the famous Govt Brojomohun College, commonly known as BM College, founded in 1889, is one of the oldest institutions of higher education in Bangladesh. All these places have their foundation grounded in history from the colonial era.

Bell's Park is another example of Barishal's British-Bengal connection. Situated at the heart of Barishal is the Bangabandhu Udyan, popularly known as Bell's Park. This historic urban park adjacent to a riverside road has a playground, a walkway, and a helipad, all encircled by old trees. The park was constructed in 1896 by ND Beatson-Bell to celebrate the visit of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, lieutenant-governor of Bengal.

Another historical place turned into a happening leisure destination is the "Tirish Godown" by the river Kirtankhola. History says there were 30 go-downs to store rice, which were dispatched and distributed from there to other districts. The al-fresco-styled food court and small two-storied hut-like restaurants offer a variety of snacks as diverse as jhalmuri and syrupy waffles to phuchka, chotpoti, and bite-sized Bombay shingaras.

"Craft shops line the river banks along the Bhanga Bazar by Kirtankhola. They also offer rental trawler rides on the Kirtankhola, a river that is 160 kilometres," says Chompa, while talking enthusiastically about why Barishal can be your next tourist destination.

You soak in the serenity of the flowing river view and be mesmerised like Jibanananda Das with beautiful Barishal -- serene with wide roads, glistening ponds at intervals, dotted by tall coconut trees, the big neon sign of "I love Barishal" at the city centre by the Planet Park compliments the cityscape.

Barishal is Bangladesh's third largest financial hub after Dhaka and Chattogram. The south of Bangladesh is lush and unaltered away from the tide of urbanisation. It's the perfect local tourism destination to unwind.

Barishal is truly "God's own country".

FICTION

Pest control

> **It says right here—the casualties have been somewhere under a hundred", declared Mr Telaroach, reading The Daily Roach out loud to his revolting son and an unconvinced yet silent wife, "I believe it's even less. The Daily Roach has always been a bit anti-republic.**

HASIB UR RASHID IFTI

ILLUSTRATION: **MAISHA SYEDA**

Geronimo rushed inside the hole coughing, somehow managing to shut the door behind him. His mother Telapatra grabbed her son, hugging her tight for an instant before smacking him across the back. "How many times did I tell you not to go out at this hour?" cried Telapatra.

"They're spraying insecticides everywhere", coughed Geronimo, "I saw it with my own eyes."

"Those are for the affected ones only", commented an unbothered Mr Telaroach, Geronimo's father.

Telapatra looked at her husband with cold eyes, giving him the signal to shut up for once, which really isn't Mr Telaroach's area of expertise. Geronimo, still in disbelief at his father's lack of empathy, burst into tears, "I was there, Papa! I saw cockroaches my age lose consciousness and drop dead within seconds. I even saw our neighbour Mr Telaowski's son lying unconscious in front of their curb."

"Oh, that little runt", Mr Telaroach sounded annoyed, "They're the ones spreading this disease and forcing the authorities to take such measures. Have you seen his face? He looks like one of those insurgents—his entire family does."

Tears kept rolling down Geronimo's cheeks as he stared at his unbothered father. He choked out a quick burst of laughter out of rage and disbelief before rushing to his room.

The situation in Roachtown worsened after an epidemic of rot disease spread across the town, affecting cockroaches of all ages and causing their skin and wings to rot within a few days. In response, the authority imported vaccines from the faraway lands of Roachland at cheap rates. The motive was mostly to rebuild a friendly relation with the town, which had been otherwise strained for years.] to [The motive was mostly to rebuild a friendly relation, which had otherwise been strained for years, with the town. The friendship between the two towns meant a lot to the authority and they were willing to take any measures to make sure it was strengthened under the current regime.

Although the new vaccine put a halt on the rot, victims mysteriously died of other reasons within weeks. The authority put out a notice suggesting the epidemic had been successfully tackled and the mysterious deaths were completely unrelated to the vaccinations. While the authority-funded celebrations riled up the city and Roachtown declared itself a 'rot-free city', an independent study about the vaccine was leaked by a whistleblower within the Health Ministry. The study showed clear correlations between the vaccine and the mysterious deaths that followed and the authority's efforts to hide it. The whistleblower, Telward Roachden, was found dead in his home the next day.

Following the leak, protests broke out all across Roachtown as crowds numbering up to thousands gathered outside the town centre. It was unlike anything Roachtown authority had ever seen before or expected for that matter. The mayor, Julius Roacher, decided it was time to go hard and nip the protest in its bud before it could turn into a revolution.

Mayor Roacher knew that two measurements were needed before his forces could clean house—cease all modes of communication and control what the public gets to know. For the first measure, all telephone lines were cut across the town and flying was prohibited until further notice. Now that the unregulated flow of information ceased, it was time to control and modify it. The mayor called an urgent meeting with newspaper editors: "The headlines will be sent to you right after midnight", they ordered. "You can work overnight, fill in the gaps and print them by the morning. If you don't want to end up like The Roach Times, I suggest you listen to my suggestions, stop printing misinformation and stop creating panic in times of emergency."

Most roaches knew the mayor's strategies and didn't believe the newspapers anymore. While they were still on the streets putting their lives on the line, some roaches like Mr Telaroach were gullible enough to believe wholeheartedly that everything truly was under control. 'The true cockroaches of Roachtown'—as mayor Roacher had labelled them and congratulated them for keeping their trust in the republic.

To the mayor's displeasure, the situation kept worsening and he had no option but to launch smokes of the same vaccine at the gathered crowd, only multiple doses stronger, intense enough for the rioters to lose consciousness and die in under a minute. To their horror, the casualties reached thousands within a week.

"It says right here—the casualties have been somewhere under a hundred", declared Mr Telaroach, reading The Daily Roach out loud to his revolting son and an unconvinced yet silent wife, "I believe it's even less. The Daily Roach has always been a bit anti-republic."

"Just look out the window, Papa!" howled Geronimo, "They're spraying the pesticide everywhere as we speak. There isn't even a crowd out there. They're just targeting neighbourhoods now."

"It's a vaccine, not pesticide", scolded Mr Telaroach, "And didn't you read the leaflet distributed by the mayor? These vaccines are genetically modified in such a manner that it will only affect the anti-republics. Roaches like us will be safe from its effects even if we accidentally fall in the attack radius."

The silent treatment from his wife and son angered Mr Telaroach even more. "Look, the mayor's even distributing gas masks at a discounted rate! There's no pleasing y'all anymore", he said while putting on the gas mask to show Geronimo.

Suddenly, a shell burst right through the window of the Telaroach household. Before Mr Telaroach could run towards his wife and son, a huge explosion threw him across the drawing room and against the wall.

When he woke up minutes later, Mr Telaroach crawled across piles of rubble and, as the dust finally settled, he could see Geronimo and Telapatra lying on their backs, covered in bricks and rods, presumably dead.

The attacks on Roachtown that night were the final blow on the revolution with casualties crossing 10,000 in a single night. When the bodies were too many for the mayor to hide, he wrote an emergency instruction for the victims' families to be broadcasted via flying roaches all across Roachtown.

Mr Telaroach was holding his wife and son, still in shock, when he heard the declaration in the loudspeaker, "Victims' family members are instructed not to panic. As you know, the vaccines only affect the anti-republics. If you're confident that your loved one is not an anti-republic, you're instructed to dig a hole behind your household and bury them as soon as possible. Not following this procedure will automatically result in labelling the victim as an anti-republic and the household will be issued an anti-republic certificate by our officials."

Mr Telaroach quickly rushed to the shed behind his house and grabbed a shovel. He had a long night ahead of him.

Hasib Ur Rashid Ifti *is a writer and a student of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.*

ILLUSTRATION: **MAISHA SYEDA**

POETRY

Bulbul pakhi

FARAH MASUD

"Attention passengers.
The next train arriving is a B train traveling westbound towards Boston College.
Please stand clear of the closing doors."
Hop on, squeeze
between bodies against bodies against face
against bags and sweaty hands of children.
Swing back and forth,
catch yourself from falling into someone's lap instead,
knock your head on sticky glass,
tossing and turning on squeaky tracks.
Taste, the tang of rusty metal, sweetness of snacks.
Stop, collect more bodies.
Squeeze, make space.
Breathe, as little as possible.
Tossing and turning on squeaky tracks.
It's 8:30 pm and the sun is just setting.
Back home the sun would've set long before.
Right now the Isha Azaan would be blaring.
But here–
the final screech of wheels on the rails,
bodies against bodies against stroller against
doors.
Hop off, breathe.
A quiet lull.
Gaze at the dying sun,
cinnamon-lavender sky,
memories of a lullaby.
Bulbul pakhi moyna tiye
Ayna ja na gaan shuniye.
Birds you can no longer find—hear
them sing
Songs of distant forests
and blue rivers,
Dur dur boner gaan
Nil nil nodir gaan.
Set aside milk, rice, and shondesh
Dudhbhaat debo shondesh makhiye...
Watch them go stale
and forgotten–
Cling
to the tune of your mother's voice,
guiding yours
to a time trapped in a chrysalis.
Your first song on stage
She taught you to sing
All this time you thought it was about birds in the sky,
But was it really about
long-winded goodbyes?
Jhilmil jhilmil jhorna jethay
Kulkul kulkul roj boye jay
Byangoma byangomi golpo shunay
Rajar kumar ponkhiraj chore jay.
Bhorbela pakhna mele diye tora–
Eli ki bolna shei desh beriye?
Bulbul pakhi moyna tiye
Ayna ja na gaan shuniye.

Farah Masud *is a collector of stories, seeker of metaphor in daily life, and weaver of terrible rhymes.*

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

POETRY

A man walks into a bar

FAIZA RAMIM

a man walks into a bar but he looks like a little boy
except for his eyes that wrinkle around the edges
(this is the start of a joke)
a man walks into a bar looking like a little boy
but the bartender decides to cut him some slack.
after all, he passed the initial inspection;
and he looks like he could use a drink.
his timid stance, nervous stare and jittery legs
make him look out of place
that could supposedly come from carrying a fake id
or from being in the sight of too many people.
that man of course, is you.
and you are not a little boy.
but it's an easy mistake to make;
the way you always sleep in a foetal position
or the way you feel too much
but can never put them in words.
a curious case; but not an unsolvable one.
until your eyes speak up and apart from the rest
of you
they say how you almost obsessively take the
longest of walks
or the way you are unfazed in thunderstorms
and it's the quiet you that makes you flinch.
you are a monolith of contradictions,
but you could use a drink.
so you are offered a drink.
which you unceremoniously almost immediately
spit out from your mouth. So childish
inside your hand there is a punchline
inside the other, there is a keepsake
dug out from the bottom of a well
from what appears to be buttons.
When you are rushed to the hospital
the sound of sirens lull you to sleep.

Faiza Ramim *is a final year student of BBA at the University of Dhaka. She likes to watch sad films and write sad poems.*

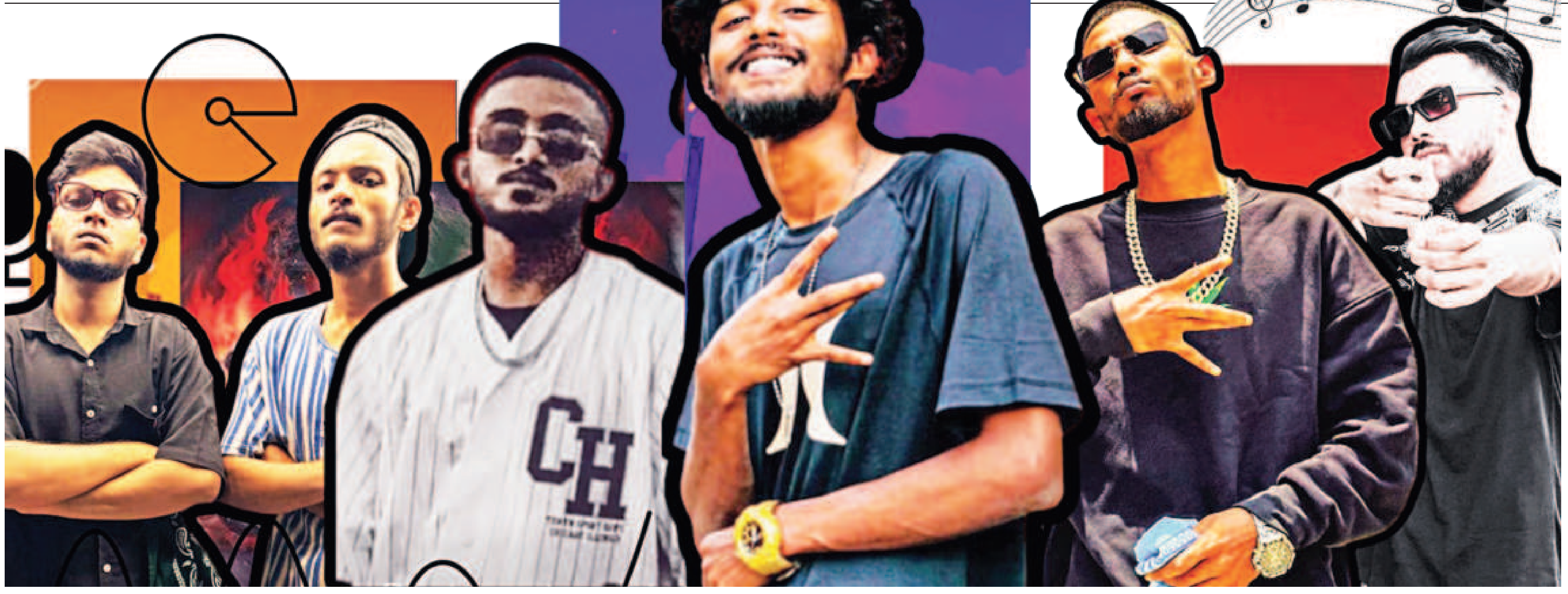


ILLUSTRATION: DOWEL BISWAS

Valiant voices against brute force
THE FEARLESS UPSTARTS OF BANGLA RAP

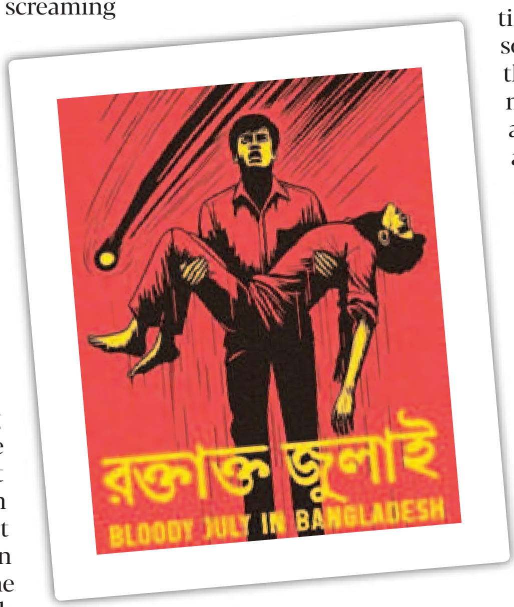
DOWEL BISWAS

If your time to you is worth savin'
And you better start swimmin'
Or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'

As Bob Dylan, often considered as one of the greatest songwriters of history puts it on his revolutionary anthem ***The Times They Are A-Changin'***. Dylan later recalled writing the song as a deliberate attempt to create an anthem of change for the moment, to capture the spirit of social and political upheaval that characterised the 1960s. However, it's weirdly satisfying to find that time echoes its own course, speaking the truth no matter what and where–it does always sing for the oppressed.

The song finds a weird sense of autonomy alongside the protesters on the streets, musicians, singers, rappers, from all walks of life – the voice of youth and the country now, are screaming with an untrumpable tool that no oppressing entity could ever tame–poetry, lyricism and music.

It's incredible how modified slogans, songs, anthems surrounding our Liberation War of 1971 are being uttered on the streets to support the quota reform movement that has been raging in the country for the past month. Bangla has always been a land where political resurgence has been dealt and stood on the stronghold of its cultural heritage. People have raged wars, formed rebellion through the purest form of art, the voice of the revolution always has been laid on this landscape with cultural dignity and opulence, through its songs, poems, graffiti and mass folk songs.



Rapper Hannan Hossain Shimul, who has recently come into the spotlight for his hit rebel rap ***Awaaz Utha***, was arrested on July 25 in Narayanganj's Bhuighor area.

Ironically, he starts his song by incorporating Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's historic 7th March speech, with a chorus that tells us to call out freedom through ***Awaaz Utha Bangladesh***. Hannan's lyrics loosely translate to:

"Bengalis are no fools, we won't fall for every trick they throw,

...Sayeed, I'm taking the bullet, smiling at the barrel's call,

Student voices rise, commands come from the hall."

Hannan's song, which sought freedom of speech, had gathered over 600,000 views on YouTube and was trending on # 5 in music category till August 1. The song emphasised the strength of music in rebellion as it stands, as a cultural movement, mirroring the same values, empowering individuals to express their truths and confront societal challenges. However, his non-political stance couldn't save him from being imprisoned under unknown clauses of the law and jurisdiction.

Dozens of rap songs came to prominence in the span of only a month to stand alongside the thousands of protestors across Bangladesh, voicing their demands and speaking of what the imprisoned, 'beaten up' and 'silenced' could not. Like Pablo Neruda's famous line "You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming," these fiery artistes are a voice that no oppressing entity could ever stop.

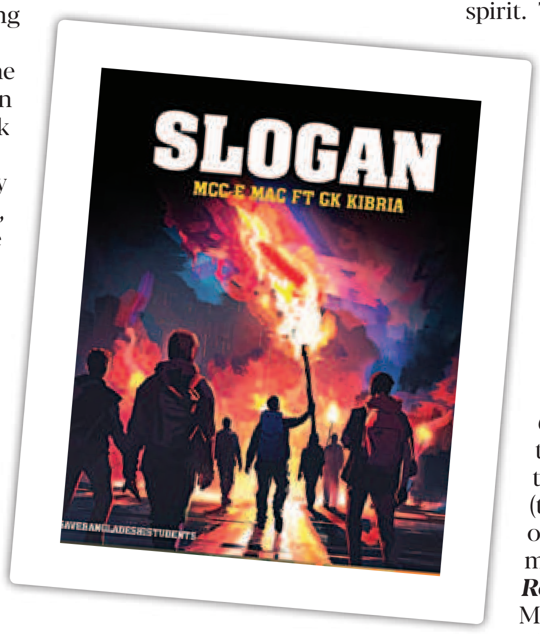
Another rapper Shezan, popularly known as Shezan Beatz, released his rap track ***Kotha Ko*** on July 16, which had gathered over 1.6 million views, making the YouTube trending list with the following lyrics.

"Where's the difference between 52 and 24? Speak up!

If the country claims freedom, where's the freedom? Speak up!

My siblings die on the streets, are you even trying? Speak up!"

Another rap song, Gold Cube and Scary Crow's ***Desh Shongskar***, also borrows from a historic speech from Bangabandhu. In the song, they demand answers from the ruling party for the mass imprisonment, usage of oppressive methods of handling peaceful students and protestors on the streets urging for a rightful demand, merit-based assessment and opportunities. His lyrics read, "Rebellion every time..not for jobs, stipends, but dignity...in a land ruled by tyrants, where thieves feast, more students die than birds from bullets," the song carries out with this message.



Rap song, ***Desh Kar?*** by Lunatix Veer and Rhythmsta, speaks no different than its predecessors, carrying the same spirit of resistance and uprising, which came back to us in every generation, the only difference perhaps is its usage of contemporary Bangla as a language.

Quota na Medha?, dedicated to Abu Sayeed, who died after being shot by rubber bullet while protesting for the quota reform, chants the claim of the protesters, "Quota or Merit?".

"I dream of change,
...As death visits my life.
Chanting slogans, my voice cracks,
Counting bullet scars on my chest."

Most of these songs speak of the same demands, cries, chants we hear through shouts, chants, slogans, in poetry and spirit. They are of the same message with different words put together eloquently, beautifully and blatantly, looking eye to eye with a higher power.

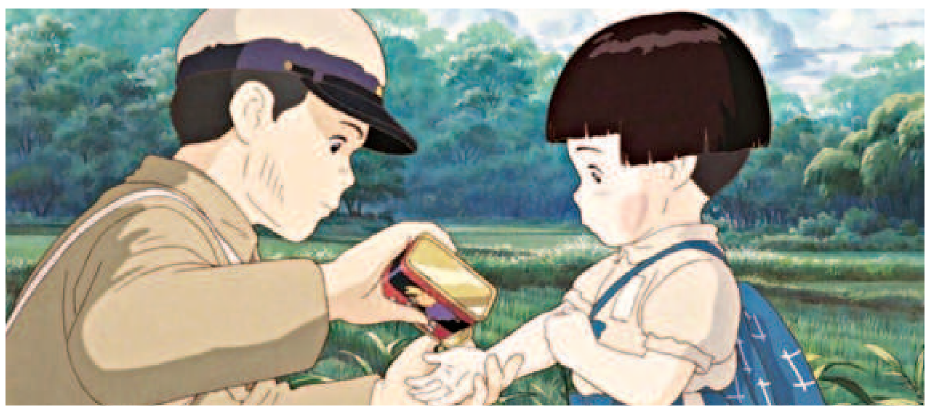
Joining in the rebellious voices are ***Chobbisher Guerrilla*** by the rap group by the same name (trending #18 on YouTube for music), Omix's ***Rokto***, Mcc-e Mac and Gk Kibria's ***Inquilab***, Lazy Panda O'seven and Dashu's ***Freedom ain't free***, Crown Engine's ***Daam De***, Flag Bang's ***Godi Chhar***, Chef-IQ's ***Bangla Ma***, Raafky's ***Odhikaar***, Coldcraft and Bihan's ***Bayanno***, Mascot's ***Freedom?***, Wakeup Hadi's ***Shokuner Chokh***, and Rafsan Ahmed Siam's ***Joy Bangla***, while many others have become the voice of the bleeding country whose sons and daughters are on the streets fighting for their cause.

These young upstarts of Bangla rap have achieved a feat that the mainstream music industry in Bangladesh could never achieve in this decade -- point their valiant, unsheathed, and belligerent voice against the guns of the oppressors.

The rap verses have been translated into English for the readers' convenience.

1-MINUTE REVIEW

Silent cries and enduring impact of 'Grave of the Fireflies'



A forlorn, devastating, yet enrapturing Studio Ghibli production that will forever remain as one of the flagbearers of Japanese credo and stand the test of time is ***Grave of the Fireflies***.

Released in 1988, this Isao Takahata-directed anime film tells the story of two military siblings who endure the consequences of surviving the end of a losing war, marred by the death of their mother and the uncertain return of their father, who works in the Japanese Navy.

In March 1945, as the Pacific War neared its end, American Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers obliterated much of the city of Kobe. Following their mother's death, Seita and Setsuko Yokokawa were forced to leave their abusive aunt's home after staying there too long.

It is Seita's hard-and-fast ideal of never having to settle for abuse or mistreatment, which is often associated with being Japanese, that prevents him from either seeking help or even accepting help from people who willingly lend a hand.

The film derives its meaning from the bond between the brother and her sister. Scarcely finding kindness in a war-ridden and nearly apathetic atmosphere, Seita goes above and beyond to provide his beloved younger sister, Setsuko, with the comforting images of a world that was too harsh and unforgiving.

WHAT'S PLAYING

AWAAZ UTHA

Awaaz Utha by Hannan, produced and mastered by SnareByt, is a powerful rebel rap song that begins with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's historic 7th March speech.

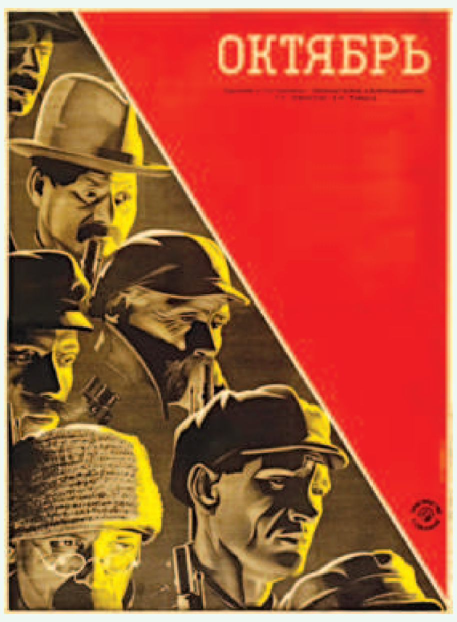
Released on July 18, the track emphasises the importance of freedom of speech and the courage to resist oppression, aligning with Hip Hop's core values. With 381k views in just 12 days and trending at #9 on YouTube, the song has struck a chord with listeners. Its compelling intro, ***Raise your voice, Bangladesh***, calls for justice and resilience against societal injustices.

The intro of the song loosely translates to: ***Raise your voice, Bangladesh, raise your voice//So much blood on the streets, raise your voice//Raise your voice, Bangladesh, raise your voice//Who fired the shots on the streets?//Raise your voice, Bangladesh.***

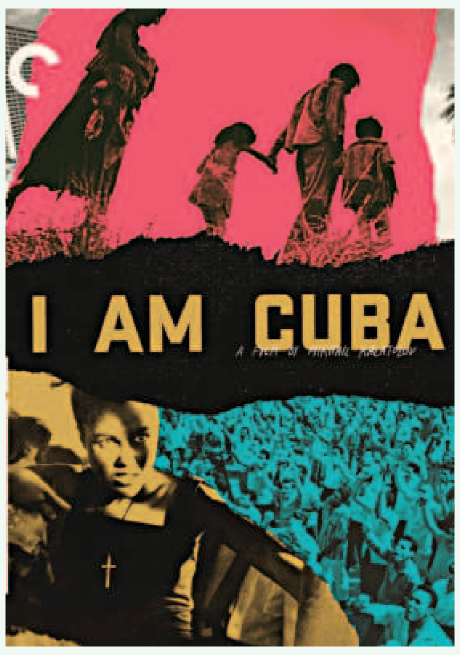
আওয়াজ উঠা
SNAREBYT

REBELLION IN CINEMA

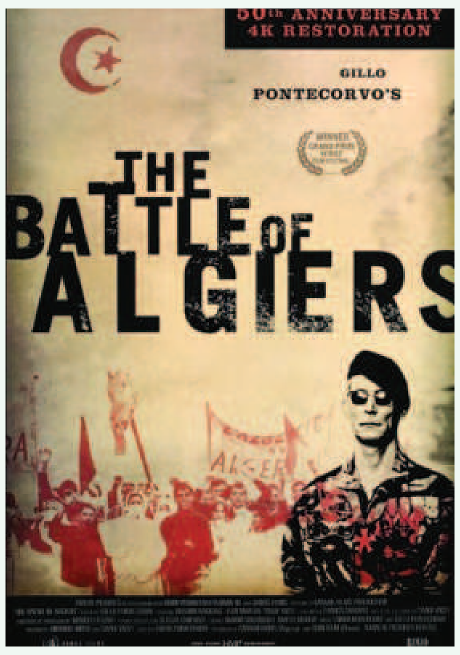
October: Ten Days That Shook the World (1927)



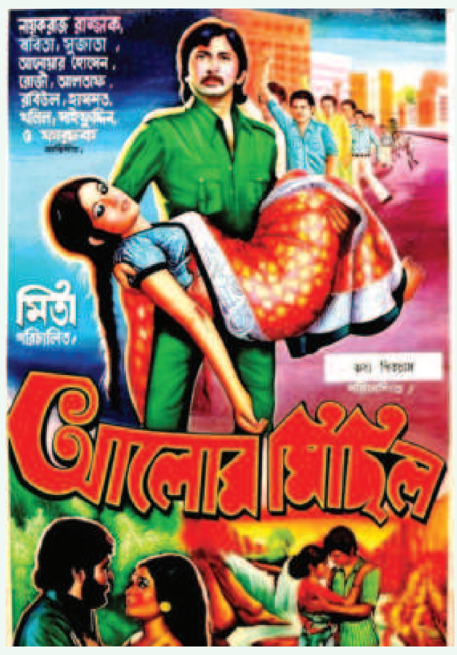
I Am Cuba (1964)



The Battle of Algiers (1966)



Alor Michil (1974)



The Revolution Will Not Be Televised (2003)

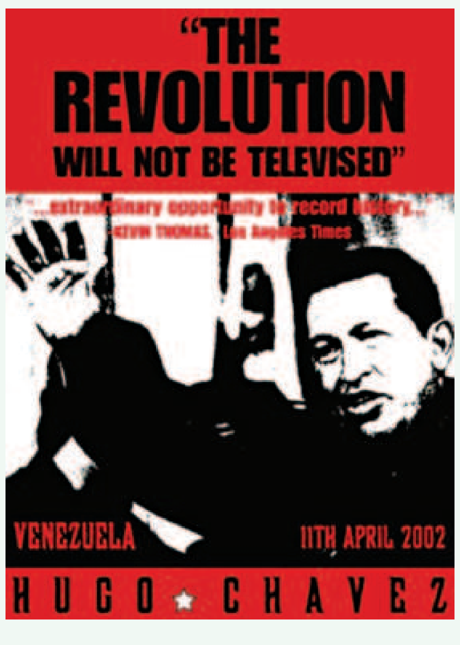


PHOTO: AFP

JOB-SCARCE ECONOMY

Frustration runs deep among a generation of graduates as too many unemployed young people chase too few jobs

> **Except for public service and a few private companies, job security is scarce in Bangladesh. Only a few private companies comply with the labour law.**
>
> **Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed,**
> Former executive director of Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

The recent unrest stemming from a student movement seeking reforms to the quota policy for government jobs boiled over into violence after the initially peaceful protest was allegedly attacked by an opposing party.

Then, between July 18 and 25, there was an internet outage and the government imposed a nationwide curfew in a bid to restore order. People were understandably anxious at the time as they were cut off from almost all communication and had no idea what may come next.

And although things have slowly improved since then, seeing the lengths people would go to for a better chance at working in civil services begs the question: what is so appealing about government jobs?

Ahmed Reza (not his real name), a former student of economics at Jahangirnagar University, first appeared at the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination in 2017.

He has taken the exam five times since, and reached the viva voce twice, but on all occasions he failed to secure a coveted government job.

He was assigned a non-cadre post in the 40th BCS, but didn't join as he had greater aspirations.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Despite the failures, he didn't go for any private sector job either.

Instead, he took a different exam and joined a government office as an 11th-grade official. He was posted in Chapainawabganj, a northwestern district. But he continued to strive in future BCS exams.

"The private sector is full of uncertainties. Layoffs can happen at any time without due reason," Reza explained over the phone.

He also pointed to a lack of benefits like pensions and a lower perceived social status for his disinterest in the private sector.

Thousands of Bangladeshis like Reza graduate from universities every year and many opt to sit for the BCS exams to ensure a decent living.

This is despite the private sector being the engine of the economy, growing by 6 percent on average since 2000.

However, university graduates do not prefer the private sector unless they can find jobs in banks or multinational companies.

Factors like low salaries, a lack of job security, high workloads and a lack of post-retirement benefits are to blame for the indifference, according to an analyst.

Despite this, a large number of educated candidates have no choice but to turn to the private sector. But there are simply not enough jobs, which is reflected in the high unemployment rate among people with tertiary education.

Among graduates, 28 percent were unemployed in 2022, estimated to be around 8 lakh of the total unemployed population, according to the Labour Force Survey 2022 by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Graduates also remain unemployed for a long time, as nearly 20 percent wait for two years for a job, while 15 percent remain jobless for more than two years, as per the BBS data.

Against this backdrop, university students demanded the government reform the quota system for public sector jobs.

"The high unemployment rate and a dearth of jobs have led to the quota reform movement," opined Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, former executive director of the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies.

The quota system reserved 56 percent of total jobs for children and grandchildren of freedom fighters, women, ethnic minorities and persons with disability, specifically for the 9th to 13th grade, as of 2018.

The remaining jobs were filled based on merit.

In the wake of massive student protests in 2018, the government reformed the quota system.

However, following a writ petition, the High Court reversed that decision in June this year.

This led to the reinstatement of the quota system and students once again took to the streets to protest the decision.

Eventually, the peaceful movement turned violent, leading to the death of at least 204 people, many of whom were students.

However, the Supreme Court upheld the order to reform the quota system on July 21, increasing the merit-based recruitment in civil service to 93 percent.

Shortly after, the government issued a circular, saying only 7 percent would secure jobs through various quotas.

"Private jobs paid around three times more than public jobs. But when the government announced a higher pay scale in 2015, it reduced the gap significantly. So public jobs became more popular," said SM Zulfiqar Ali, research director at the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

He attributed other factors like pensions, fiscal benefits, and the feeling of power that government jobs provide for their popularity.

As the unemployment rate among graduates has increased over the years, most private companies can get away with offering low pay.

Ali alleged that the high unemployment rate among graduates enables the private sector to exploit them and offer low salaries.

The lack of interest for private sector job among graduates was evident from their participation in the BCS examination as around 4.75 lakh applications were registered for the preliminary examination of the 41st BCS and 4.35 lakh for the 43rd BCS.

However, competition is fierce.

For example, after the 43rd BCS, the Bangladesh Public Service Commission recommended 2,805 candidates for different cadre and non-cadre positions.

"Except for public service and a few private companies, job security is scarce in Bangladesh. Only a few private companies comply with the labour law," Ahmmed added.

He further said the starting salary for most private jobs is Tk 20,000 to Tk 25,000, while their cohorts in government jobs get almost double alongside other benefits.

"There is deep-rooted discrimination in terms of social dignity and job security and that's why the recent protest was not confined to quota reform -- it was also for raising the voice of many unemployed graduates," said Ahmmed.

As per the BBS, the unemployment rate in Bangladesh was 3.5 percent in 2022, which he said was due to a faulty definition.

According to the definition, a person is considered employed if he or she works for even a single hour during the previous week.

Ahmmed and Ali both believed that this definition simply did not work from Bangladesh's perspective.

"If we take into consideration the Bangladesh's perspective, the unemployment rate among graduates as well as the overall jobless rate might be higher," he said.

Employment includes part-time, informal, temporary, seasonal or casual jobs within the national territory or abroad.

At present, the country has nearly 26 lakh unemployed people, with 21.46 lakh or almost 83 percent aged between 15 to 29.

Additionally, around 68 lakh people are underutilised and are suffering from underemployment. Of them, 13.18 lakh are graduates.

Sayema Haque Bidisha, a professor of economics at the University of Dhaka, believes that high unemployment has created frustration and anger among graduates.

"Graduates are more interested in public jobs for job security and social status," she said.

Besides, not all graduates have the necessary skills for private jobs. This skill mismatch leads many to go for government jobs, exposing the lack of upskilling support, she added.

"We need to develop our academic curriculum and provide soft skills to the graduates as per the job sectors' requirements."

Sabuj Sarker, who graduated in mass communication and journalism from Rajshahi University in 2019 and is currently preparing for public jobs, said some private firms offer higher perks and benefits than public jobs, but most of them are Dhaka-based.

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said there are 12 lakh government employees in Bangladesh.

He added that the majority of employment is in the private sector. So, jobs for graduates haven't increased alongside demand.

"Our job structure is shaped like the Eiffel Tower. We have available jobs for low-skilled and less educated persons. But we do not have enough managerial or white-collar jobs, which is why many educated young people leave the country," he said.

"In such a situation, frustration grows when a graduate sees that the scope to get a job in the public sector is reduced," Moazzem added.

However, he opined that unemployment among graduates would not be solved by reforming the quota.

"If you want to solve the problem of unemployment, the private sector has to play an important role."

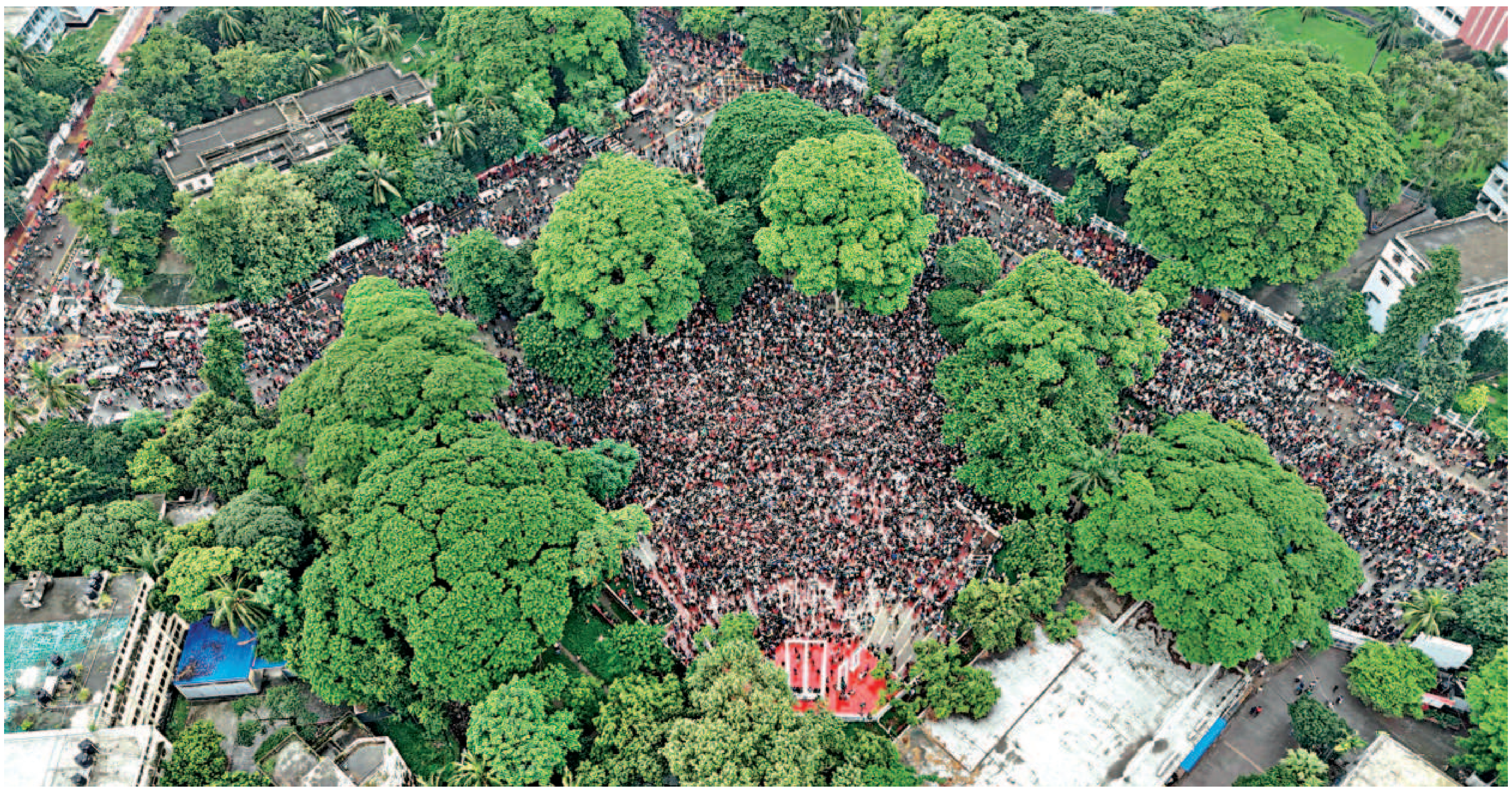
WALTON
Smart Fridge
১ নম্বর
রেফ্রিজারেটর ব্র্যান্ড

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW
The Daily Star
SECOND EDITION

KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

DHAKA SUNDAY AUGUST 4, 2024

REGD. NO. DA 781 | VOL. XXXIV NO. 192 | SRABAN 20, 1431 BS | www.thedailystar.net | MUHARRAM 28, 1446 HIJRI | 20 PAGES : TK 15.00



The Central Shaheed Minar and adjacent roads were full to the brim as thousands of people, including teachers, lawyers, guardians with their children, civil society members, cultural and political activists, freedom fighters and day labourers, from across the capital braved the rain and joined the anti-discrimination student movement yesterday afternoon. PHOTO: **NAIMUR RAHMAN**

Gono Bhaban doors open to agitating students: PM

BSS, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the agitating students to sit with her at Gono Bhaban to end violence centring the quota reform protest.

"Doors to the Gono Bhaban are open. I want to sit with the student protesters and listen to them. I want no conflict."

The prime minister made the remarks at a meeting with the central leaders of the Peshajibi Somonnoy Parishad (Professionals' Coordination Council) at the Gono Bhaban in the morning.

She also asked the authorities concerned to release the general students who have been detained over the recent violence.

The PM assured that trials would be held for each person killed during the quota reform protests.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

ONE DEMAND NOW

PM, her cabinet colleagues must step down, say protesters from a mammoth rally at Central Shaheed Minar

STAR REPORT

Turning down the prime minister's call for dialogue, the organisers of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement yesterday came up with a one-point demand -- the resignation of Sheikh Hasina and her cabinet members.

They made the announcement at a rally attended by tens of thousands of people at the Central Shaheed Minar around 5:00pm.

People from all walks of life – from teachers to lawyers to rickshaw pullers -- joined the rally that spilled over into surrounding areas.

"We are here with a one-point demand. We seek to ensure people's safety and justice ... ," said Nahid Islam, one of the key organisers.

Referring to the PM's call for dialogue, he said, "We are demanding the resignation of Sheikh Hasina. Her resignation is not enough;she has to be brought to justice for all the killings and abductions. Not only Sheikh Hasina, but also the entire cabinet has to resign."

Nahid said they want to develop a political system where autocracy would never return. He urged the people to join the "student-citizen mass uprising" and organise in every locality.

He said the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement will soon forge an alliance of citizens, student organisations, and all professionals.

"Upon consulting all, we will unveil a future national framework. We are urging people to join the all-out non-cooperation. We will not cooperate with the government in any way," he said.

Earlier in the morning, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called upon the students to sit with her at the Gono Bhaban.

"The Gono Bhaban's doors are open. I want to sit with the agitating students and listen to them. I don't want any conflict," she said at a meeting with professionals.

THE RALLY

Braving the rain, many with their family

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

NONCOOPERATION

Protesters roll out 15 points

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement yesterday issued a 15-point instruction for people so the non-cooperation movement it has announced is successful.

Earlier in the day, it made a single-point demand -- the resignation of the prime minister and her cabinet members -- at a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Asif Mahmud, an organiser of the movement, later announced the instructions. They are as follows:

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

2 killed as clashes erupt in several dists

At least 55 people injured

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed and 55 others, including students, injured in clashes involving the anti-discrimination protesters, law enforcers and ruling party activists in at least seven districts yesterday.

Police and Awami League men allegedly opened fire on the protesters in some incidents while demonstrators also vandalised government vehicles and ruling party offices.

Clashes were reported in Gazipur, Chattogram, Cumilla, Sylhet, Bogura, Jamalpur and Faridpur.

In Gazipur, a man was killed and at least nine other people were injured during a clash between police and protesters in Sreepur upazila's Mawna area.

Jahangir Alam, 45, used to make mattresses in the upazila's Channapara village.

Speaking to The Daily Star, his relative Kajal Mia said Jahangir died of bullet wounds.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

TIMELINE STUDENT PROTESTS

July 15, 2024

Chhatra League and other ruling party activists attack quota protesters at Dhaka University. They also attack wounded demonstrators inside and outside Dhaka Medical College Hospital. More than 300 injured on both sides.

July 16, 2024

At least six killed in fierce clashes between protesting students and law enforcers joined in by ruling party activists in Dhaka, Chattogram and Rangpur. All universities, colleges and secondary schools are shut down for indefinite period. Students take control of most of DU and RU halls and vandalise BCL leaders' rooms.

July 17, 2024

Police attack students at DU, JU and RU during "absentee funeral" for student martyrs. Students announce a nationwide "complete shutdown" for the next day. Hasina addresses the nation and announces a judicial probe into previous day's killings.

MORE ON PAGE 07

Count of a carnage

At least 95pc of the victims were killed by gunshots, including live rounds

STAR REPORT

When Tahir Zaman Priyo, 30, was gunned down around 5:00pm on July 19 just behind Labaid Hospital in Dhaka's Dhanmondi, his friend Faria Ulfath Syed heard just a single gunshot.

Amid raging street protests and almost ceaseless firing of teargas shells and sound grenades, a panicked crowd ran into Central Road. Priyo, a journalist, and his friends, including Faria, followed, with law-enforcers closing in from front and back.

"Suddenly, I heard one single shot. First, I thought it was a sound grenade. I looked back to see Priyo on the ground. The bullet hit the back of his head," said Faria.

There are numerous such cases.

The Daily Star has now analysed injuries of 204 victims of the violent clashes centring the quota movement and found that 195 or 95 percent were killed by bullets, including live rounds, rubber bullets and shotgun pellets. Of them, 113 were shot by live rounds that struck mostly in the head, chest, stomach and abdomen. Even a single gunshot to these vital parts of the body can kill in minutes.

As many as 26 were hit by pellets or rubber bullets. Eight families confirmed their loved ones were shot, but could not specify the bullet types. The Daily Star could not reach out to the remaining 48 families, including those of the 21 unidentified bodies. Hospital, morgue and graveyard sources confirmed that they had gunshot wounds.

At least 43 of the victims were students and 32 were children with one as young as four. Unicef also said 32 children had died in the violence.

Over the last one week, The Daily Star scoured death registers at morgues, major hospitals and graveyards in Dhaka and elsewhere and reached out to different communities, and were able to collect information about 204 victims.

Of them, we collected information from families and close friends of 157 victims across the country and gathered details of the nature and extent of the injuries that killed them. Most of them said their loved ones were hit

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

PHOTOS AND OTHER DETAILS OF 178 VICTIMS ON PAGE 8, 9

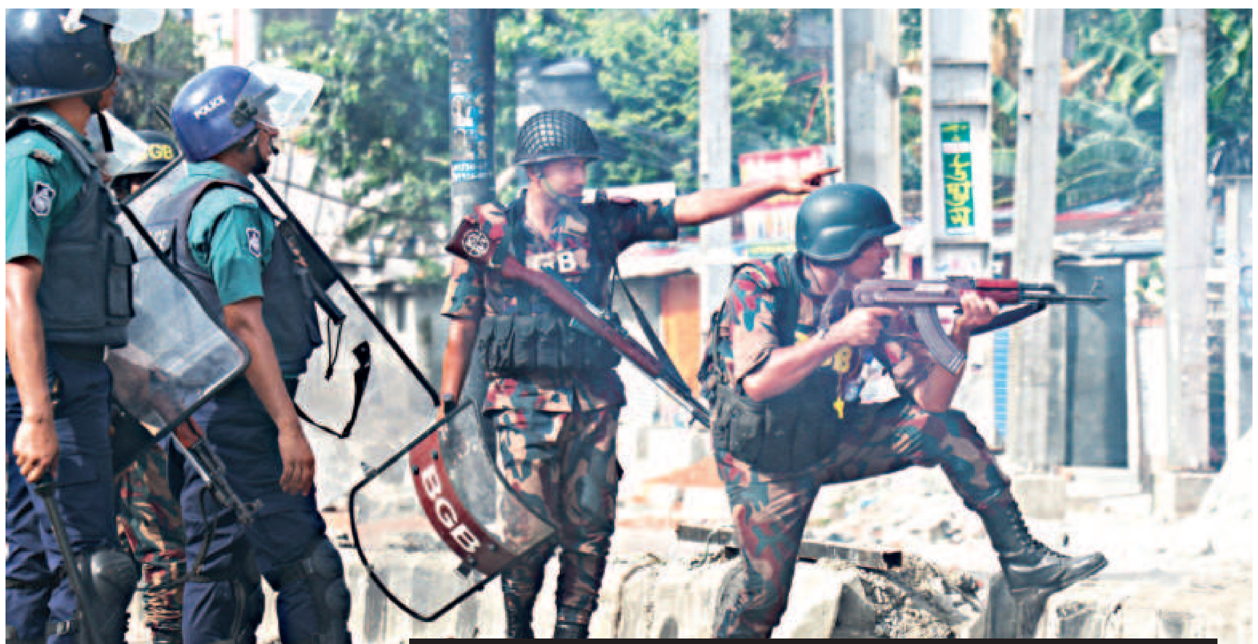


PHOTO: **IBRAHIM KHALIL**

TOTAL DEAD: 204
(AS OF AUG 1)

113 killed by live rounds
26 killed by pellets/ rubber bullets
56 killed by unspecified bullets
9 died of other injuries

39 shot in head
35 shot in chest
11 in stomach
8 in abdomen
2 in neck
8 in back
9 in leg, arms, other parts

SNIPPETS OF DISREGARD FOR LIFE

CASE 1

Video footage captured on July 16 shows police shooting at Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed. He died soon afterwards. Standing alone and unarmed with arms outstretched, Sayed posed no threat to law enforcers when he was shot from a distance of 50-60 feet.

CASE 2

A video from Mirpur-10 on July 19 shows 31-year-old Asif Iqbal being fatally shot in the chest by police. Unarmed and alone, Asif was struck by a clear gunshot, causing a severe wound that led to his death, said his friends and family members.

CASE 3

Another incident seen by The Daily Star on July 19 near Better Life Hospital in Rampura involved a child who was shot in the head as police and BGB opened fire at protesters. He was unarmed. The child's seemingly lifeless body was carried away by bystanders as his blood strained the street.

MORE ON PAGE 07

Tens of thousands of people from all walks of life yesterday joined the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement in their own cities and districts across the country. *Top left,* Chattogram; *bottom left,* Narayanganj; *centre,* Dhaka; *top right,* Sylhet; *bottom right,* Thakurgaon.

PHOTO: STAR

QUOTA PROTESTS

Another dies from bullet wounds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 17-year-old boy, who suffered bullet wounds during the recent violence, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Mohammad Emon was shot during a clash between police and protesters in the capital's Natun Bazar area on July 19, said his sister Tahmina Begum.

Emon, who used to work at a restaurant in the capital's Bhatara area, breathed his last around 3:00am yesterday, according to the DMCH's death register.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College morgue for an autopsy, said inspector Bachchu Mia, the in-charge of the DMCH Police Outpost.

Emon's death takes the total number of deaths from the violence centring the quota reform protest to 209, as per The Daily Star's count.

The tally could become higher as this newspaper could not get confirmation from different hospitals where dozens of critically injured were taken for treatment.

No children died in recent violence

Claims home minister; curfew relaxed from 6am to 9pm in 4 districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan last night said one or two teenagers may have died but no children had lost their lives in the violence centring the quota protests.

He was addressing a press briefing at the secretariat.

"You [journalists] may not be interpreting the definition of a child correctly. An 18-year-old is called a teenager, not a child. At 18, I think, he becomes a young man. That person is no longer a teenager," said the minister.

"They [children] were used as shields during this movement. They [teenagers and children] were in the front while miscreants were in the back. They [miscreants] took shelter behind the children."

Replying to a query about a journalist having died in police firing, he said, "No one was killed in police firing during the movement."

At that, another journalist asked, "Honourable minister, you said nobody died from police firing during this movement, then whose firing killed people?"

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

2 killed as clashes erupt in several dists

FROM PAGE 1

"Jahangir was in a shop during a clash between police and protesters. Around 3:00pm, I learnt that Jahangir was lying on a road injured and protesters rescued him. He died on the way to hospital."

Witnesses said protesters blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway in Palli Bidyut area at 11:00am. Police fired shots and lobbed teargas shells around 1:30pm to disperse them.

Agitators then set fire to three police boxes at the Mawna intersection. They surrounded the Mawna Highway Police Station and set fire to several police vehicles, said the station's OC Sheikh Mahbub Morshed.

Dr Nazmul Huda, resident medical officer at Sreepur Upazila Health Complex, said at least six injured protesters took treatment there.

In Chattogram, a shopkeeper died last night after being shot during a clash between protesters and law enforcers.

The deceased, Md Shahid, 45, a resident of the city's Chakbazar area, died of pellet injuries at Park View Hospital around 10:30pm, said hospital sources.

According to witnesses, Shahid sustained injuries during a clash between protesters and law enforcers in Bahaddarhat in the evening.

Abdul Hannan Miah, additional commissioner of Chattogram Metropolitan Police, claimed that police did not open fire there.

"We used teargas shells and truncheons to disperse the crowd."

In another incident, four people were injured in a clash between protesters and law enforcers in the port city's Bahaddarhat area around 8:00pm. Police fired shots and teargas shells to disperse the demonstrators.

The injured were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital, said Sub-Inspector Alauddin Talukder of the CMCH Police Camp.

In Cumilla, seven students sustained bullet injuries when a group of AL men attacked a student procession in the city's Police Lines area in the afternoon.

Witnesses said protesters started gathering on the Comilla Zilla School premises, Pubali Chattar, Police Lines, and Race Course areas since 11:00am.

AL activists attacked the students in Police Lines area around 12:45pm, triggering a clash. Both sides threw brick chunks at each other. At one stage, the ruling party men allegedly opened fire, causing panic.

Police and BGB personnel present there did not intervene, witnesses said.

Dr Fazle Rabbi, director of Comilla Medical College Hospital, said seven students were admitted to the hospital with bullet wounds.

In the district's Chandina upazila, agitators set fire to a vehicle of the upazila assistant commissioner (land) on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway around noon.

Soumya Chowdhury, the AC (land), said he escaped the attack unharmed.

In Sylhet, clashes between demonstrators and police erupted during a protest in the city's Chowhatta area around 5:00pm.

The clash began after demonstrators from a procession threw brickbats at police and attacked a police Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) in Chowhatta. Law enforcers retaliated by firing stun grenades, teargas shells and shotgun rounds.

Sporadic clashes continued in the area until 7:30pm as demonstrators blasted crude bombs.

In Companiganj, Jubo League and Chhatra League activists attacked a student procession near the Upazila Parishad Complex around 12:30pm.

Demonstrators later vandalised several government offices on the complex premises. Police fired teargas and shotgun rounds to bring the situation under control.

At least 15 people, including local journalists Kabir Ahmed and Sohrab Ahmed, were injured in the incident.

In Rajshahi city, protesters set alight a police box at Vodra intersection around 1:50pm and vandalised a temporary office of the Vodra ward AL.

In Bogura, police clashed with protesters in the town's Sat Matha area in the afternoon, leaving several demonstrators injured.

Students from different educational institutions, their parents and a group of professionals gathered in Sat Matha since 2:00pm.

The clash broke out around 4:00pm, prompting police to fire teargas and rubber bullets to disperse the demonstrators.

Protesters threw brickbats at police and set fire to a traffic police box there. The demonstrators and police chased and counter-chased each other until 6:00pm.

Two people received treatment at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital for rubber bullet injuries, said hospital sources.

In Barishal, protesters vandalised a traffic police box and an APBn vehicle in the city's Chaumatha area around 2:30pm, said Tanvir Arafat, deputy commissioner of Barishal Metropolitan Police.

In Noakhali, protesters took out a procession from Maizdi Bazar area around 2:30pm. After reaching the Town Hall intersection around two hours later, they hurled brickbats at a local AL office which was locked.

At one stage, the protesters entered the office breaking the padlock on the door, vandalised furniture and set fire to the office.

In Faridpur, at least eight protesters were injured after police allegedly fired rubber bullets, teargas and stun grenades to break up a procession of students.

Students took out the procession from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College around 10:45am. They alleged that AL leaders and activists attacked the procession with sticks.

In Jamalpur town, at least 10 people were injured in clashes between protesters, police and AL men in the new high school area around 2:30pm.

In Kushtia, protesters at Islami University vandalised the office of the Chhatra League around 2:00pm.

Our district correspondents contributed to this report.

One demand now

FROM PAGE 1

members started flocking to the Central Shaheed Minar since morning -- first in their hundreds and then in their thousands.

They carried the national flag, banners, and placards from across the city, including Rampura, Badda, Dhanmondi, Science Laboratory, and Mirpur areas.

As the rally began, the crowd poured over onto the Doyel Chattar in the east, Jagannath Hall in the west, Dhaka Medical College Hospital gate area in the south, and Shibbari intersection in the north.

The areas reverberated with anti-government slogans such as "Dofa Ek, Dabi Ek, Sheikh Hasinar Podotyag [One point, one demand, the resignation of Sheikh Hasina]".

The protesters in groups graffitied the streets, walls, and trees. Some of them were seen writing posters and banners.

Rafique Munir and his wife Ahmed Munira went to the Central Shaheed Minar with their six-year-old son.

Munir told The Daily Star, "The demand is now loud and clear. We do not want anyone in power who kills our children."

Aziz Miah, a rickshaw-puller, said, "Our brothers were killed when they took to the streets. How long will we remain silent? The time is now to raise our voices."

Demonstrators took to the streets across Dhaka since morning, demanding justice for those killed in the recent violence centring the quota reform protests. They blocked various intersections.

Around 11:00am, the protesters began gathering in front of BRAC University, Aftabnagar residential area gate and Banasree. They were chanting slogans demanding resignation of the PM and justice for their friends who were killed.

They graffitied the streets and walls.

Around 2:00pm, the road from Rampura Bridge to Badda U-loop area was teeming with protesters, mostly students from private universities and colleges. Many others joined them from Badda, Rampura, and Banasree.

Some parents were seen accompanying their children on the streets.

People on balconies and roofs of buildings were seen clapping and echoing slogans as the processions went by. No police personnel were seen obstructing the processions.

Chanting slogans, they marched nearly 8km to join the rally at the Central Shaheed Minar.

At the Science Laboratory intersection, students started to gather around noon, and later blocked Mirpur Road.

Kamrul Hasan, a Dhaka College student who was there, said, "We cannot betray the blood of our brothers. We shall not leave the streets until the one-point demand is met."

A team of police personnel had already taken position in front of Baitul Aman Mosque Market, a few hundred metres from the protesters.

Around 1:30pm, parents of students in nearby neighbourhoods joined the protesters and gave them dry food and water.

After half an hour, the protesters formed a procession and headed towards the Shaheed Minar. As the procession went past New Market, hundreds of workers from nearby markets joined it.

Many students were seen tearing apart banners and posters of Awami League and Chhatra League.

People from teachers' and staff quarters of Dhaka University cheered them on. Many were seen giving them water, food, and flowers.

Meanwhile, thousands of students gathered at Mirpur-10 roundabout around noon. Their number grew as protesters in small processions joined them one after another.

Many guardians, rickshaw-pullers, hawkers, and employees of shops joined the protest.

Ayon Rahman, a student of law at Bangladesh University of Business and Technology, said, "We demand the withdrawal of all false cases against us."

Police and two dozen members of the Border Guard Bangladesh were standing at a safe distance from the demonstration.

In Uttara, the protesters took position near the BNS Centre and its surrounding streets. Like other places in the city, many parents were with them.

Students from various universities in and around Uttara stood on the pavements with placards. "My brother is in the grave, why is the killer outside?" and "Police, whose side are you on, the people's or Sheikh Hasina's?", read some placards.

A parent said, "We are here for the safety of our children. We want peace. No more bullets. These bullets are bought with our money."

As the rally at the Central Shaheed Minar ended at about 6:10pm, the protesters gathered in the TSC area. They tore down several banners and posters of Chhatra League leaders and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

They also removed wooden letters on the TSC auditorium that displayed slogans of the Chhatra League. They replaced the slogans with "Terror-Free TSC".

They also blindfolded the Raju Bhaskarjya with pieces of red cloth.

Around 7:00pm, the protesters threw brick chunks at the Shahbagh Police Station and chanted anti-police slogans.

Later, a large number of protesters blocked the Shahbagh intersection.

OUTSIDE DHAKA

In Narayanganj, students and their parents kept the Chashara intersection in Narayanganj city blocked for five hours from 11:30pm.

Students in Pabna brought out a procession in front of Pabna Edward College and on the campus of Pabna University of Science and Technology.

A group of students blocked Dhaka-Patuakhali highway for half an hour from 11:00am.

In Feni, agitators staged a sit-in in Khejur Chattar area for one and a half hours after Zohr prayers.

Protesters also took out processions in Jashore, Kushtia, Thakurgaon, Panchagarh and other districts.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Nahid Islam, a key organiser of the anti-discrimination student movement, surrounded by fellow organisers and protesters, announces the one-point demand at the mammoth rally in the capital's Central Shaheed Minar yesterday.

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Don't try to buy time, resign without delay

Fakhrul to govt

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has urged the government to step down instead of trying to buy more time and indulging in killing and bloodshed.

In a statement yesterday, he also called upon the law enforcement agencies and the administration not to torture and shoot the students as per the unjust orders of the Awami League regime.

"I call upon the murderous government to stop the killing, torture, suppression, persecution, terrorism and accept the demands of the students without delaying another moment," he said.

He also demanded the unconditional release of BNP and other opposition party activists and ordinary

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'There is still time to solve the issue'

Speakers call for solutions to ongoing crisis through discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for discussion with the agitating students to resolve the ongoing crisis.

They said there is still time to solve the issue. The crisis can be resolved through dialogue. If terrorism and violence are stopped, peace, harmony and non-communal democratic Bangladesh will be established.

They were speaking at a views-exchange meeting organised by Sampriti Bangladesh at CIRDAP auditorium yesterday.

Pijush Bandyopadhyay, convener of the organisation, presided over the event, while member secretary Professor Dr Mamun Al Mahtab moderated it.

Journalists Ali Habib and Farhad Mahmud presented a keynote paper.

Protesters stand atop a monument in the port city's New Market area yesterday afternoon. Tens of thousands of people from all walks of life joined a rally there to protest the killings and mass arrests over quota protests. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

AL, BNP leaders' homes, office attacked in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The houses of Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhoury Nowfel and Mayor Rezaul Karim, and the office of Awami League MP Md Mohiuddin Bachchu were vandalised in Chattogram yesterday.

Besides, the residences of BNP leader Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and Chattogram city unit BNP convener Ershad Ullah were vandalised last night.

Also, two cars were torched and eight were vandalised at the car park of BNP leader Shahadat Hossain.

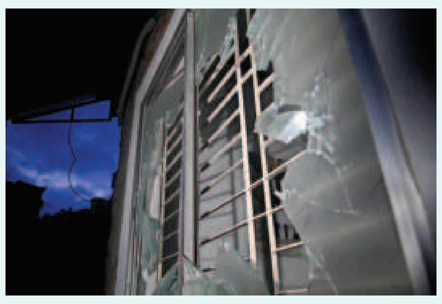
However, sources at the houses of Nowfel and Bachchu said the attackers were not students while BNP alleged that the ruling party members attacked their leaders' residences.

Around 6:30pm, a section of people from a protest procession attacked the house of the education minister.

Some furniture and glasses of the windows were vandalised at that time, said witnesses. Two vehicles at the parking space were also vandalised.

Dr Salim Akhter Chowdhury, former chief health officer of Chattogram City Corporation and brother-in-law of Nowfel, said several hundred people from a procession carried out the attack.

Nowfel's mother Hasina Mohiuddin said the attackers were not students.



A broken window at Nowfel's home.

A torched car at the parking lot of BNP leader Shahadat Hossain's apartment.

Nowfel is the eldest son of late AL stalwart and former mayor of the port city ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury. He had served as an organising secretary of the party.

Trisha Das, duty officer at Panchlaish Police Station, said they dispatched a team to the minister's house immediately after being informed about the attack.

The attack on Rezaul's house in the Bahaddarhat-Bahaddarbari area was carried out in a similar fashion around 7:30pm.

Chandgaon Police Station Sub-inspector Salma Akter said a team of police rushed to the spot around 7:45pm.

Rezaul is a joint general secretary of the ruling party's Chattogram Metropolitan Unit.

Contacted, Rezaul said some 200 people attacked his house around 7:30pm. "I was at my residence at that time," he said, adding, "They broke open the main entrance and blasted crude bombs in the yard."

"However, they could not enter the house as neighbours and locals resisted them," he said.

Chattogram-10 MP Bachchu's office in Lalkhan Bazar also came under attack in the evening when the protest march reached the area.

The attackers vandalised the furniture of two rooms and later set those on fire, according to witnesses.

Sidraturl Rahi, a witness, said around 10 people from the procession entered the office and carried out the attack.

The attackers were not students, Rahi added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Solidarity amid strife

People from various sectors of society back students' protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recent protests surrounding the quota reform movement have garnered widespread solidarity from various sectors of society.

People from all walks of life -- including teachers, writers, farmers, workers, expatriates, development professionals, and artists -- have expressed their support for the students and their deep shock at the recent violence resulting in the loss of numerous lives, as well as countless serious injuries.

For instance, 626 faculty members of BRAC University, through a press statement, expressed their solidarity, emphasising commitment to a just, democratic, and inclusive society, and support for the students' right to peaceful protest.

They expressed deep concern over the torture and harassment of students and the disruption of academic life.

Additionally, leaders of eight teachers' organisations have urged students to resolve the issue through discussions with the prime minister.

This call was made yesterday at a meeting held at the central office of the Independence Teachers Council, presided over by principal Dr Shahjahan Alam Saju.

People from all walks of life -- including teachers, writers, farmers, workers, expatriates, development professionals, and artists -- have expressed their support for the students and their deep shock at the recent violence resulting in the loss of numerous lives, as well as countless serious injuries.

Furthermore, 51 teachers from Cumilla University expressed shock and grave concern over the killing of young students, calling for an end to the harassment, arrest, and torture of students nationwide. They also demanded justice for the deaths.

The Expatriate Unity Council, in a separate statement, expressed solidarity with the anti-discrimination student movement and their non-cooperation movement from today, and urged everyone to support it.

They also called on army officials to reject any orders by the government against citizens.

Thirty writers also demanded an impartial investigation to all killings related to the quota reform protests, an end to mass arrests, and the immediate release of detained individuals.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Are they even okay?

Families left clueless as jail authorities bar them from meeting arrested loved ones

RAFIUL ISLAM

Mowsumi Parveen rushed to Bogura jail on July 20 to see her son Shahreear Muztaheed Jim, who had been arrested by police during the quota movement in Sherpur upazila and landed there.

Since then Mowsumi and his husband Tajkirul Islam went to the jail for seven successive days together or by rotation to desperately see their beloved son, but were refused by the jail authorities that has not been allowing any visitors.

Shahreear, a student of Govt Shah Sultan College, was arrested on July 17 as he, along with hundreds of other students, was demonstrating at Dhunat More area, demanding quota reform in government jobs.

"We do not know whether our son is doing well or not. We cannot see him, let alone talk," Tajkirul told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Had we met our son even once; we could console ourselves, and himself too. The jail authorities cannot even say when we will be able to meet him," Tajkirul lamented.

This is not an isolated incident. Thousands of families, whose loved ones are among the over 10,000 individuals recently arrested in connection with the quota protests, are going through immense sufferings as are being denied the chance to see or speak to their relatives in different jails of the country.

Jail authorities said they are not allowing anyone to meet or call over the phones for security reasons as

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Microcredit Regulatory Authority

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মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার সনদ/সাময়িক অনুমোদন বেচাকেনা/হস্তান্তর করা হতে বিরত থাকা বিষয়ক

সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি আইন, ২০০৬ এর ১৭(২) ধারা অনুযায়ী মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি (এমআরএ) কর্তৃক ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার জন্য প্রদত্ত কোন সনদ বা উহার অধীন অর্জিত স্বত্ব সম্পূর্ণ বা আংশিকভাবে হস্তান্তর করার সুযোগ নেই। সম্প্রতি লক্ষ্য করা যাচ্ছে, কতিপয় অসাধু প্রতিষ্ঠান/চক্র/ব্যক্তি অথরিটির ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রমের সনদ/সাময়িক অনুমোদন সম্পূর্ণ বা আংশিক হস্তান্তর/বেচাকেনা করার অপচেষ্টা চালাচ্ছে, যা মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি আইন, ২০০৬ এর ধারা ৩৫(১)(ঙ) অনুযায়ী শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ। উল্লেখ্য, অথরিটির সনদ/সাময়িক অনুমোদন হস্তান্তরের প্রমাণ পাওয়া প্রতিষ্ঠানের সনদ/সাময়িক অনুমোদন বাতিলসহ আইনগত ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হচ্ছে।

এ প্রেক্ষিতে, সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে অথরিটি কর্তৃক ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার সনদ/সাময়িক অনুমোদন সম্পূর্ণ বা আংশিক হস্তান্তর/বেচাকেনা হতে বিরত থাকার অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে। এছাড়া অথরিটির সনদ ব্যতীত বেআইনী ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ বিধায় এ জাতীয় কার্যক্রম হতে বিরত থাকার জন্য সকলকে অনুরোধ করা হলো।

এক্সিকিউটিভ ভাইস চেয়ারম্যান

GD- 110

Fulfill demands of students

Two partners of AL's 14-party alliance urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers Party of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Tarikat Federation, two partners of the Awami League led-14 party alliance, yesterday urged the government to immediately fulfill the nine-point demand of the protesting students.

In separate meetings, the parties also urged the government to sit with the leadership of the agitating students to resolve the crisis.

"A solution could be reached by ensuring justice to the killing of students during the protests, compensation for the dead and injured, opening of educational institutions and other demands of the students. If the leadership of the student protests agrees, the Workers Party can help start that process," said its president Rashed Khan Menon.

Meanwhile, Tarikat Federation urged the government to take the leading role in resolving the crisis.

AL, BNP

FROM PAGE 3

ATTACK ON BNP LEADERS' HOUSE

Mohammad Idris, former office secretary of Chattogram city unit BNP, said some 200 people threw stones at the car parking of Shahadat Hossain's apartment at Badshah Miah Road.

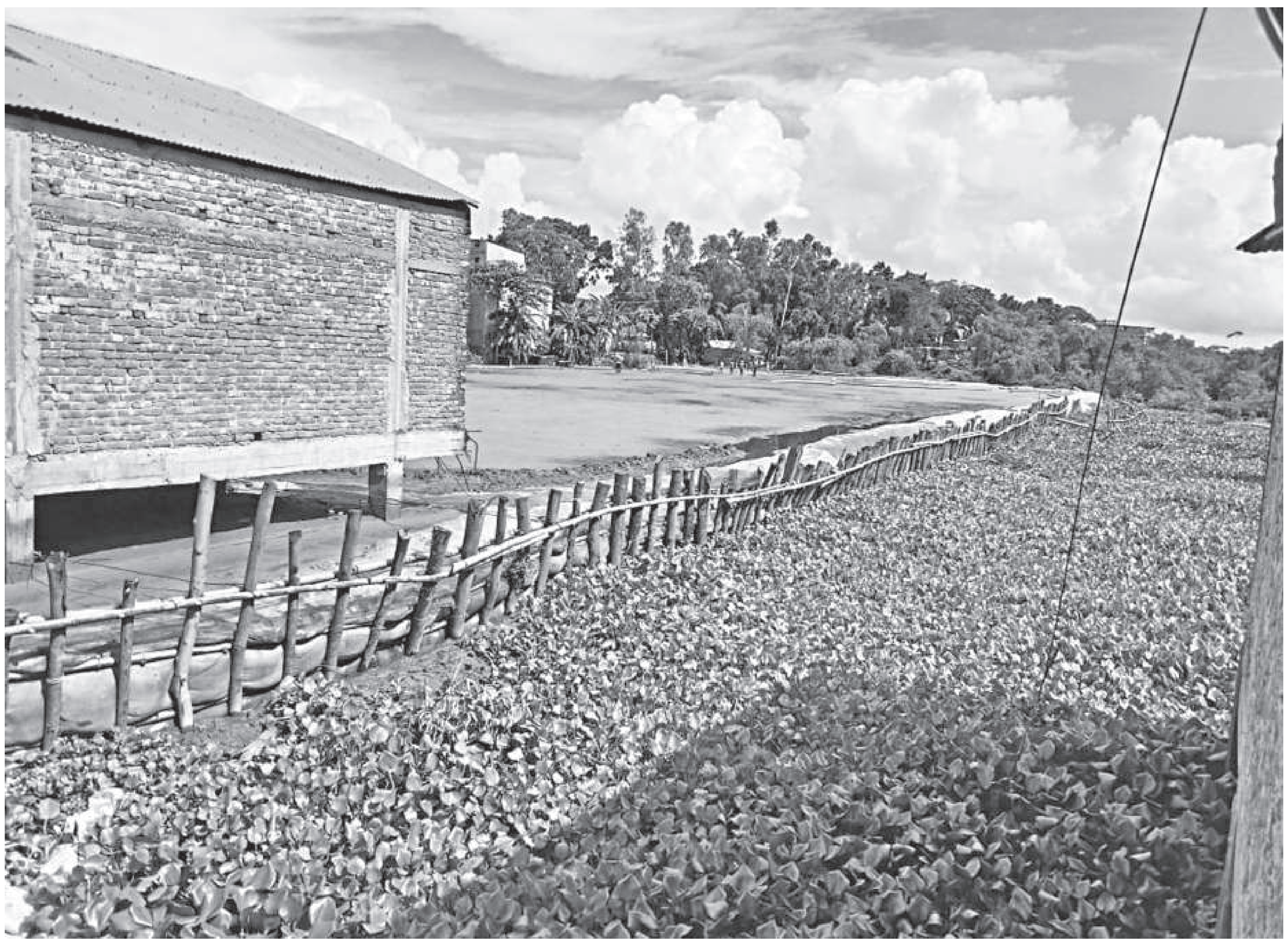
They torched two cars and vandalised eight others.

He alleged the attackers were ruling party men.

"The Awami League men also vandalised the residence of Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury in Mehedibagh area," he said.

Afterwards, they vandalised the residence of Chattogram city unit BNP convener Ershad Ullah in Panchlaish Residential Area.

Santosh Chakma, officer-in-charge of Panchlaish Police Station, could not be contacted for comments. Comments from the protest organisers or AL leaders were not available immediately.



Located between Patuakhali Sadar and Baufal upazilas, around an acre land of Kashipur canal is being filled up with sand for setting up a kitchen market with car parking.

PHOTO: STAR

Canal land grabbed for kitchen market

Locals allege Patuakhali-2 MP gave the directive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Around an acre land of Kashipur canal, located between Patuakhali Sadar and Baufal upazilas, is being filled up with sand for setting up a kitchen market with car parking.

The work is being done allegedly upon the directive of ASM Feroz, lawmaker of Patuakhali-2 (Bauphal) constituency, while being supervised by Majnu Howladar, chairman of local Adabaria Union Parishad.

According to locals, Bangladesh Water Development Board constructed a sluice gate and a dyke on the 300-foot wide canal around 1990, before the Local Government Engineering Department constructed the Patuakhali-Baufal road on the dyke to connect Baufal, Galachipa and Dasmina upazilas with Patuakhali district town.

As such, Kashipur became the junction where the three roads to Patuakhali Sadar, Baufal and Galachipa upazilas meet, thereby paving way for hundreds of businesses emerge on the canal's banks, which eventually led to its encroachment.

Some local businessmen at Kashipur market, wishing anonymity, said the local UP chairman plans to expand the market and began filling up sand across one acre of the canal's land as part of it.

Some of the land may also be sold as plots later, they alleged.

"The market lacks adequate space. Often, fish and vegetables have to be kept on the busy road adjacent to the market due to space constraint. To ease the shop-owners at the market, the UP chairman has initiated to expand the market by filling up some portion of the canal," said Mojibur Rahman Howladar, a local UP member.

Contacted, UP chairman Manju Howladar claimed he has only been supervising the market's expansion upon directive of local lawmaker ASM Feroz.

"The road here is very narrow while numerous different vehicles including buses and trucks ply it every day. The kitchen market is largely set up on the road, which makes it difficult for the shop-owners to run their businesses smoothly. So, lawmaker ASM Feroz directed to fill up some portion of the canal to provide space for the market. I am only supervising the work," he said.

ASM Feroz said the initiative has been taken in public interest.

"The canal has already been gradually filled up and largely abandoned, and hardly comes to any use," he added.

Contacted, Patuakhali Deputy Commissioner Noor Qutubul Alam said he was unaware about the canal filling.

"It is illegal to fill up or encroach on canals. Necessary legal actions will be taken in this regard after inquiry," he added.

74 villages submerged, thousands affected

15 points in flood control dams breached in Feni

UNB, *Feni*

Floodwaters have breached 15 points in the flood control embankments of the Muhuri, Kahua, and Shilonia rivers in Feni's Fulgazi and Parshuram upazilas, inundating 74 villages.

As a result, 28,000 families are stranded, with 64 families relocated to safer areas. By Saturday afternoon, river water levels had risen 220 centimetres above the danger mark.

Fulgazi Upazila Nirbahi Officer Tania Bhuiya reported that the area was first hit by floods on July 1. On August 2, the embankments of the Muhuri, Kahua, and Shilonia rivers broke once more, worsening the situation for residents. Continuous rainfall and upstream runoff have caused a significant rise in river water levels.

The rising waters of the Muhuri, Shilonia, and Kahua rivers have submerged six unions in Fulgazi upazila, affecting 43 villages and isolating 8,000 families.

According to the Water Development Board, water levels are currently 10 centimetres above the danger mark. The Feni-Bilonia regional highway is also submerged in Fulgazi and Parshuram, severing road communication with the district. New areas continue to be inundated.

28,000 families are stranded, with 64 families relocated to safer areas. By Saturday afternoon, river water levels had risen 220 centimetres above the danger mark.

Parshuram Upazila Nirbahi Officer Afroja Habib Shapla stated that approximately 20,000 people are stranded due to the floods caused by excessive rainfall and upstream runoff. The WDB reports that the Muhuri River is flowing 150 centimetres above the danger level, with the number of stranded families increasing daily.

In response to the crisis, the Fulgazi Upazila administration has distributed dry food to 300 families and prepared an additional 250 food packages. They have distributed 13 tonnes of rice and stockpiled 5 tonnes. The Parshuram Upazila administration has distributed 550 packages of dry food.

Abu Abdullah from Mirzanganj area reported that he has never seen water enter homes with such force. "We are struggling through the night," he said.

Mohammed Khalil Ullah added, "Normally, this high ground does not flood, but the heavy rainfall has submerged roads, homes, crops, and fish ponds. If the water level rises further, the situation will become dire."

Jasim Uddin, chairman of Chitholia Union Parishad, criticised the Water Development Board (WDB) for negligence, which has led to repeated breaches in the flood control embankments.

Who will call

FROM PAGE 5

during the unrest and died in Kurmitola Hospital. I got a call after he died, and then I brought his body back to Barguna," said Liton's elder brother Bashir Matubbar.

"Liton not only supported our parents, he also used to help us. He took care of all of us despite being the youngest," he added.

"My brother was not involved in any politics. Then why was he shot? How do we accept his death?," asked Bashir.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

A luxurious Semi Furnished Apartment for Rent in Bashundara Residential Area for family with 3 bed, 4 bath, drawing, dining, family room.House 278, road 8, block D, flat 7, Bashundara

✆ 01730031870, 01713081700

Solidarity amid strife

FROM PAGE 3

They called for lifting the curfew, reopening of educational institutions, stopping the harassment of students and the public, providing compensation to the families of those killed, treatment for injured protesters, and addressing the protesters' demands promptly.

They also urged a national dialogue to resolve the crisis.

The Bangladesh Krishak Sangram Samiti expressed solidarity with the students' demands, emphasising the difficulties in receiving education and unemployment after graduation.

They condemned the government's authoritarian response and urged the eradication of the entire authoritarian system to advance the movement for public liberation.

Under the banner of "Development Professionals' Alliance for Freedom and Justice", around a thousand development professionals from different organisations yesterday joined a rally at Justice Shahabuddin Park in Gulshan.

Rubaiyath Sarwar, a development professional and researcher, read the official statement, strongly asserting that injustice and state-led brutality must end, and that the people's right to speak and write must prevail.

"Bangladesh cannot afford to lose any more of its people in the fight for democracy," he added.

Various bands, solo musicians, lyricists, and composers organised the "Get Up Stand Up" event at Dhanmondi's Rabindra Sarobar to show solidarity with the student movement. Over 5,000 people attended the event, later marching to the Central Shaheed Minar.

Musicians outside Dhaka also expressed solidarity by organising similar events in their respective districts. Artists created banners and festoons with lines from Bangla songs that have historically inspired movements and protests.

Hamin Ahmed, the current president of Bamba and a member of Miles, said, "We want no more shootings, no arrests, and a proper investigation into those who have lost their lives."

He went

FROM PAGE 5

so happy for him."

"He was not involved with any political parties as he had no interest in politics. My son hoped to get a job after finishing his internship, with which he would support our family."

Farida has been inconsolable since Hasan's death. She keeps fainting over and over again, and has stopped eating properly while grieving for her son, according to family members.

Hasan's father, Jamal Uddin, who is an NGO worker, said he last spoke to his son on the afternoon of July 18. Hasan planned to return to Noakhali by a bus once the situation improved.

However, Hasan did not return. He was the oldest out of three brothers and sisters. His younger brother is a ninth-grade student in a high school in the district town, while their youngest sister is a fourth-grade student.

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of The Director
Chittagong Medical College Hospital
www.cmch.gov.bd

Memo No: CMCH/Tender/2024-2025/e-GP/Non-MSR (Diet & Non-Diet)/9070 Date: 03-08-2024.

:e-GP Tender Notice (Time Extension):

The following corrections are hereby made on the tender notice of Procurement of Non-MSR Goods (Diet & Non-Diet) Tender for Chittagong Medical College Hospital in the fiscal year 2024-2025 vide the office reference no: **CMCH/Tender/2024-2025/e-GP/Non-MSR (Diet & Non-MSR)/7081 Date: 22-06-2024.**

SL. No.	Tender Id	Name of Goods	Previous Timeline		Correction Made	
			Tender/ Proposal Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/ Proposal Closing & Opeing Date & Time	Tender/ Proposal Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/ Proposal Closing & Opeing Date & Time
1	999517	Procurement of Diet goods (Milk, Bread, Egg, Banana etc) for the fiscal year 2024-2025.	21-July-2024 14:00	22-July-2024 14:00	08-August-2024 14:00	11-August-2024 14:00
2	999518	Procurement of Diet Goods (Dressed Mutton & Chicken Meat etc) for the fiscal year 2024-2025.	21-July-2024 14:00	22-July-2024 14:00	08-August-2024 14:00	11-August-2024 14:00

The other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

(Brigadier General Mohammed Taslim Uddin)
Director
Chittagong Medical College Hospital.
Telephone: 0241356220
E-mail: cmch@ hospi.dghs.gov.bd

GD- 111

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 4

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

2,000 families

FROM PAGE 5

Brahmaputra river has become blocked over the years and is therefore unable to serve its purpose anymore, further worsening waterlogging, they also said.

Moreover, as there is no dustbin in the area, people are compelled to leave their garbage in the open, thereby posing risk of environmental and health hazards, the locals added.

"Even though the Mymensingh City Corporation authority has been repeatedly claiming to be working on solving waterlogging menace by construction of new drains and repair of old ones across city areas, there is no visible development in the city's drainage system," alleged Nazrul Islam Chunnu, convener of a citizens' forum.

Md Rafiqul Islam Miah, chief engineer of MCC, said, "A Tk 10 crore project to construct a culvert has been taken for Balashpur Madhyapara area to drain away rainwater."

"The work would be completed by October. We are also working to unblock the drains in the area," he added.

Don't try to buy

FROM PAGE 3

students, who were unjustly arrested in false cases, and also demanded the withdrawal of the cases.

Fakhrul alleged that the government is pushing the country towards an extreme conflict by providing the ruling party cadres with the arms, to suppress the movement by killing and torturing the students and people.

"The Awami League government is solely responsible for all the killings, destruction, anarchy and crisis as it tried to brutally suppress the student-led mass movement," he said.

Why did they shoot

FROM PAGE 5

Abdul Gani Mridha, elder brother of Jahangir, said Jahangir lived in a rented house with his wife and two children in the Rayerbagh bus stand area. Due to poverty, Jahangir was not able to provide Sujan with an education.

He demanded that the government take responsibility for his late brother's wife and children.

Laiju Begum said as they had no food left in the house, Jahangir had ventured out of their home on the morning of July 19.

"Who will take responsibility for the death of my innocent husband? Who will judge his killers? How will I survive now with my two sons?" she asked.

Sujan said, "My father did not participate in the movement. He does not support any political party. So why was my father shot? I want his death to be investigated."

Are they even

FROM PAGE 3

curfew is going on and in light of recent attacks on Narsingdi District Jail.

Shamsuzzaman Ome, a seventh semester student of Dhaka University's Institute of Education and Research, was arrested from Uttara area on July 18. He was in Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj after a Dhaka court ordered to send him to jail.

Like Shahreear's family, his near ones could not meet him or talk in over two weeks.

"He was never arrested before. Police arrested him this time as he went to a logical movement. We do not know yet how he was in the police custody and in jail now," a relative of Ome told The Daily Star, preferring anonymity.

Suvash Kumar Ghose, senior jail super of Dhaka Central Jail, said they suspended meeting with inmates for security reasons amid the ongoing events.

He said there are 9,921 inmates in the jail now against the capacity of 4,590, which is almost a regular scenario.

"We often transfer inmates to four jails in Gazipur when it is overcrowded. The transfer was also suspended for some days due to road conditions," he added.

Contacted, Mashiur Rahman, senior secretary to the security services division of Home Ministry, said "As unrest is going on in the country, we have stopped phone call and meeting with inmates at all of the country's jails."

"We will restore this service once the situation becomes normal," he added.

A son taken too soon

Freedom fighter mourns loss of slain constable Suman Gharami

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY, *Bagerhat*

"I fought for this country. I sacrificed my youth for the freedom of this land. How do I go on now that my son is no more?" asked 80-year-old freedom fighter Sushil Gharami.

His son, Suman Gharami, 35, a police constable posted at Khulna Police Lines, was beaten to death during a clash between agitators and the law enforcers in the city's Gollamari intersection during a protest on Friday.

Shushil's once strong, weathered face now shows the deep sorrow and helplessness that haunt him.

His home, "Bir Nibash", which was built by the state to honour those who fought in the Liberation War, now appears unbearably hollow, filled with overwhelming grief and despair that have consumed the family.

Gita Rani Gharami, 60-year-old mother of the slain policeman, was seen by the shallow grave that was dug for her son. Her eyes, red from crying, stared blankly at the mound of earth that will soon cover Suman's body.

"Can you bring my son back?" she asks, her voice breaking up with every word. "Can anyone return my Suman to me?"

The loss of a child is a parent's worst nightmare, and for Gita Rani, that nightmare has become a harrowing reality.

Suman's younger sister, Sumona Gharami, recalls the devastating moment when she learned of her brother's death.

"It was around 7:15pm when my sister-in-law called me," Sumona said, her voice trembling. "She said, 'Your brother is no more. He is in the hospital.'"

The shock, disbelief, and sorrow that followed left her numb.

She said Suman was not only a dedicated police officer but also a beloved son and brother. The brutal nature of his killing has left his family demanding justice.

"I want justice," said Sushil Gharami, his voice carrying the unbearable pain of losing a son.

Parents of Suman Gharami, 35, a police constable, still cannot come to grasp the passing of their son.

PHOTO: **STAR**

1,200 sued over killing of constable Sumon

BSS, *Khulna*

Police filed a case on Friday night with Labanchara Police Station against 1,200 people on the charge of killing constable Sumon Gharami.

Mostafa Saklain, sub-inspector of the police station, filed the case. No one was arrested yet to this end, said Momtazul Haque, officer-in-charge of Labanchara Police Station, yesterday.

On Friday, a large number of people under the banner of "Anti-Discrimination Student Movement" involved in a fierce clash with police in different areas of the city.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mozammel Haque said constable Suman Gharami died after agitators beat him up. Police members found him with a serious head injury in Gallamari in the evening.

They rushed him to the nearby Khulna City Medical College Hospital, police said.

The hospital authorities said Suman was pronounced dead after he was brought there.

His body was handed over to his family members yesterday after an autopsy, said police.

PHOTO: **STAR**

2,000 families living amid waterlogging

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Around 2,000 families in the low-lying Balashpur Madhyapara area of Mymensingh city have been living amid seasonal waterlogging for the past several months.

Shafiul Alam, a resident, said the menace has been a recurring one for the past one decade between the months of May and September.

"Earlier, waterlogging would ensue after rainfall and remain for a few days. Over the past 10 years or so, it has become unbearable. Every year, when rainfall begins, the area becomes waterlogged and will remain so for months until dry season comes," said Farhad Riad, an undergraduate student and resident of the area.

"We have been suffering immensely due to waterlogging since last month as rainwater cannot drain away completely even after a moderate downpour," he added.

Hasna Hena, a housewife living in the area, said, "Often the area becomes submerged under knee-deep water. We have to remain alert to make sure small children stay indoors to prevent them from drowning in water."

"School and college-goers often have to skip their classes, while office-goers and other residents have to use rafts to reach the main road from the area," said Nurul Kabir, another resident.

Locals also alleged that the water often enters homes and inundates the kitchens and toilets, leading to untold sufferings to the residents.

Despite repeated pledges offered by the authorities concerned, no step has yet been made to resolve the issue, they alleged.

The situation turned worse since 2013 after the construction of the Balashpur Madhyapara Road, which they alleged was done in an unplanned way.

Also, a drain through the area used to remove the water to let it flow into the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

More than just NUMBERS

A 20-year-old shot dead in Uttara. A mason died of bullet wounds in Badda. A van puller shot dead in Jatrabari. At least 204 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are sons, husbands, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

He went to Dhaka to support his family

Says father of Hasan, 20, who was shot dead on July 18

ANWARUL HAIDER, *Noakhali*

Mahmudul Hasan, 20, was shot in the head on the evening of July 18 in Uttara, Dhaka during the unrest centring the quota reform protests.

He just got his diploma in electronics.

Hasan was from the village of Charkailash Mahalla of Hatia.

On the day, when Hasan along with three friends were returning to their mess in Uttara's Rajalakshmi area, the firing suddenly started.

While fleeing the location, Hasan got shot in the head. His friends took him to a private hospital where the doctors declared him dead around 7:00pm.

His classmate Saurabh Hasan, who was there at the hospital with Hasan, shared this information with journalists.

Hasan's mother, Farida Yasmin, spoke to The Daily Star on Friday evening.

"My son Mahmudul Hasan passed the Diploma Engineering in Electronics from Lakshmipur Polytechnic Institute. He began his internship in an institution in Dhaka at the beginning of July. We were

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Who will call me Abba?

Death of Liton, 30, leaves family devastated

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Despite being the youngest son of the family, Liton Matubbar, 30, had to support and look after his elderly parents.

Liton, born into a poor family in Barguna's Sonar Bangla village, had to take the matter upon himself to ensure proper treatment for his parents. So, he came to Dhaka to work as a tile mason.

He was looking forward to making things better for his family; instead, his lifeless body returned to them, shattering their hopes and dreams.

Liton was shot during the violence centring the quota protests in the capital's Badda area on July 18, when he was returning from work.

He was rushed to Kurmitola General Hospital, where he died that night.

His body was brought back home the next day, and he was buried in his family graveyard.

"Although I have three other sons, Liton was the one who took care of us. Now who will look after us? Who will call me Abba? Who will tell me, 'Abba (father), don't worry, I will take care of everything'? I don't know what will happen to us now," said Liton's father Taiyab Ali Matubbar, 65.

"Liton lived in a rented house in Badda. He was shot while getting back from work

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Why did they shoot my father?

Asks son of van puller Jahangir

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Jahangir Hossain Mridha, 51, was the sole earning member of his four-member family. He made his living delivering goods to shops in a van.

During the recent unrest, Jahangir was not able to drive his van for four days. As a result, there was no food in their house.

Therefore, Jahangir stepped out of his home on the morning of July 19, hoping to buy vegetables that he would sell on his van. The plan was to return home that night with some rice and pulses after selling the vegetables.

While moving through the capital's Jatrabari area around 10:00am, a bullet hit Jahangir. He died on the spot.

Hailing from the Dwipasha village of Madanpura union in Patuakhali's Baufal upazila, Jahangir was the youngest of four brothers and two sisters. Jahangir once held just 1.5 decimals of land to his name, but eventually had to sell that due to poverty.

Jahangir was buried in his village near a pond beside his once paternal home on the night of July 19. Two days after his burial, his wife Laiju Begum, 18-year-old son Sujan and three-year-old son Shanto returned to Dhaka, where they currently reside.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Heavy rain likely in Dhaka, four divisions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) has forecast light to moderate rain across the country till Tuesday morning.

Besides, moderately heavy to very heavy rainfalls will occur at some places, according to BMD's latest weather forecast.

Monsoon is active over Bangladesh and strong over North Bay, it said.

In the last 24 hours till 6:00am yesterday, BMD recorded the country's highest rainfall at 231mm in Feni while Dhaka experienced 60mm rainfall.

Meteorologist Muhammad Abul Kalam Mallick said they have forecast heavy to very heavy rainfalls at parts of Dhaka, Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram and Sylhet divisions.

Since last Tuesday, Chattogram, Rangamati, Bandarban, Hatia and Teknaf areas have experienced heavy rainfalls and therefore, there are chances of landslides in Chattogram hilly areas.

He said the country's all sea ports have been advised to hoist cautionary signal-3 to avert accident.

BMD has also advised several of the river ports at Dhaka, Noakhali, Faridpur, Chattogram and Patuakhali to hoist cautionary signal-1.

154 more hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 154 dengue patients were hospitalised with dengue in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

Of them, 36 patients were from outside the capital.

With the new cases, the total number of cases rose to 6,751. The number of deaths this year stands at 58.

Some 744 dengue patients are taking treatment in various hospitals.

Three including mother, son killed in road accident

BSS, *Noakhali*

At least three people, including a woman and her son, were killed in a road accident in Noakhali yesterday.

The accident took place on the Begumganj-Feni regional highway in Dokan Ghor area of Durgapur union under Begumganj upazila.

The deceased are CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver Jasim Uddin, 55, his mother Tahera Begum, 75, and his cousin Salimulla's wife Kohinur Begum, 45.

The accident occurred when a bus hit the auto-rickshaw coming from the opposite direction around 10:30am , leaving three dead on the spot, said Ruhul Amin, officer-in-charge of Chandraganj Highway Police Station. Police recovered the bodies from the spot, he said.

Filing of a case was underway, OC added.

RAIN, FLASH FLOOD

Over 300 tourists stranded in Sajek

UNB, *Dhaka*

At least 300 tourists have been stranded in Sajek due to the suspension of road communication caused by flash floods and torrential rains for the last several days.

The Dighinala-Bakakhali road of Khagrachhari and Baghaihat Bazar in Baghaichhari upazila of Rangamati district have been inundated.

The low-lying areas and houses were already submerged, which caused immense sufferings to residents. A portion of the Khagrachhari-Dighinala road was also inundated, suspending vehicular movement.

Baghaichhari Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shirin Akter said the tourists were stranded at Sajek and failed to return home due to road communication suspension. Measures have been taken by the local administration, she said.

Besides, the Kachalong river was flowing above its danger level due to rain and onrush of water from upstream.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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When musicians play the tune of defiance

MAISHA TASNIM SRESHTHA

In an inspiring display of unity and support, musicians from across the nation converged for the ***Get Up Stand Up*** movement. On Saturday (August 3) this rally brought together individuals from all walks of life at the capital's Rabindra Sarobar (Dhanmondi 8/A) in a show of solidarity with students advocating for justice and reform. Artistes expressed their support for the students, while those outside Dhaka stood at designated locations within their respective districts. The movement also saw journalists and cameramen from various media outlets—TV channels, online platforms, and newspapers—covering this significant demonstration of unity and support.

The rally began at Rabindra Sarobar, where artistes gathered and invited everyone to march towards the Shaheed Minar. This site holds deep significance for Bengalis, as it commemorates the martyrs of 1952, who sacrificed their lives for their freedom to speak their language. In 2024, it will stand as a symbol for those who did the same, but in a different context.

During the proceedings, legendary lyricist-composer Prince Mahmud stated, "We call for the immediate release of rapper Hannan. It's imperative that he is freed as soon as possible. Many are wondering why we have only come forward now. The fact is, we have supported the students' demands from the outset. We are losing sleep over this. We demand justice."

Miles frontman Hamin Ahmed, who recently lost his brother, Shafin Ahmed, was also present during the event. He said, "Do not fire a single bullet more. We want the government to listen to the demands of the students."

Veteran singer Maqsoodul Haque stated, "I am seeking justice for the students who have shed so much blood. Why has there been so much bloodshed? Many lives have been lost due to the violence stemming from this movement. I expect accountability and a fair trial for those responsible."

The event saw the presence of numerous artists and bands, including Partha Barua, Sheikh Monirul Haque Tipu, Asif Akbar, Raef Al Hasan Rafa, Pantha Kanai, Miles, Souls, Shironamhin, Artcell, Nemesis, Chirkutt, Ashes, Sujit Mustafa, Elita Karim, Shaukat Ali Emon, Sandhi, Ritu Raj, Joy Shahriar, Sujan Arif, Muhin, Earnnick, Rafat, Dola, Latiful Islam Shibli, and Someshwar Oli, among others.

Throughout history, there have been numerous instances where tyrants were ultimately brought down by the very people they once ruled with an iron fist. Today, following that, inspired by Bob Marley's song titled "Get Up Stand Up", musicians and artistes have adopted a similar approach in their efforts to challenge the government of Sheikh Hasina.

Student protests in Bangladesh against the government have escalated into a pro-democracy movement, marked by police brutality and mass arrests. Despite the government's violent crackdown, students remain determined to continue their demands for accountability and reform. The situation reflects broader issues of governance, economic instability, and the struggle for democratic rights in the country.

তীব্র গতির সংকেত জানাই

PHOTOS:
SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED AND MAISHA TASNIM SRESHTHA

NEWS

ASI, constable

FROM PAGE 16

Further action will be taken after receiving the full report of the investigation team, he said.

Video footage showed police shooting at Abu Sayed, who posed no physical threat to the law enforcers, during the quota reform protest near the campus on July 16. He died soon afterwards.

Just a day before his death, Sayed shared on Facebook how he was ready to sacrifice his life for the cause if needed.

At 12:37pm on July 15, he shared a photo card of Rajshahi University teacher and martyr Prof Dr Shamsuzzoha, who was killed in police firing in 1969 during a student protest.

The accompanying caption read: "Sir! We desperately need you right now, sir! Everyone of your generation has passed away, but you live on even after death. Your legacy is our inspiration. We are enlightened by your ideals.

"And to those of our generation, you too will die one day as per the laws of nature. But as long as you live, live with integrity. Support the just cause, take to the streets, stand as a shield for the students. You will receive genuine respect and honour. You won't be lost in the sands of time after your death. You will live forever like Shamsuzzoha."

Committee on nat'l security

FROM PAGE 16

people, including a police constable, were killed in violence in Habiganj and Khulna on Friday.

The government imposed a curfew across the country for an indefinite period past midnight on July 19 and deployed the army to tackle the situation.

The National Committee on Security Affairs was formed in March 2019 after the approval of the National Defence Policy 2018. The committee is responsible for reviewing the problems related to national security.

The November 15, 2023, meeting discussed preventing the spread of disinformation on social media, strategies for maintaining law and order, and prices of essentials, among other issues.

See that govt officials complicit

FROM PAGE 16

Senators Edward J Markey, Chris Van Hollen, Richard J Durbin, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Jeffrey A Merkley, and Christopher S Murphy co-signed the letter in the Senate, and Representatives William R Keating, James P McGovern, Seth Moulton, Lori Trahan, Joe Wilson, Dina Titus, Grace Meng, Gerald E Connolly, Gabe Amo, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Nydia M Velázquez, Daniel T Kildee, Barbara Lee, and James C Moylan co-signed the letter in the House of Representatives.

They said in responding to the student demonstrations, the Bangladeshi authorities deployed Rapid Action Battalion; condoned the use of teargas, rubber bullets, and sound grenades by riot police against protesters; imposed curfew and "shoot-on-sight" orders; and shut down the Internet.

"Given these alarming and continuing trends, we hope that you will lead the US Department of State in upholding the shared democratic principles that have long underpinned the US-Bangladeshi relationship," they wrote to Blinken.

They said their concerns have only become more acute following recent deadly clashes between student protesters and security forces and Bangladesh's national elections on January 7, 2024, which the US, UN and other observers have rightly criticised as being neither free nor fair.

The letter said since their inception, US-Bangladeshi relations have been predicated on mutual respect for the rule of law, the promotion of democracy, and the protection of human rights, as well as enhancing regional security, and bolstering inclusive economic growth. With the support of the US and other international community, Bangladesh has made great strides in improving the lives of its citizens.

However, they said the shared principles have come under threat in Bangladesh as the ruling Awami League and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have acted in an increasingly authoritarian manner since returning to power in 2009.

They noted the US sanctions on Rab in 2021, visa policy in May last year and the consistent messages conveyed to Bangladeshi officials for free and fair elections and improving human rights and labour rights.

Sadly, the Bangladeshi government has continued to take actions that undermine democratic processes, including by holding deeply flawed elections in January, failing to improve labour regulations, and, most recently, violently cracking down on demonstrations using guns, teargas, and imposing a near-total shutdown of Internet services, they said.

The January 7 election was largely boycotted by Bangladesh's political opposition, which itself was hamstrung by a wave of arrests following demonstrations on October 28, 2023.

Most importantly, the election was marred by violence and not supported by a large swath of the Bangladeshi electorate, they said.

Beyond members of the political opposition, workers and trade unionists have long faced violence, repression, and labor rights violations.

The Bangladesh government has yet to amend its labour laws to protect workers' freedom of association in line with the ILO standards, the letter said.

They urged the US Department of State to redouble its efforts to support the democratic aspirations of the Bangladeshi people.

Meanwhile, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk has urged for immediate steps by the Bangladesh government to prevent further violence and ensure accountability.

In a post on X, formerly Tweeter, he yesterday said as rallies and internet restrictions continue, along with appalling new reports of violence by security forces and groups affiliated with the government, the government needs to take immediate steps to ensure right to peaceful assembly and right to information.

Earlier on July 23, Turk wrote to Hasina, offering to deploy an independent fact-finding team to assist the Bangladesh government in building trust among all stakeholders and to help de-escalate tensions.

"In these challenging times, my office is ready to support your efforts in resolving the current crisis," he said in the letter.

Cheptegei relishes 'special day'

FROM PAGE 16

and is expected to aid the sprinters more than the previously-used brick-red track -- finished 18 seconds faster than Kenenisa Bekele's 2008 Olympics run.

"Barely 16 years ago when I was watching the great Kenenisa Bekele win in Beijing, it was something that grew in my heart.

"My collection for this run is really complete. I'm so excited," he told reporters.

Berihu Aregawi, part of a three-pronged Ethiopian front-running group almost from the start, finished strongly for silver in 26:43.44 and Grant Fisher took a superb bronze in 26:43.46 - only the United States' fourth medal over the distance since the event was added to the Games in 1912.

A pack of 13 athletes ran the last two thirds of the race together and, remarkably, all of them finished in under 27 minutes as recent advances in shoe and track technology continue to redraw traditional race times.

Cheptegei, world champion in 2019, 2022 and 2023, was surprisingly beaten to gold by Ethiopian Selemon Barega in Tokyo and was desperate for revenge.

Barega, Aregawi and fellow Ethiopian Yomif Kejelcha started to stretch the race out after the first few laps and kept up sub-27 minute pace relentlessly to hit halfway in 13.23 minutes.

Frenchman Jimmy Gressier was hanging on to the lead pack of 13, drawing huge noise from the Stade de France crowd and he eventually finished 13th in a huge personal best time and a national record 26:58.67.

Unusually, that pack remained solid for the next half-dozen laps. Cheptegei had stayed tucked behind the leaders as they chopped and changed, but he put the hammer down coming around the final bend on the penultimate lap and did not let up.

Protesters roll out 15 points

FROM PAGE 1

1. Don't pay taxes.
2. Don't pay any utility bills.
3. All government and private institutions, offices, courts, mills, and factories will remain closed. Don't go to work, but collect your salaries at the end of the month.
4. All educational institutions will remain closed indefinitely.
5. Don't send remittances through banking channels (addressed to expatriates).
6. Boycott all government meetings, seminars, and events.
7. Don't go to work; don't unload any kind of goods (addressed to port workers).
8. Don't go to work (addressed to RMG workers).
9. Public transport services will remain suspended; workers won't go to work.
10. Banks will only remain open on Sundays for urgent transactions.
11. Offshore transactions will remain suspended so that not a single taka is smuggled out of the country.
12. The police will only perform their routine duties at their respective stations. They won't perform any protocol, riot, or protest duties.
13. Except for the BGB and navy, other forces won't perform duties outside their respective cantonments. The BGB and navy will be in their respective barracks and coastal areas.
14. Bureaucrats won't go to the secretariat; DC or upazila officials won't go to their respective offices.
15. Luxury goods shops, showrooms, shops, hotels, motels, and restaurants will remain closed.

EXCEPTIONS

1. Hospitals, pharmacies, emergency transport services such as transportation of medicine and medical equipment, ambulance services, fire service, media, transportation of daily necessities, emergency internet service, emergency relief assistance, and transport services of officers and employees on duty in these sectors will be out of the purview of these directives and remain functional.
2. Shops for essential commodities will remain open from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

No children died

FROM PAGE 2

Asaduzzaman said, "Many of the bullets [shells] we have retrieved were not fired from police rifles. The police do not use those [bullets]."

Regarding the student's demand for his and some other ministers' resignation, he said, "If the prime minister thinks ... We always work for the country; we will do it [resign]."

The movement has now been taken over by political parties, who were always involved in anti-state activities -- the Jamaat-e Islami and the BNP, he added.

"We have accepted all the demands of the quota protesters, including bringing the police officials under trial," said the home boss, adding that the government has already taken steps to release the arrested students, who do not have any specific complaints against them.

Regarding the noncooperation movement, the minister said, "As all of their demands have been met, we think they should withdraw their movement."

He said the ongoing curfew will remain in force from 9:00pm to 6:00am. The decision will be effective for four districts -- Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, and Narsingdi. In other districts, the local administration will take the decision on the timing of the curfew as necessary.

Gono Bhaban

FROM PAGE 1

"I repeat I still want to hold talks if the agitators want. They can come at any time (to Gono Bhaban). They can also bring their guardians."

The premier also announced the cancellation of the proposed, universal pension scheme "Prottoy" for universities, autonomous and state-owned organisations.

Ensure the security of people's lives

FROM PAGE 16

He was speaking at "officers' address" at the Helmet auditorium.

Highlighting the country's current situation, the army chief gave different instructions to its officers about the activities of the force and answered their queries.

He also asked the officers to be aware of rumours on social media.

The army chief instructed the officers to discharge their duties with honesty and sincerity.

Top officers of the Army Headquarters, among others, joined the event via videoconference.

TIMELINE
STUDENT PROTESTS

FROM PAGE 1

July 18, 2024
Police and BCL men attack students at Brac University and other institutions. At least 29 die in daylong mayhem as clashes break out in 19 districts. Agitators vandalise, torch BTV Bhaban, Setu Bhaban and other government establishments. Internet service blocked across the country; Metro rail operations suspended for indefinite period.

July 19, 2024
Effective from midnight, government announces nationwide curfew and deploys army after daylong violence kills at least 66 people. More government establishments, including Narsingdi jail, metro rail stations, BRTA offices, vandalised, torched.

July 20, 2024
At least 21 killed on the first day of curfew amid army deployment. Curfew extended until further notice and a two-day general public holiday announced. Key organiser of quota demo 'picked up' and several BNP leaders detained.

July 21, 2024
Supreme Court curtails quotas to 7pc as at least seven killed amid curfew. Chiefs of three forces meet Hasina, as UN, EU, UK voice concern over violence.

July 22, 2024
Six more hurt in previous days' clashes die, taking death toll to 146. Hasina warns BNP and Jamaat of consequences; army chief hopes for return of normalcy. Arrest of BNP and Jamaat leaders continues.

July 23, 2024
Govt issues circular reforming quota system, but four quota reform protest organisers reject it. Arrests and raids targeting opposition leaders and demonstrators continue amid curfew. Broadband internet is back in selected areas.

July 24, 2024
Inter-district bus and launch services resume partially.

July 25, 2024
JP leader Partha Andaleeve, businessman David Hasnat, among dozens, arrested, as social media remains off-limits. UN, Amnesty International, US, Canada call for end to crackdown. Hasina makes first public appearance since army deployment and visits damaged metro rail station.

July 26, 2024
Detective Branch of police picks up three organisers. BNP calls for national unity and ouster of government. Hasina visits Dhaka Medical College Hospital on the second day of public appearance after the curfew announcement. UN calls for an end to crackdown and full restoration of internet services.

July 27, 2024
Block raids targeting protesters, mostly students, continue as DB picks up two more quota protest organisers. Fourteen foreign missions urge govt to hold law enforcers accountable for wrongdoings. Hasina visits Pongu Hospital, says violence was committed to cripple economy.

July 28, 2024
Nationwide crackdown goes on, with over 2.13 lakh people made accused in over 200 cases in Dhaka city alone. Mobile internet is back, but social media remains shut. After having a meal with DB chief Harunor Rashid at his office, six organisers earlier taken into custody read out a written statement, lifting the movement. Outside, a section of organisers vow to press on. Government announces death toll for first time, setting it at 147.

July 29, 2024
Protesters take to streets again in some districts, face police obstructions, dozens detained. Government announces plan to ban Jamaat-Shibir. HC rebukes DB over handling of the six quota organisers, including sharing the photograph of sharing a meal with them on social media.

July 30, 2024
Students and teachers of JU hold silent procession, teachers of several universities hold rallies, guardians protest death of children, obstructed by cops. Eminent citizens blame government for loss of lives. Hasina says government will take "foreign help" for judicial probe, announces nationwide mourning for next day. Police crackdown continues.

July 31, 2024
Protesters reject government-called nationwide mourning, stage demos in capital, elsewhere. Six quota movement organisers were still in DB custody. Eminent citizens form probe body, urge public support. EU delays partnership talks with Dhaka. Hundreds of HSC students announce boycott of exams if fellow examinees not released from police custody/jail.

August 1, 2024
Government issues gazette banning Jamaat-Shibir under anti-terrorism act. UN offers sending fact-finding team, PM says "UN free to probe violence". Six organisers freed from DB custody. Protesters hold mass processions and prayers for those killed. Teachers, students of five public universities stage demos.

August 2, 2024
Demonstrators continue protest against killings, thousands join march for justice. Protesters attacked by AL activists and police in capital, elsewhere, leaving two more dead. Protesters announce countrywide demo for next day and non-cooperation movement from Sunday. Facebook blocked again for seven hours. Six organisers say "statement of withdrawal made from DB office was not voluntary".

Count of a carnage

FROM PAGE 1

in the head, chest and abdomen with bullets, not pellets.

The Daily Star shared the descriptions of the nature of the injuries with firearm experts and former army officials, who said shootings targeted at these vital areas are meant to kill, and not to disperse.

Such shootings with lethal weapons are a violation of the rules of engagements during civilian protests, they said.

The UN, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch also called out the excesses by law enforcers that led to the killings of so many people, who were mostly unarmed.

One of the first victims of a targeted shooting was Abu Sayed, 23, a student of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur. He was standing with his arms stretched out in defiant protest in front of the university, with just a stick in his right hand. Police were clearly seen shooting him multiple times in the chest, wounding him fatally.

"We used whatever little we earned to support his education, hoping that one day he would be successful and better days would come. But bullets ended all that," his brother Ramjan told The Daily Star after his death.

SHOTS THAT KILLED

Of those fatally hit in the upper parts of the body, 39 were shot in the head, 35 in the chest, 11 in the stomach, eight in the abdomen, eight in the back and two in the neck. The rest 10 of the 113 victims who were killed by live rounds were shot in the leg, arms and other parts of the body.

Four of the victims who were hit in the head were inside their homes and were likely struck by stray bullets. The 35 others were shot while on the streets, according to family members.

Our analysis of the date-wise casualties shows that deaths from gunshots spiked after the Border Guard Bangladesh was called in alongside an overwhelming number of police, Rab, Ansar, riot police, Armed Police Battalion and SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) members.

BGB was first deployed on July 17 in six districts on a small scale, but at least 229 platoons of the border guard force were dispatched across the country the next day.

The killings by gunfire continued even after armed forces were called in to contain violence on July 19 – by this time the quota protests boiled over into a larger movement joined by thousands of members of the public.

"Under the law, a written government order [gazette] must be sent to the forces to empower them to shoot at sight. The government order clearly outlines the circumstances under which the forces are allowed to shoot at sight, for example for breaking the curfew. I have not heard of any such written order being published," Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hossain told The Daily Star.

On August 1, this newspaper visited the Bangladesh Government Press's online archive and the home ministry's online bulletin board, but did not find any such written order. The gazette of the nationwide curfew, imposed at midnight on July 19, did not mention any shoot-at-sight order, although Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader told reporters that evening that it was a "shoot-at-sight" order.

Chiefs of police and BGB did not respond to our calls and text messages seeking their comments if there was indeed an explicit order to shoot at protesters, and if not, why law enforcers shot so many people indiscriminately.

In a written statement to The Daily Star on August 1, Rab said, "During the recent quota protest, no directive was given to open fire."

Under the rules of engagement, forces are supposed to crouch in a lying position in situations like this, Sakhawat said.

"This way, they are certain to shoot below the hip to incapacitate the opponent. If they are standing or aiming upwards, then they will hit the fatal parts of the human body. We have seen people dying because of gunshots to the head and chest," he said.

In many cases, fatal shots were also fired from close range. For example, more than two dozen people died from rubber bullets. This means they were likely shot at point-blank range, Sakhawat said.

At least six victims sustained perforating bullet wounds where the bullet entered and exited the body. A ballistics expert, speaking to this newspaper in the background, said it is possible that they too were shot from close range.

One video of a close-range execution was captured in Rampura on July 19. It shows a man hiding by hanging from the cornice of an under-construction building and two law enforcers shot him point-blank, one after another within seconds.

The video was verified by Qadaruddin Shishir, the fact-checking editor at AFP news agency.

"There are international guidelines on proportionate use of force for law enforcement. Bangladesh security forces violate those standards if they shoot at unarmed protesters, or fire indiscriminately," Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Asia Division, told this newspaper on Thursday.

WHAT GUNS WERE USED?

Naima Sultana, 15, a student of Milestone School from Uttara, had gone to the balcony to fetch the clothes hung out to dry when she was hit by a bullet on July 19.

"When the bullet hit her head, she fell to the floor and her brains spilled out. We took her to the hospital immediately but the doctors declared her dead," said her father Golam Mostofa.

From the photos and videos captured by this newspaper's reporters and photographers, we have been able to identify some of the lethal weapons used by law enforcement and security forces during the protests.

They include automatic and semi-automatic rifles, light machine guns, machine guns, Chinese AK47, Bangladesh-made BD-08 Type 81 assault rifles and semi-automatic 7.62mm Type 56 assault rifles. Handguns were also used. (Firearms were used against the protesters also by alleged ruling party activists in Dhaka and elsewhere.)

Two gun-experts who have seen the photos and the videos taken by our team helped us identify these weapons used by law enforcers and security forces.

In front of the Jatiya Press Club on July 19, Ansar members were found wielding AK47 guns, as well as the semi-automatic 7.62mm Type 56 assault rifle.

"Chinese" AK47 assault rifles were spotted in the hands of BGB members also in front of Jatiya Press Club. In Rampura, a BGB man armed with the same AK47 version was photographed firing at protesters on July 19.

In the capital's Khamarbari on July 20, Bangladesh infantry were seen carrying light machine guns. The Gazipur-made BD-08 Type 81 assault rifle was spotted in Bijoy Sarani the same day.

"The 7.62mm rifles used by police have two modes -- single firing and rapid firing. In the videos we have seen, they have mostly used the rapid-fire mode or automatic mode which are mostly used in wars," said Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat.

"The 7.62mm rifles are one of the best Chinese killing machines, which were earlier used by the Bangladesh Army and are now available to the BGB and police," he added.

The spotting of such lethal weapons on key dates corresponds with the death toll on those days. According to The Daily Star's latest tally, July 19 was the deadliest day, with 62 people dying only in fatal shots across the country.

A vast majority of them succumbed to their injuries that very day, while a handful hung on to life for the next two or three days.

The second deadliest day was July 20, with 30 people suffering fatal shots. The rest of the people were shot between July 16 and July 24.

On the dates, including July 19 and 20, that saw some of the highest casualties in areas such as Jatrabari, Rampura, Badda, Mohammadpur and Mirpur in Dhaka, The Daily Star reporters and photographers witnessed and documented heavy firing by police, Rab, BGB members and Armed Police Battalion on the ground, as air support was also called in.

"These forces [army and BGB] were deployed to aid the police, and are armed with lethal weapons. They will not be coming to the ground with sticks and rods. The question is whether they should have been called in to tackle unarmed protesters in the first place," said Sakhawat.

KILLING HOTSPOTS

As violence spread across Dhaka and elsewhere, Jatrabari and its adjacent areas, including Kadamtali, Matuail and the Chittagong Road leading into Narayanganj's Siddhirganj, saw some of the fiercest clashes between heavily armed law enforcers and protesters, both students and non-students.

For over a week, demonstrators blocked the commercially important Chittagong Road despite the heavy firing of live bullets, sound grenades, and teargas shells from the ground as well as from the air, as Rab and BGB helicopters were called in for the first time in independent Bangladesh to tackle a civilian movement.

At least 44 people were killed in these areas, mostly in shootings. Of them, at least 30 died in Jatrabari alone -- six on July 18, 12 on July 19, seven on July 20, three on July 21.

One of the July 19 victims is a policeman, who was hacked to death.

Other hotspots in Dhaka include Rampura, Badda, Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Uttara and Savar.

Outside Dhaka, there were reports of protests and violence in over 20 districts, including Rangpur, Rajshahi, Bogura, Chattogram, Khulna and Narsingdi.

At least 52 people were killed outside Dhaka.

DISREGARD FOR LIFE

Although many died in direct clashes, attacks and counter-attacks, many also had nothing to do with the protest but got killed anyway.

Abdul Ahad, 4, is one of them. The boy from Jatrabari was watching the protests from his balcony, when a bullet struck his head. He died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In Mohakhali, Goni Mia was going home, parking his rickshaw in a garage. He was hit by a bullet in the chest, and he died at DMCH a few hours later, his brother Hafiz Uddin told The Daily Star.

Although most people were killed in shootings, several died of beating and at least one was hacked.

Overall, the victims, aged between four and sixty years, come from various professions and backgrounds. As many as 50 were low-income people, 26 private jobholders and 21 were traders or businesspeople.

"The high death toll is a shocking indictment of the absolute intolerance shown by the Bangladeshi authorities to protest and dissent. The unlawful force used against protesters, including lethal force as verified by Amnesty International, shows a callous disregard for the right to life and an abject failure by law enforcement officials to uphold their obligations under domestic and international human rights law," said a spokesperson of Amnesty International, speaking to this newspaper.

Note: *This newspaper's list of victims is as of August 1, and is not comprehensive because not all the dead bodies ended up in the major hospitals or graveyards tracked by The Daily Star. For example, this newspaper has a photo of a dead bearded man wearing a lungi with a gunshot wound to the head lying on the steps of a clinic in Rampura, but failed to get any records of a man matching that description from the corresponding morgues on that day. As a result, that man has not been counted in our tally. Many hospitals did not keep any records of the dead, while many families collected the bodies of their loved ones from the scene and The Daily Star could not contact them.*

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Editing: Martin Swapan Pandey.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE VICTIMS

Student ↦ 43
Worker ↦ 54
Jobholder ↦ 25
Journalist ↦ 3
Police ↦ 3
Ansar ↦ 1
Trader ↦ 21

AGE OF THE VICTIMS

Under 18 ↦ 32
18 to 25 ↦ 64
26 to 35 ↦ 33
36 to 45 ↦ 20
46 to 60 ↦ 5

SNIPPETS OF DISREGARD FOR LIFE

FROM PAGE 1

CASE 4
On the same day, around 3:30 pm in Rampura, a student named Samudra from Rajdhani Ideal College was killed when BGB shot at demonstrators near the BTV area. A bullet hit his arms and pierced through his chest, as seen by this newspaper and later confirmed by family members and doctors.

CASE 5
In Savar, a severely injured protester was seen atop an Armed Police Carrier in a BBC verified footage. One of the officers on the vehicle was heard saying, "Felai den, Felai den" (Put him down, put him down).The officers then threw the injured youth from the top of the vehicle onto the ground. This newspaper later identified the youth as Shaikh Ashabul Yamin, a student of MIST. He was brought dead to a hospital, his body bearing bullet wounds.

THE LIVES WE LOST

The violent protests centring quota movement claimed more than 200 lives since July 15. The Daily Star has identified 178 of them and collected photos of 64 of them. We are publishing the details of the lives that we lost.....

ABU SAYED, 23
Student
Spot: Begum Rokeya University
Shot in chest

Abdul Ahad, 4
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in head while on balcony

Abu Taher, 35
Journalist
Spot: Bandar Bazar, Sylhet
70 pellets in chest

Ahsan Habib, 25
Jobholder
Spot: Cox's Bazar
Shot in neck

Arafat Islam Akash, 16
Fruit seller
Spot: Jatrabari
Multiple bullet wounds

Akram Khan Rabbi, 28
Manager of a cricketer
Spot: Dhaka
Shot in hand, abdomen

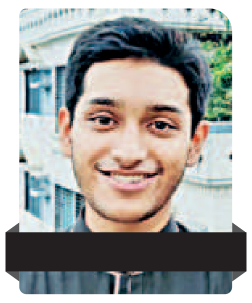
Aminul Islam Amin,16
Local factory worker
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in chest

Asif Iqbal, 31
Jobholder
Spot: Mirpur 10
Shot in chest

Azizul Miah, 22
Coconut seller
Spot: Narsingdi
Shot in torso, back

Dulal Mahmud
Senior Manager, SCB
Spot: Azimpur
Shot dead

Faisal Ahmed Shanto, 20
Student
Spot: Muradpur, Chattogram
Pellets in chest



Farhan Faiyaaz, 17
Student
Spot: Dhanmondi
Pellets in body

Goni Sheikh, 45
Electrician
Spot: Dhaka
Shot in the head

Hafez Md Sadiqul Islam, 17
Student
Spot: Uttara
Shot in stomach

Hridoy Chandra Taruya, 22
Student
Spot: Chattogram
Shot in the back

Irfan Bhuiyan, 22
Student
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in chest

Jisan Ahmed, 19
Day labourer
Spot: Shonir Akhra
Shot in head

Jobayer Ahmed, 20
Trader
Spot: Kolatapara, Mymensingh
Shot in back

Khalid Hasan, 16
Student
Spot: Azimpur Staff Quarter
Pellets in chest

Mahmudur Rahman Soikot, 19
Student
Spot: Mohammadpur
Shot in the head

Maruf Hossain, 20
Student
Spot: Rampura Bridge
Shot in the kidney

Md Adil, 16
Student
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in chest

Md Ahadun, 15
Student
Spot: Badda_
Shot in head, leg

Md Hasan Hossain, 18
Student
Spot: Badda
Shot in head

Md Omar Faruk, 24
Student
Spot: Old Dhaka
Shot in chest

Md Shahjahan, 25
Hawker
Spot: New Market
Shot in face

Md Titu Howlader, 33
Driver
Spot: Green Road
Shot in the head

Md Zaman Mia, 17
Student
Spot: Narsingdi
Shot in stomach

Monayel Ahmed Imran, 16
Student
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in chest

Mustafa Zaman Shamudra, 17
Student
Spot: Rampura
Shot in chest

Mir Mahfuzur Rahman Mugdho, 25
Student
Spot: Uttara
Shot in head

Md Arif, 17
Waiter
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in back of head

Mobarak Hossain, 13
Milkman
Spot: Green Road
Shot in head

Mohammad Sohel, 35
Mobile servicing agent
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in stomach

Mamun Hossain, 28
Car driver
Spot: Mohakhali
Shot in the back

Medhedi Hasan, 26
Journalist
Spot: Jatrabari
Pellets in chest

Naima Sultana, 15
Student
Spot: Uttara
Shot while on balcony

Nazmul Kazi, 34
Trader
Spot: Jatrabari
Beaten to death

Noor-E-Alam Siddique Rakib, 20
Student
Spot: Mymensingh
Shot in chest

Rakib Hasan, 22
Cleaner
Spot: Aftab Nagar
Shot in abdomen

Ridoy Ahmed Shihab, 18
Furniture shop employee
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in chest

Ridowan Sharif Riyad, 21
Student
Spot: Uttara
Shot in head

Rudro Sen, 20
Student
Spot: Akhalia Shurma R/A
Drowned being chased by police

Robiul Islam
Shop owner
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in stomach

Riya Gope, 6
Student
Spot: Narayanganj
Shot in head while on roof

Redwan Hossain Sagor, 24
Student
Spot: Mymensingh
Shot in chest

Shykh Aashhabul Yamin, 24
Student
Spot: Savar Bus Stand
Shot on police APC

Sheikh Fahmin Zafar, 18
Student
Spot: Uttara
Shot in back, waist, neck

Shaon Khan, 19
Waiter
Spot: Rampura
Shot in chest

Saiful Islam, 35
Farmer
Spot: Mymensingh
Shot in head

Saad Mahmud, 14
Student
Spot: Savar
Shot in thigh

Sojib Sarker, 31
Teacehr
Spot: Uttara
Shot in chest

Sumaiya Akhter Sumi, 20
Homemaker
Spot: Narayanganj
Shot in the head

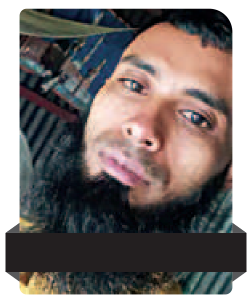
Sabuj Ali, 26
Spot: unknown
Beaten to death

Sheikh Shahriar Bin Matin Shuharto, 19
Student
Spot: Mirpur 10
Shot in head

Tahir Zaman Priyo, 30
Journalist
Spot: Central Road
Shot in the head

Tahmid Bhuiyan Tamim, 15
Student
Spot: Narsingdi
Pellets in chest

Zihad Hossain, 24
Student
Spot: Jatrabari
Pellet in chest



Zakir Hossain, 29
Tailor
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Shot in stomach

Gias Uddin, 58
Police
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Beaten to death

Masud Parvez Bhuiyan
Police
Spot: Rampura, Banasree
Hacked to death

Moktadir, 50
Police
Spot: Topkhana road, Paltan, Dhaka
Beaten to death

Jewel Sheikh
Ansar member
Spot: unknown
Shot in chest

Jahiduzzaman Tanvir
Student
Spot: Uttara, Dhaka
Pellets in body

THE LIVES WE LOST

(WE COULD NOT COLLECT PHOTOS OF THE FOLLOWING VICTIMS)

Abdul Latif, 28
Rickshawpuller
Spot: Narayanganj, Chittagong Road Near Dutch-Bangla bank

Abdul Majeed, 20
Transport worker
Spot: Chandpur
Bullet injuries

Abdul Wadud, 45
Tailoring shop owner
Spot: New Market, Dhaka
Shot in the back of head

Abdullah Al Abir
Employee at North-South University
Spot: Badda
Shot in the stomach

Abir
Details unknown

Al Amin, 18
An Actress's Assistant
Spot: Uttara Kamarpara
Shot in hand and chest

Al Amin, 24
Open University Honors student and garment factory worker
Spot: Radio Colony, Savar
Shot in the chest

Alamgir Sheikh
Private Car Driver
Spot: Rampura, Dhaka
Shot three times

Ali Hossain, 40
Salesperson
Spot: New Market, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Ali Hossain, 45
Spot: Shekherchar, Narshingdi
Pellets

Ali Hossain, 40
Betel seller
Spot: Azampur, Dhaka
Shot in face and torso

Amzad
Details unknown

Babul Patwary, 21
Grocery shop worker
Spot: Nayapaltan, Dhaka
Shot near ear

Bahadur Hossain Monir, 17
Jobholder
Spot: Bhatara
Shot in the chest

Biplob Hasan, 18
SSC student of Mozaffar Ali Fakir High School and College
Spot: Kaltapara, Gouripur, Mymensingh
Shot in throat

Dipto Dey, 21
Student
Spot: Madaripur
Unknown

Dulal Matbor
Microbus driver
Spot: Rampura
Shot in chest

Emon, 14
Worker
Spot: Badda, Dhaka

Emon, 21
Student
Spot: Narshingdi, Bhelanagar area
Pellets

Faruk, 45
Job holder
Spot: Savar Bazar Bus stand

Goni Miah
Rickshaw-puller
Spot: Mohakhali, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Hafez Jasim Uddin Mawlana
Spot: Uttara, Dhaka
Pellet wounds

Hridoy, 22
Worker
Spot: Narayanganj, Siddhirganj
Shot in leg and head

Ibrahim Khalil, 13
Apprentice Furniture Shop Worker
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Shot in back of head

Imam Hossain Taim, 17
Eleventh grade student from Narayanganj
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Multiple pellet wounds across the stomach

Imon, 22
Worker at Rubber Factory
Spot: Rayerbagh
Shot in the chest

Imran, 21
Hotel cook
Spot: Dania, Dhaka
Shot in the head

Imtiaz Ahmed Zabir, 22
Student
Spot: Rampura, Dhaka
Shot in right knee and thigh

Jamal Hossain Sikder, 38
Paint worker
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Chopper firing injuries

Jewel Mollah, 38
Contractor/local politician
Spot: Near Abdullahpur, Dhaka
Injuries of assault to the head and other body parts, rod inside abdomen

Jillur Rahman, 18
Student
Spot: Aftabnagar, Dhaka
Unknown

Kabir Hossain, 34
Details unknown

Kamal Mia, 35
Rickshaw puller
Spot: Shahbagh
Shot in back

Korban Seikh, 60
Chicken trader
Spot: Savar Bazar Bus Stand
Shot in left leg

Liton Matubbar, 30
Tile mason
Spot unknown
Shot in the chest

Mainuddin, 25
Madrasa student
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Shot in neck and back

Mamun Hossain, 28
Private car driver
Mohakhali
Shot in back

Mamun Madbar
Student at Government Titumir College
Spot: Rampura
Shot in the head

Maya Islam, 55
Housewife
Spot: Rampura, Banasree
Shot in stomach

Md Abdullah, 14
Madrasa student
Spot: Jatrabari
Shot in the chest

Md Arif, 18
Worker
Details unknown

Md Habib, 45
CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver
Spot: Shanir Akhra, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Md Hannan, 30
Bakery van driver
Spot: Badda, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Md Nasir Hossain, 32
Tailor
Spot: Rayerbagh, Dhaka
Pellets, 1 bullet between ear and forehead

Md Rasel, 20
Tailor
Spot: Narayanganj
Shot in his chest

Md Shajib, 21
Not mentioned
Spot: Not mentioned
Bullet injuries

Md Shohagh, 19
Worker
Spot: Rampura, Dhaka
Shot in head

Md Shubho
Rickshaw Mechanic
Spot: New Market, Dhaka

Md Wasim Sheikh, 35
Shop owner
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Shot in head

Md Zaman Mia, 17
Clerk
Spot: Shekerchar, Narsingdi
Shot in stomach

Mehedi Hasan, 38
Garments worker
Spot: Savar Bazar Bus Stand
Shot in face and neck

Milon Miah, 26
Trader
Spot: Ganeshpur Rangpur

Mizanur Rahman, 48
Details unknown

Mohammad Faruk, 32
Furniture shop employee
Spot: Muradnagar, Chattagram
Pellets in chest

Mohammad Hossain, 10
Hawker
Spot: Kanchpur bridge, Narayanganj
Shot in chest and thigh

Mohammad Hossain, 25
Truck driver
Spot: Chad Uddayan, Mohammadpur, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Mohammad Mehedi Hasan, 18
Garbage van driver
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Shot in stomach

Mohammad Mobarak Hossain, 35
Shop employee
Spot: Kadamtali, Dhaka
Shot in head

Mohammad Nayeem, 18
College student
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Mohammad Shakil Islam, 19
Sweet shop employee
Spot: Bosila, Mohammadpur, Dhaka
Shot in the leg

Monir Hossain, 32
Jobholder at airlines
Spot: Badda, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Monir Hossain, 56
Building caretaker
Spot: Chittagong Road, Narayanganj
Shot in abdomen

Mosharraf Hawladar, 38
Machinery business
Spot: Board Bazar, Gazipur
Shot in the chest and the stomach

Nadim, 37
Teacher/ local politician
Spot: Rampura, Dhaka
Shot in back

Nahid, 25
Spot: Pachdona area, Narsingdi Sadar upazila
Pellet wounds

Nasir Islam, 21
Details unknown

Nobin Talukdar, 38
Businessman
Spot: Paltan, Dhaka
Shot in head

Nurul Islam, 45
Hawker
Spot: Uttara, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Parvez Mollah, 23
Construction worker
Spot: Bhuigor, Fatullah, Narayanganj
Shot in head

Rabbi, 18
Spot: Narshingdi, Madhobdi area
Pellets

Rabiul Islam
Details unknown

Rafiqul Haider Masud, 42
Construction worker
Muradnagar Block-D, Dhaka
Shot in forehead

Rahat, 16
Spot: Chawkbazar, Dhaka
Details unknown

Rajib Hossain
Details unknown

Raju
Details unknown

Rakib, 10
Details unknown

Rakib, 23
Details unknown

Redoan Hasan Sagar, 18
unknown
Spot: Mintu College Mymensingh
Shot in the chest

Robi Nur Morol, 45
Fish Trader in Savar
Spot: Savar Bazar Bus Stand
Shot in left side of his back

Rohan, 22
Details unknown

Rony Pramanik, 27
Rickshaw-puller
Spot: Savar, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Rony Al Amin
Details unknown

Ruman Bepari, 32
Truck driver
Spot: Khagadi area, Sadar upazila, Madaripur

Sabbir Hossain Shagor, 16
Trader
Spot: Mirpur
Shot in hand and chest

Sajib Miah, 17
Truck driver
Spot: Shiddirganj, Narayanganj

Sajidur Rahman Omar, 29
Freelancer
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Bullet injuries in stomach

Sajjad Hossain, 22
Vegetable trader
Spot: Rangpur

Sarwar Hossain Shawon, 17
Hotel worker
Spot: Rampura, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Sayed Mostofa Kamal, 21
Trader
Spot: Shiddhirganj, Narayanganj
Shot in the head

Saymon, 14
Spot: Bahaddarhat in Chattagram
Pellet wounds on chest

Selim Talukder
Factory worker
Spot: Rampura
Pellets

Shahin Moahammad, 20
Hotel cashier of New Hirajhil Hotel in Shimrail
Spot: Narayanganj, Shiddhirganj
Pellet wounds all over body

Shahjahan, 22
Helper for taping cartons
Spot: Mohakhali overbridge, Dhaka
Shot in lower left hand, near left armpit, and lower abdomen

Shahjahan, 24
Raw material trader
Spot: Jalkuri, Narayanganj
Shot in thighs

Shakil, 20
Rickshaw puller
Spot: Jatrabari Kutubkhan Madrasa
Shot in chest and others

Shakil Parvez, 22
Student, Manarat International University, Dhaka
Details unknown

Shaon Ahmed Shohag, 18
Textile worker
Spot: Madhabdi, Narsingdi
Bullet injuries

Shohagh, 17
Details unknown

Shohagh
Details unknown

Shuvo Shil, 24
Garment workers Swing Operator, KAC Fashion Ltd
Spot: Savar Bazar Bus stand
Shot in stomach

Siam Shuvo, 16
Plastic vendor
Spot: Seujgari-Amtola intersection, Bogura
Shotgun pellet injuries

Sohel Rana, 27
Driver
Spot: New Market, Dhaka
Shot in head

Swapon
Spot: Shiddirganj, Narayanganj

Tanvir Ahmed, 19
Student
Spot: Bahaddarhat, Chattogram
Pellet wounds on head and back side

Taufiqul Islam, 45
Marketing Engineer
Spot: Badda Buddhist temple area
Shot in lower abdomen

Tipu Sultan, 45
Matsajibi League vice president
Spot: Shibpur College Gate, Narsingdi
Hacked to death

Tuhin Ahmed, 26
Bullet injuries

Wasim Akram, 24
3rd year student of Chittagong College
Spot: Muradpur-Sholoshohor, Chattogram
Shot in lower abdomen

Wasim, 25
Worker
Spot: Near Suvastu tower at Shahjadpur, Rajshahi
Shot in head, exposing brain

Yasin, 17
Worker at gas supplier
Spot: Jatrabari, Dhaka
Shot in abdomen

Yeamin Chowdhury, 18
Garments worker from Gazipur
Spot: In front of Suvastu tower, Dhaka
Shot in arm and abdomen

Yunus Miah Sanowar, 35
Used to sell TCB products in truck
Spot: Shonir Akhra overbridge, Kacha Bazar, Dhaka
Shot in chest

Zakir Hossain, 38
Jobholder
Spot: Gazipur, Dhaka
Shot in stomach and right arm

Zishan
Details unknown

21
UNIDENTIFIED BODIES FOUND IN HOSPITALS

SocialistWorker
FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA PALESTINE WILL BE FREE
Back the resistance
THE NAKBA
1948..
2024..
NEVER ENDED

A person holds a placard that reads "The Nakba never ended" in London during the "National March for Gaza", calling to "end the genocide", "stop arming Israel" and "no Middle East war" yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Israeli strike kills 10 at Gaza school

AFP, *Palestinian Territories*

Gaza's civil defence agency said an Israeli strike struck a school compound in Gaza City yesterday, killing at least 10 people.

"There are 10 martyrs and several wounded due to Israeli bombardment on Hamama school," agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP. The Israeli military confirmed the strike, saying it had hit a Hamas command and control centre located inside the compound.

Bassal said the compound was housing Palestinians displaced from their homes in the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas militants.

The military said the compound was being used by Hamas militants to manufacture weapons, adding it was a "hiding place for Hamas terrorists".

The Israeli military has repeatedly accused Hamas of using civilian facilities as command and control centres or to hide their commanders and militants. The Palestinian group denies the accusation.

The war in Gaza erupted after Hamas militants attacked Israel on October 7, which resulted in the death of 1,197 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on official Israeli figures.

Militants also seized 251 people, 111 of whom are still held hostage in Gaza, including 39 the military says are dead.

Israel's withering military campaign has killed at least 39,550 people, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

Drones hit Russian airfield, oil depot: Kyiv

AFP, *Kyiv*

Ukrainian drones targeted a military airfield and an oil depot in Russia, a defence source in Kyiv said on Saturday, after Moscow reported repelling the latest aerial barrage.

Kyiv has stepped up aerial attacks on Russian territory, saying it carries out the strikes in retaliation for the bombardments Ukraine has faced since Russia invaded more than two years ago.

"Last night, drones from Ukraine's Security Service visited the Morozovsk airfield in the Rostov region" that stored aircraft and guided aerial bombs, the source said.

"Ukrainian drones did a great job, hitting the aviation ammunition depot," the source added.

Russia has launched more than 600 guided air bombs on Ukraine in one week alone, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

"Russian combat aircraft must be destroyed where they are, by all means that are effective. Striking at Russian airfields is also quite fair," he said on social media.

Russian officials did not address claims regarding the destroyed airfield, but local governor Vasily Golubev said on Telegram that authorities introduced a state of emergency in the district of Morozovsk.

9 killed in 2 Israeli air strikes in West Bank

AFP, *Tulkarem*

Israeli forces killed nine Palestinians in separate air strikes in the occupied West Bank yesterday, the Palestinian press agency Wafa reported, while the Israeli military said it had "eliminated terrorist cells".

Five people were killed in an Israeli drone strike in the Tulkarem area, Wafa reported, while the Israeli military said it struck "five terrorists" on their way to carry out an attack.

According to Wafa, the drone fired two missiles at a vehicle which caught fire, killing five men.

The director of the Thabet Thabet Hospital in Tulkarem said in a statement that "five martyrs" had arrived at the facility after "an Israeli drone strike on a Palestinian vehicle close to the village of Zeita".

"The Israeli police are currently conducting a counterterrorism activity in the area of Tulkarem," the military said in a statement.

A witness at the scene of the strike told AFP: "I live less than 50 metres (yards) from here. We came (after) the sound of an explosion and saw a vehicle on fire" on the road towards Zeita, to the north of Tulkarem.

"Next to it, we saw a body lying on the road. Inside the vehicle, there were three charred bodies, from what we were able to see, completely burnt," said the witness named Nasser, who declined to have his last name published.

The Israeli military quickly sealed off the area, Wafa reported.

In a second air strike, hours later in the Tulkarem area, Wafa reported that four Palestinians were killed.

The military confirmed the aerial strike, saying "an additional terrorist cell was eliminated" as part of the ongoing counterterrorism activity there.

During the operation there was an encounter between troops and militants, after which Israeli soldiers called in an air strike, killing the four, the military said.

Alongside the Israel-Hamas war that began last October in the Gaza Strip, violence has intensified in the West Bank, occupied by Israel since 1967.

At least 603 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops and settlers in the West Bank since October 7, according to an AFP tally based on Palestinian health ministry figures.

At least 17 Israelis, including soldiers, have been killed by Palestinian attacks in the West Bank over the same period, according to official Israeli figures.

Excluding east Jerusalem, some 490,000 Israeli settlers now live in the West Bank alongside some three million Palestinians.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Palestinians marched to protest the treatment of prisoners held in Israeli jails on Saturday, following reports of abuse and even torture.

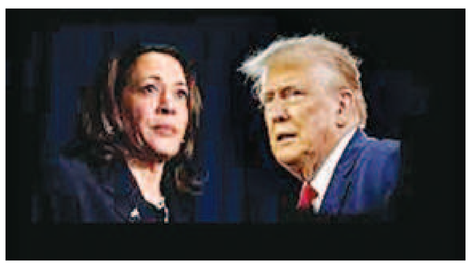
Relatives held up pictures of prisoners and waved Palestinian flags during separate demonstrations in Ramallah and Nablus in the occupied West Bank.

"Even if the whole world submits, we will not recognise Israel," chanted the protesters in Ramallah.

Thousands of Palestinians have been detained in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel since the start of the Israel-Hamas war in October, the United Nations human rights office said this week.

Surging Harris, Trump spar over debate dates

AFP, *Washington*



Kamala Harris's campaign branded Donald Trump "scared" Saturday after he proposed to change the presidential debate schedule ahead of a rally in Georgia where he will try to halt the vice president's surging momentum in her bid to become America's first woman president.

In an overnight post on his Truth Social app, Trump said he was willing to debate Harris on the conservative Fox News network on September 4, while declining to participate in a previously scheduled debate on ABC.

Trump pitched the idea before going to a rally in Atlanta, where he will gather supporters in the same arena where Harris addressed an excited crowd of some 10,000 just this Tuesday.

Trump said he had "agreed" to the debate plan with Fox. And he said it would take place in Pennsylvania -- a crucial swing state in the US presidential electoral system -- in front of a live audience.

The Harris campaign dismissed this as "games."

"Donald Trump is running scared and trying to back out of the debate he already agreed to and running straight to Fox News to bail him out," Harris's campaign communications director Michael Tyler said in a statement. "He needs to... show up to the debate he already committed to on Sept 10."

The proposal to confront Harris on a network that has long supported him was the latest Trump effort to recapture the initiative in a campaign that had been entirely focused on a rematch against 81-year-old Joe Biden, until he dramatically dropped his reelection bid on July 21.

Since then, Harris, 59, has reenergized the Democratic base almost overnight.

She has raked in donations, reassembled the team behind Barack Obama's two historic election victories, and neutralized the solid lead that 78-year-old Trump had built against Biden in opinion polls.

On Friday, she secured the official Democratic nomination, backed by near unanimous party support.

Harris is due imminently to announce her vice presidential pick, with the popular governor of key state Pennsylvania, Josh Shapiro, a frontrunner. On Tuesday, she is set to launch a countrywide tour with her yet-to-be-named running mate.

- Rally in battleground state -

Late Saturday, Trump will be joined by his own vice presidential pick, Senator J.D. Vance, at the rally in Georgia -- another battleground state that will help decide who wins the Electoral College majority on November 5.

Trump lost narrowly to Biden there in 2020 and the state was at the center of his unprecedented attempts to overturn the results of the election and refusal to accept defeat.

The size of Harris's rally on Tuesday was a warning sign to the Trump campaign, which has long touted its ability to draw thousands of passionate supporters, in contrast to Biden's usually meager crowds.

The situation is a remarkable turnaround in a campaign where Trump had been appearing to gather force while Biden -- hurt by a disastrous debate performance in June and mounting voter concerns over his mental acuity -- was steadily slipping.

Harris's rapid entry has left the Trump campaign scrambling -- and Trump now the oldest presidential nominee in US history.

UK braces for far-right protests after riots

AFP, *London*

UK police yesterday readied for more far-right protests across England after a third night of rioting linked to misinformation about a mass stabbing that killed three young girls.

The violence, which has seen scores of arrests and put Britain's Muslim community on edge, presents the biggest challenge yet of Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer's month-old premiership.

It has also put hard-right agitators linked to football hooliganism in the spotlight at a time when anti-immigration elements are enjoying some electoral success in British politics.

Police were gearing up for dozens of demonstrations after officers faced "serious and sustained levels of violence" during rioting in Sunderland, northeast England, on Friday night.

Eight people were arrested and three officers required hospital treatment following hours of "utterly deplorable" disturbances, Northumbria Police Chief Superintendent Helena Barron said.

Two officers remained in hospital early Saturday, she added.

Footage broadcast by the BBC showed a mob of several hundred rampaging in Sunderland's city centre, attacking police and setting fire to at least one car and a building next to a police office.

Other images shared on social media showed balaclava-clad youths throwing bricks and other missiles as fireworks and flares were let off.

The unrest followed two nights of disturbances in several English towns and cities in the wake of Monday's frenzied knife attack in Southport, near Liverpool on England's northwest coast.

They were fuelled by false rumours on social media about the background of British-born 17-year-old suspect Axel Rudakubana, charged with several counts of murder and attempted murder over the attack at a Taylor Swift dance party.

After violence in Southport late Tuesday, unrest rocked the northern cities of Hartlepool and Manchester as well as London 24 hours later, where 111 people were arrested outside Starmer's Downing Street residence.

In Southport, the mob threw bricks at a mosque, prompting hundreds of Muslim places of worship across the country to step up security.

Police blamed supporters of the disbanded English Defence League, an anti-Islam organisation founded 15 years ago whose supporters have been linked to football hooliganism.

In Sunderland on Friday, rioters attacked police officers, set a police station and two cars on fire, and again targeted a mosque.

Police officers face protesters outside the Liver Building in Liverpool yesterday during the 'Enough is Enough' demonstration held in reaction to the fatal stabbings in Southport on July 29.

PHOTO: AFP

Demonstrators hold placards and flags of Palestine during a rally in Rabat yesterday, protesting the killing of Palestinian group Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh. PHOTO: AFP

US scraps plea deal with 9/11 mastermind

AFP, *Washington*

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Friday scrapped a plea agreement with 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, just two days after the announcement of a deal that reportedly would have taken the death penalty off the table.

Deals with Mohammed and two alleged accomplices announced Wednesday had appeared to have moved their long-running cases toward resolution -- but sparked anger among some relatives of those killed on September 11, 2001, as well as criticism from leading Republican politicians.

"I have determined that, in light of the significance of the decision to enter into pre-trial agreements with the accused... responsibility for such a decision should rest with me," Austin said in a memorandum addressed to Susan Escallier, who oversaw the case.

"I hereby withdraw from the three pre-trial agreements that you signed on July 31, 2024 in the above-referenced case," the memo said.

The cases against the 9/11 defendants have been bogged down in pre-trial maneuverings for years, while the accused remained held at the Guantanamo Bay military base in Cuba.

The New York Times reported this week that Mohammed, Walid bin Attash and Mustafa al-Hawsawi had agreed to plead guilty to conspiracy in exchange for a life sentence, instead of facing a trial that could lead to their executions.

Much of the legal jousting surrounding the men's cases has focused on whether they could be tried fairly after having undergone methodical torture at the hands of the CIA in the years after 9/11.

The plea agreements would have avoided that thorny issue, but they also sparked sharp criticism from political opponents of President Joe Biden's administration.

Republican lawmaker Mike Rogers, the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, sent a letter to Austin that said the deals were "unconscionable," while House Speaker Mike Johnson said they were a "slap in the face" to the families of the nearly 3,000 people killed in the September 11 attacks.

And Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's running mate, JD Vance, described the agreements as a "sweetheart deal with 9/11 terrorists," saying during a campaign rally: "We need a president who kills terrorists, not negotiates with them."

Mohammed was regarded as one of Al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden's most trusted and intelligent lieutenants before his March 2003 capture in Pakistan. He then spent three years in secret CIA prisons before arriving at Guantanamo in 2006.

The trained engineer -- who has said he masterminded the 9/11 attacks "from A to Z" -- was involved in a string of major plots against the United States, where he had attended university.

Bin Attash, a Saudi of Yemeni origin, allegedly trained two of the hijackers who carried out the September 11 attacks, and his US interrogators also said he confessed to buying the explosives and recruiting members of the team that killed 17 sailors in an attack on the USS Cole.

Extreme heat breaks records in east China

AFP, *Beijing*

Swathes of eastern China baked under a scorching heat wave yesterday, with temperatures in some areas reaching record highs, weather authorities said.

China is enduring a summer of extreme weather, with unseasonable heat searing parts of the north and east while torrential rains have triggered floods and landslides in central and southern regions.

The country is the world's largest emitter of the greenhouse gases that scientists say drive global warming and make extreme weather more frequent and intense.

All of the 10 hottest cities in China early Saturday afternoon were located in Zhejiang, with the city of Zhuji logging a daily high of 42.3C, the weather service said.

MOGADISHU BEACH ATTACK

Al-Shabaab kills 32, scores wounded

AFP, *Mogadishu*

An Al-Shabaab suicide bomber and gunmen attacked a busy beach in the Somali capital Mogadishu killing at least 32 people and wounding scores more, police said yesterday, in one of the deadliest strikes in the East African country in months.

The al-Qaeda-linked jihadists have been waging an insurgency against the internationally backed federal government for more than 17 years and have previously targeted the Lido beach area, popular with business people and officials.

Unverified videos shared online in the immediate aftermath of the attack late Friday showed people scattering along a street, with a number of clips purporting showing bloodied bodies lying on the beachfront.

"More than 32 civilians died in this attack and about 63 others were wounded, some of them critically," police spokesman Abdifatah Adan Hassan told reporters during a press conference.

"Targeting and blasting to kill 32 members from the civilian population means these Kharijites are not going to target only government centres, soldiers and officials," he said, using the term Somali officials adopt to describe Al-Shabaab.

The assault, for which Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility in a post on a pro-Shabaab website, began when a suicide bomber detonated a device and gunmen stormed the area.

Officer Mohamed Omar told AFP members of the group had "shot civilians randomly".

He said security forces had ended the attack and killed five gunmen, while a sixth member of the group "blew himself (up) at the beach".

Witnesses said there were many people at the popular location when the explosion occurred, describing how gunmen then stormed the area.

Hawo Mohamed, who lives near the scene, said at least seven people he knew had died in the attack.

"The devastation is immense and there is blood, and severed pieces of human flesh strewn in the scene," he told AFP.

Witness Abdilatif Ali was at the beach when the attackers struck and described the chaos and fear that unfolded late at night.

"Everybody was panicked and it was hard to know what was happening because shooting started soon after the blast," he told AFP.

"I saw many people strewn (on the ground) and some of them were dead and others wounded," he said.

Hospitals appealed for blood donations following the influx of wounded, local media reported.

Opponents of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro take part in a demonstration called by opposition leader Maria Corina Machado over the presidential election disputed results, in Caracas yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Venezuela set for new protests after Maduro win ratified

AFP, *CARACAS*

Venezuela braced for fresh protests Saturday, after President Nicolas Maduro's disputed election victory was ratified -- and a growing number of nations recognized his opposition rival as the true winner.

Both Maduro and the opposition, led by Maria Corina Machado and her presidential candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia, have called on their supporters to demonstrate this weekend, in the wake of Sunday's controversial vote.

The South American country's CNE election authority, which is loyal to Maduro, on Friday proclaimed him the winner with 52 percent of the vote and said Gonzalez Urrutia had garnered 43 percent of ballots.

But Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama and Uruguay recognized opposition Gonzalez Urrutia as the true president-elect, joining the United States and Peru in rejecting the official results.

For his part, the 61-year-old Maduro -- who has reacted fiercely to criticism of his victory -- described allegations of vote fraud as a "trap" orchestrated by Washington to justify "a coup."

He also has threatened Machado and Gonzalez Urrutia, saying they "should be behind bars."

Maduro has led the oil-rich, cash-poor country since 2013, presiding over a GDP drop of 80 percent that pushed more than seven million of once-wealthy Venezuela's 30 million citizens to emigrate.

Experts blame economic mismanagement and US sanctions for the collapse.

Gonzalez Urrutia did not show up to a hearing at the Supreme Court after Maduro requested the tribunal investigate and certify the election result.

Gaza burns cases surge as medical supplies dwindle

AFP, *Jerusalem*

In Gaza City's Al-Ahli Hospital, five-year-old Amir Habib al-Habeel screams out in pain from the burns he suffered from an Israeli air strike on his home in Shujaiya a fortnight earlier.

He occupies a bed far from his mother, who also suffered burns, and who cannot move to be by her son's side.

Instead, her brother cares for him, the only available guardian after his "father was martyred", as the tearful child says, struggling to remove one of many IV tubes.

"We receive daily cases of second- and third-degree burns as a result of rocket attacks and the use of internationally banned weapons by the Israeli army," Amjad Eleiwa, an emergency doctor at the hospital, told AFP.

"Most of the cases that come to us are children and women. We don't have any capacity to deal with these burns," he said, explaining that they could not access any of the medical supplies needed to treat burns and had to resort instead to whatever was available in private warehouses and pharmacies.

"We are in dire need of medical and logistical support and medicine to deal with these cases and save them."

Medical facilities have in the past weeks reported increasing numbers of burn victims.

Julie Faucon, a medical coordinator at Doctors Without Borders (MSF), told AFP some of the charity's specialists have been working for two months in Nasser Hospital in the southern city of Khan Yunis, "supporting what we call the trauma auto burn unit".

In that time, they have received "more than 69 cases with burns. One case out of five is related to explosions", the burns specialist said.

"Three out of four" of the patients they have received are children, she said, adding that 10 of the patients have had burns on more than 20 percent of their bodies.

According to Muhammad al-Mughayyir, of Gaza's civil defence agency, Israeli forces have been using "new weapons that cause increased ignition and burning".

Contacted by AFP, the Israeli military did reply to a request for comment.

Mughayyir said the weapons reach extremely high temperatures and are "capable of melting bodies".

They often target "tent areas made up of nylon containing primitive materials such as wood and plastic, all of which directly affects the speed and rate of ignition", he added.

"These burns have a direct impact on people's lives and appearances. They affect skin layers and burn nerves, and there are people who become disabled as a result of that."

The World Health Organization has said that out of 36 hospitals in the territory, only 15 are partially functional, adding that medical facilities have been targeted more than 1,000 times since war broke out on October 7.

Mohammed Zaqout, the head of hospitals in the Gaza Strip, said "there is only Nasser Hospital in the southern areas, with 12 operating rooms, all of which are overcrowded".

"There are 16 beds in the intensive care units, all of which are occupied, and we have added a capacity of 24 beds but they are now full," he said.

"We try to distribute these cases to field hospitals, but the occupation's massacres against unarmed civilians occur on a daily and hourly basis, and no one in the world intervenes."

Access to treatment abroad has been blocked as most Palestinians cannot leave the besieged territory, as has the entry of most medical supplies, particularly since Israeli forces seized the Palestinian side of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt since early May.

Faucon similarly highlighted the urgent need for medical supplies, pointing to surging demand among extremely meagre stocks.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Take concrete steps to address public anger

Call for discussion must be preceded by definitive action

We condemn the fresh set of violence that occurred in different parts of the country on August 2, leaving at least two people dead and almost 150 injured. The clashes reportedly took place in the capital's Uttara area, Sylhet, Khulna, Narsingdi, Chattogram and Noakhali during processions of the student movement against discrimination. Law enforcers and members of ruling party affiliated student wings allegedly tried to foil the processions at different locations, which led to the violence. On August 2, thousands of people from different walks of life joined the students in their march for justice. And they again came out in huge numbers alongside thousands of students yesterday, demanding investigations into the killings that took place in July following a government crackdown on students using state and non-state actors.

As we have repeatedly said in this column, the use of force to attempt to quell the student movement, from the outset, was a terrible mistake. Such attempts were totally undemocratic, and have now transformed the movement to a point where it is no longer restricted to the students only. People from all walks of life have extended their support to the nine demands of the students. And we hope the government understands the gravity of the situation, and the necessity to show restraint and create the groundwork for open and prompt negotiations.

In that regard, we see wisdom in the prime minister's willingness to sit with the protesting students and listen to them. The students, however, have so far refused to sit for dialogue with the government. The government's previous actions, which ran contrary to its own statements, as well as the expectations and hopes of the students, have created this situation where the students no longer seem to trust the government. The government's decision to arrest huge numbers of people—including students and ordinary citizens—while dithering about in regards to investigating law enforcers responsible for shooting at unarmed students and citizens, as well as various other questionable decisions, has naturally created immense misgivings about the government among students in particular.

As of now, while calling for dialogue, the government has not taken any concrete steps to address the grievances of the students or the public in general. Therefore, the government should immediately launch credible investigations into the firings. Those responsible for such atrocities and the killing and injuring of students must be brought to book. Additionally, it is high time to hold those who pushed for the student protests to be quelled using violence to account also. In their nine demands, the students have identified certain ministers for their role in the events that unfolded. These ministers should be held responsible for their actions.

These and other concrete steps are the only way forward for the government. The public anger that has taken hold should be understood, rather than undermined, so that the country can find a peaceful resolution to the ongoing unrest. And that is essential to prevent any further damage to our economy and society, and most importantly, to prevent any further violence and loss of lives.

Israel's actions a recipe for regional disaster

Global forces must urge for peace deal

When the world is pushing for peace in the form of a ceasefire in Gaza, the assassination of Hamas' top leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Iran has derailed that hope. Analysts fear this event could have far-reaching consequences in the whole Middle East, leading to a full-on regional conflict. And such fears cannot be dismissed completely at this point, given the tensions that have built up in the region.

Senior officials of Hamas have said the death of Haniyeh, who had been a top negotiator in the ceasefire talks, means their fight against Israel would intensify. While Israel has not publicly acknowledged its role in the killing, *The New York Times* reports that several US officials assess that the country was indeed responsible. Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden said the killing "doesn't help" efforts to secure a ceasefire. In almost 11 months, amid widespread destruction in Gaza, Israel has repeatedly thwarted talks of truce, clearly indicating that it has no intention of stopping the atrocities. If the reports are accurate, this is just the newest manufactured obstacle.

Israel is already facing global condemnation for its genocide, which has claimed the lives of over 39,000 people in Gaza. Besides such heinousness, it is also attacking people in foreign lands, beyond its jurisdiction, which is absolutely unacceptable and is a recipe for greater turmoil. A recent instance of this is Israel's airstrikes and artillery fire on Lebanon, leading to multiple deaths. Unsurprisingly, this has forced Hezbollah to resume rocket and artillery attacks on Israel. The group's chief Hassan Nasrallah has said that Israel "crossed red lines" after killing its top military commander earlier in Beirut. It's quite obvious: attacks lead to retaliation, and the cycle of violence continues. But this simple reality is being constantly ignored.

After Haniyeh's killing, US, Egyptian and Qatari mediators are desperately trying to salvage ceasefire talks, but for them to be successful, both parties have to be on the same page. They are, however, dealing with a country that does not want peace, for why else would it strike a school sheltering displaced Palestinians, killing 15, on Friday. Nevertheless, global actors must stand against this genocide, and continue to condemn and pressurise Israel, if they want to ensure peace for the Middle East. Given that the violence has kept expanding, it is high time for it to end before the entire region becomes engulfed in further turmoil.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Anne Frank is caught by the Gestapo

On this day in 1944, the secret annex in Amsterdam where Anne Frank and seven others were hiding was discovered by the Gestapo; all were sent to concentration camps, with only Otto Frank surviving.

Bangladesh's growth story lacks justice and humanity

MACRO MIRROR

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Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

The student-led non-political quota reform movement—calling for fair treatment towards all job seekers on the basis of merit—ended up being such a huge tragedy because of a total lack of sensitivity and understanding of reality on the part of the government and the ruling political party. The ongoing student movement, which began on July 1, 2024, is the manifestation of bigger problems that policymakers have overlooked for decades. The problems are economic, social and political in nature. Behind the quota movement is the suppressed anger and deprivation in various forms that have existed for a long time.

Despite economic progress during the last one and a half decades, for which the current government takes credit, there are not enough jobs for the young population in the country. With stagnant private investment which was 23.5 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in fiscal year (FY) 2024, the private sector cannot create that many jobs. Meanwhile, with the increases in salaries, perks, job security and power, government jobs have become the most coveted form of employment in the market.

Though the official unemployment rate is only 3.53 percent according to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2022, youth unemployment stands at eight percent, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). The percentage of youth aged 15- 24 years who are not in employment, education, and training (NEET) is 40.67 percent. In a skewed labour market, the opportunity for decent employment is limited, due to which 84.9 percent jobs are in the informal sector where income and job security are low.

Cleary, the economic growth in Bangladesh could not create enough jobs. This is also reflected in a downward trend in the employment elasticity of GDP. Employment elasticity is a measure of how employment changes due to changes in economic growth. The quarterly GDP estimates and LFS data indicate that in FY2022, employment elasticity was 0.38 percent, which has come down to 0.13 percent in the first quarter of FY2024.

The lack of employment opportunities, rampant corruption, cronyism, huge bank loan defaults, and lack of good governance have resulted in unequal distribution of economic opportunities and wealth across all strata of society. The top five percent of the population possessed 30.04 percent of the national income in 2022, which was 27.82 percent in 2016. On the other hand, the bottom five percent owned only 0.37 percent of the national income in 2022, which increased slightly from 0.23 percent in 2016. On the other hand, the average inflation rate in Bangladesh was 9.72 percent in June 2024. The failure of the government to contain high inflationary pressure during the last two years has squeezed the purchasing power of low and middle-income families.

The so-called "political stability," which has turned into a one-party system through multiple questionable national elections, has resulted in a lack of accountability in every sphere of public services. Hence, reducing inequality and empowering the people—particularly the young and the poor—through ensuring productive employment with a decent salary remained outside the development realm of the government, except for some lip service in national strategies such as the five-year plans. Bangladesh has not yet ratified the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on pursuing "full, productive and freely chosen employment." Among South Asian countries, India ratified the convention in 1998, and Sri Lanka did too in 2016.

An important change in governance during the past one and a half decades is evident through over-bureaucratisation and over-regulation of the economy. This has failed to provide skills and jobs to the people, leading to unabated corruption and huge resource misuse which has favoured the rich and privileged, and throttled the opportunities of the common people and the youth.

Though some government interventions helped achieve growth and improve average social indicators such as health and education, the quality and distributional issues of such advancements are questionable. Access to public facilities is unequal. Moreover, the allocation of public resources to the social sectors is very low and stagnant although both the size of the economy and the national budget have expanded over the years. Allocation for the health sector is at 0.74 percent of GDP, and only 1.67 percent of GDP is for education. Actual public expenditure for social safety net programme (SSNP) is very low at 1.32 percent of GDP in FY 2025, even though the government has inflated SSNP allocation figures by adding pensions for government employees, interests for savings certificate, and agricultural subsidy to the calculation.

On a broader perspective, Bangladesh's persistent growth model, which disregarded the rule of law on several occasions, has resulted in the establishment of entrenched rent-seeking. The culture of the distribution of public contracts, licenses, and benefits by government ministries has been practised for several years now. The distortion of economic policymaking with the objective of favouring certain groups is a clear reflection of obvious patronage and clientelism. The banking sector, the power sector, and the readymade garments sector are only a few examples where many policies and rules have been formulated to exclusively support these vested interests at the cost of national interest. For instance, policies in the banking sector are dictated by powerful people who also incidentally receive licenses because of their political connections. Due to poor governance, the sector is overburdened with wilfully defaulted bank loans, which rose consistently from Tk 22,480 crore in 2009 to Tk 156,039 crore in the fourth quarter of FY2023. Fraud and irregularities are also on the rise. An assessment of only 24 significant published irregularities that occurred between 2008 and 2023 revealed that a total of Tk 92,261 crore was taken out of the banking system, which is equivalent to 2 percent of the GDP of FY2023 and 12 percent of the national budget for FY2024.

For the less privileged, access to public services often depends on bribes to officials and connections with the ruling party's local cadres. For example, the government's beneficiary list of the SSNPs often ends up excluding the genuinely poor people and including non-needy people, as the party men control such programmes for the poor.

The cracks in the development pattern of the current government have been clearly visible for some time now. This condition has arisen due to insufficient and misguided policies, together with ineffective execution, a deficiency in governance, and a lack of reform measures. Macroeconomic stability is broken as all key indicators have been deteriorating during the last two years. Shrinking fiscal space due to low tax-GDP ratio, increased debt servicing liability, dwindling foreign exchange reserves due to low export and remittances, a fragile financial sector, low investment, and high prices of fuel and essential commodities have subdued economic growth. Institutions have been systematically weakened, while policymakers have shown less enthusiasm for improving governance, which is a prerequisite for achieving inclusive and sustained economic growth. Over the years, institutions have become extractive in nature, where the nexus among political elites, bureaucrats, and a small but privileged group exploit the rest of the population. Such a predatory state has ignored the participation and voice of the larger section of the people in economic policymaking, including empowering the youth through quality education, skills and employment.

VISUAL: **SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM**

Therefore, students have now termed their protest a movement for justice. Students' demands have touched millions across the country. The government's brutality was manifested in the heavy-handed manner in which it tackled the movement for a just cause. Display of more importance to the destruction of physical infrastructure over human lives is a cruel insensitivity to the students and common people who were killed and injured.

Alas, Bangladesh's growth story does not have a human face!

That is why the student movement has now transformed into a mass movement from where the call for political change is sought. Indeed, without a participatory political system and the establishment of people's voting rights, economic growth can neither sustain nor be just and humane.

An urgent plea for democracy

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M M BASET OLI MISHKAT

The ongoing protest by students and mass people demanding justice has surfaced in a profound democratic void in Bangladesh. The government's heavy-handed response to peaceful demonstrations reflects a deep-seated intolerance for dissent. Rather than engaging with the students' legitimate concerns, the administration chose to suppress their voices, further exacerbating the democratic deficit.

Over the past 15 years, the ruling party has systematically eroded the democratic fabric of the nation, leading to widespread discontent and disillusionment among the populace. For the past decade and a half, Bangladesh has witnessed a systematic de-democratisation process orchestrated by the ruling party. This process has involved manipulating democratic institutions, undermining free and fair elections, and consolidating power through various means. The ruling party has effectively used blame games and the rhetoric of development to mask its authoritarian tendencies, creating an illusion of progress while stifling democratic freedoms.

The last three elections have been marred by allegations of irregularities and manipulation, distancing the ruling party from the electorate. These questionable elections have not only undermined the democratic process but also alienated the party's leaders from the people. The gap between the government and the governed has widened, resulting in a significant disengagement that has eroded public trust in the political system. The creation of a parliament with a one-sided election that does not heed the demands of the society, but benefits a select group has further entrenched this de-democratisation. The systematic interference in the legal system has undermined the rule of law, eroding the foundational principles of democracy and justice.

Surprisingly, the identity of a portion of civil society has become blurred as they aligned themselves with the ruling party and adopted behaviours and rhetoric that echo the government's stance. This co-optation of civil society further stifles independent voices and critical discourse, contributing to the democratic erosion. The parties not in power have also drastically failed the nation by ignoring the real challenges faced by the masses. Their focus has been primarily on regaining power rather than addressing the pressing issues that affect the everyday lives of the people. This neglect has further contributed to the democratic void and the growing disillusionment among citizens.

To address this democratic crisis, it is imperative for the ruling party to cultivate a culture of democracy within its ranks. This includes encouraging and allowing opposing voices, ensuring freedom of speech, and using administrative apparatus for the benefit of citizens rather than for maintaining power. Free and independent media is vital for a functioning democracy, and steps must be taken to ensure that media outlets can operate without fear of repression or censorship. Listening to opposing voices with good intentions and understanding that protesters are citizens of Bangladesh, not merely supporters of opposition parties, are crucial. Representatives of the government should communicate through the media with the humility of public servants, not the arrogance of rulers. Sensible and respectful discourse is necessary to rebuild trust and confidence among the people.

The path to restoring democracy in Bangladesh requires a commitment to these principles. The ruling party must take concrete steps to re-engage with the people, uphold democratic values, and ensure that the governance of Bangladesh is truly for the benefit of its citizens. Only by embracing these changes can Bangladesh move away from autocracy and towards a future where democracy thrives. It is time to stop the authoritarian practices and begin showing respect to the people of Bangladesh, championing democracy in both word and deed.

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Holding to account the perpetrators of crimes against protesters

ON THE SHORES OF (IN)JUSTICE

Dr CR Abrar
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C R ABRAR

"It was the henchmen of the ruling party and the law enforcement who committed the crimes, but we (the students) are the ones who are being picked up." — Tasneem Tanha, a protester.

The above statement succinctly captures the feeling of student protestors about the role of law enforcement agencies in committing the infamous July massacre, and what was then done in its aftermath. While electronic media lost no time in repeating the government's carefully crafted narrative to divert people's attention from mindless killings to the damaging of state properties and the much-coveted symbols of development of the ruling regime, leading dailies were able to deliver updates and analysis on grievous state crimes unleashed on them.

It was only after the withdrawal of restrictions on internet services that the extent and magnitude of such wrongdoings began to unravel. Graphic video footage of wanton violence committed by the law enforcers on unarmed young protestors triggered outrage. The display of the government's might through use of armoured personnel carriers and helicopters, new kits in the arsenal of "law enforcement," further added to the trauma of the people. For the citizenry, by now habituated with social media offering them real time information and alternative perspectives, the internet blockade was stifling.

The number of those killed, injured or abducted by law enforcement grew with each passing day. The number of dead and maimed patients in the medical facilities began to swell. Some facilities (including renowned ones) refused to admit patients with gunshot wounds for fear of reprisal from the authorities. There are also allegations that law enforcers seized death registers from public hospitals. The families' inability to track their lost members further contributed to the tense situation. Reports of police engaging in extortion from families of those detained caused further fury.

The move to diffuse the quota movement through the Appellate Division verdict failed to assuage the agitating students. By then, the situation deteriorated sharply as incidents of killing, involuntary disappearance, and incarceration of protestors became rampant. The abuse of those while under arrest and in detention, particularly the female students, further incensed the people. All these prompted the protestors to make additional demands including that of accountability.

Wanton violence committed by the law enforcers on unarmed young protestors has triggered outrage. FILE PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

The curfew and the imposition of restrictions on assembly had very little impact on the students. The unprecedented participation of private university students, otherwise perceived as privileged, provided it a fresh stimulus. The agitating students were able to garner the support of not only their peers, parents, and loved ones, but also that of ordinary working people who were appalled by the brutality unleashed on the protesters. The reckless statements of the senior-most functionaries of the government and the intellectuals who support their narrative—who have continued to blame the nebulous "third party" for "the violence"—have hardly resonated with ordinary citizens.

Figures from Prothom Alo inform that until August 1, at least 212 persons were killed in the July mayhem. An analysis of 175 cases reveals that more than 91 percent of the fatalities were caused by firearms (78 percent killed by lethal weapons and 13 percent by shotguns. The other nine percent succumbed to beating, arson or drowned). It also establishes that around 71 percent of the 175 killed were under the age of 29, 17 percent were between 30 and 39 and the rest were above 40.

So far, through their collective leadership and creative and methodical planning, the Students' Movement against Discrimination has been able to maintain the momentum. Even in the absence of the top leadership who remained wrongfully detained for about a week in the Detective Branch office in Dhaka, events such as "march for justice" and "rally of defiance," initiated by a different group of coordinators, became hugely popular. Despite on-the-spot rounding up of protesters and attempts of disruption by the baton wielding police force, university teachers, lawyers, cultural activists, and people of all strata, including the garments workers, have joined the students and extended their support for the demand of accountability and justice.

As this movement scales new heights with each passing day amid spontaneous support of the people, the government's ploy to hide behind the "third party" theory has failed to harvest any takers. The huge success of the red e-poster movement expressing solidarity with the protestors on social media on the very day that the government declared as a day of mourning is a testimony of the volume of support that the protestors enjoy over the beleaguered regime.

The July massacre has brought the credibility of this regime into question. While there is overpowering evidence, corroborated by Amnesty International, that Abu Sayeed of Begum Rokeya University was sprayed with pellets fired by the police, the police in the first information report (FIR) claimed that he died of bullets fired and brickbats flung by the protesters, and a 16-year-old had been blamed for the act. Completely denying the responsibility for shooting unarmed protesters, the government now maintains that the law enforcement agencies did not resort to firearms as they were not granted the permission to do so. This is an egregious distortion of facts.

The curfew and the imposition of restrictions on assembly had very little impact on the students. The unprecedented participation of private university students, otherwise perceived as privileged, provided it a fresh stimulus. The agitating students were able to garner the support of not only their peers, parents, and loved ones, but also that of ordinary working people who were appalled by the brutality unleashed on the protesters.

On July 20, the general secretary of the Awami League, also a minister, while announcing the decision to impose nationwide curfew and deploy armed forces after a meeting with 14-party alliance members, categorically stated that "shoot-on-sight" order has been issued. The state minister in charge of information is on record boasting that the government had five-year supplies of bullets to quell the protest.

Such blatant misrepresentation of facts by the government makes it imperative that a thorough, credible and transparent investigation into the crimes committed by government forces, including killings, injuries, torture and abductions, and denial of the rights to express, assemble and pursue artistic freedom by the citizens, be conducted by an independent body. The youth of Bangladesh—along with ordinary masses—strive, aspire, and have remained on the streets to hold the rulers to account. Surely history will not disappoint them.

VIOLENCE AGAINST STUDENTS

A tribute to our little John Hampdens

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MD MAHMUDUL HASAN

On July 23, 2024, a police officer kicked a teenager named Muhammad Fahir and mistreated an adult at UK's Manchester airport. The incident caused shock and horror in British society and around the world and provoked protests in Greater Manchester. The police officer involved has been suspended and is under investigation.

Remarkably, around the same time, law enforcers—who are paid by our money—killed in broad daylight hundreds of unarmed protesters, mostly students, in the streets of our beloved Bangladesh. According to a July 26, 2024 report in the *Prothom Alo*, at least 204 people were killed during this spate of violence alone. Since there is an alleged attempt to suppress the records of the carnage, we may not know the true number of casualties. Perhaps, such massive shootings and killings in the streets of Bangladesh are unprecedented.

While many protesting students are succumbing to injuries, hundreds of them are lying in excruciating pain in hospitals with various degrees of bullet wounds. Fearing arrest by the police, many more chose not to receive treatment in hospitals and are suffering in silence. Many are staying under self-imposed house arrest to avoid police harassment in the streets. As Bangladesh is a country of roughly 170 million people, here we are talking about the ordeals of millions of students.

Is there no responsibility for all these killings, injuries, and sufferings? No compassion for the tears of bereaved parents who had pinned so much hope on their now-murdered children?

Many in Bangladesh seem to have been processing the tragedy of the mass slaughter of students in dead silence. But what does it tell us about our status as human beings and about the value of our lives as Bangladeshis? I am talking about the lives of all Bangladeshis irrespective of their political complexion or partisan preferences. I repeat: here I am concerned with the lives of all Bangladeshis, including those who murdered our students in the streets.

The normalisation of government-sponsored violence points to the sad truth that our lives are cheap. Bangladeshis can be harassed and killed, and the perpetrators face no consequences. Only a select few at the top of the government enjoy Brahmanical privileges, while the rest are pawns or hostages in an undemocratic system.

Gruesome and unbearable shoot-to-kill images have continued to emerge. What transpires through a cursory look at social media sites is that students have been killed and maimed like birds. These students have parents and siblings; they are sons and daughters of Bangladesh society and are the future of the country. Attacks on them are attacks on the entire population.

As regards the Manchester airport incident, race was most probably an important factor that incited the violent behaviour of the police officer concerned. But why did our law enforcers kill our young people in such large numbers? It's not race hatred or political differences that have snatched away so many precious lives from us. It is the reduced value of our lives that made this possible.

Our lives are cheap. When we degrade and mistreat each other, we do so at our own peril. The oppressor and the oppressed among us all are lesser human beings. This realisation and efforts to address it will mark the beginning of our collective healing.

The normalisation of government-sponsored violence points to the sad truth that our lives are cheap. Bangladeshis can be harassed and killed, and the perpetrators face no consequences. Only a select few at the top of the government enjoy Brahmanical privileges, while the rest are pawns or hostages in an undemocratic system.

Students who were shot dead and injured were simply exercising their democratic rights and posed no threat to anybody. What took them to the streets tells volumes about present-day Bangladesh.

The phrase "the tip of the iceberg" is perhaps overused. But it serves to emphasise the magnitude of specific problems. The quota issue is only on the surface and only the tip of the iceberg. There are long, under-the-surface stories that have to be told to explain what gave the students such courage and brought them face-to-face with violence from law enforcement and ruling party men. They have defied the fear of death. On this issue, Bangladesh seems to have been in a war between two camps: the law enforcers and ruling party people on one side, and the general students on the other.

In a climate of cowardice and sycophancy, protesting students' exemplary courage and bravery have given Bangladesh a renewed patriotism and a glowing confidence in the country's future. FILE PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Meritorious students of underprivileged backgrounds from rural areas study at public universities with much hope and aspiration for a better life. Those who have graduated in the last couple of decades or are currently studying at Bangladesh's universities, mostly the public ones, are cognisant of the suffering to which they have been vulnerable at the hands of so-called student leaders (known as "cadres" in campus parlance). The way ordinary students are mistreated at many of Bangladesh's universities may reveal a pattern reminiscent of the master-slave relationship.

We do not discuss it enough, but we know what happens especially in the campus and dormitories at most universities in Bangladesh. You may not find many Bangladeshi university students/graduates who have not experienced or heard of the beatings of ordinary students by the "cadres" at universities. What is more, sexual harassment of female students at universities is common knowledge in present-day Bangladesh.

University students in Bangladesh have been enduring all forms of mistreatment; many had hoped that upon graduation they would get government jobs. The quota system hammered the last nail in the coffin of that aspiration for a better future. Seeing no other options, like Thomas Gray's "village-Hampden ... with dauntless breast," students in Bangladesh are rising up against tyranny in their land. In a climate of cowardice and sycophancy, their exemplary courage and bravery and their faith in themselves and one another have given Bangladesh a renewed patriotism and a glowing confidence in the country's future.

The government has been trying to contain students through bullets, blood and poison gas, but the number of John Hampdens is perhaps too many for it to suppress. Meanwhile, forces beyond our control have continued to whittle down our country to its bones.

Early action can prevent nearly half of dementia cases

STAR HEALTH REPORT

A groundbreaking report from the 2024 Lancet Commission reveals that nearly half of dementia cases could be prevented or delayed by addressing 14 modifiable risk factors throughout life, starting in childhood. These factors include high cholesterol and vision loss, along with previously identified risks like smoking, obesity, and depression.

The report emphasises the importance of early and continuous intervention, even for those with a high genetic predisposition to dementia. It highlights 13 key recommendations for individuals and governments, such as treating hearing loss, staying cognitively active, and reducing vascular risks.

Using England as a case study, new research within the report suggests that implementing population-level interventions could lead to significant economic savings—around £4 billion—by tackling risk factors like excessive alcohol use, air pollution, and high blood pressure. This underscores the substantial public health and economic benefits of early preventive measures.

The Lancet Commission's findings stress that reducing dementia risks not only increases healthy life years but also decreases the time people spend living with dementia. By adopting the recommended policy and lifestyle changes, millions of lives could be improved, and the global burden of dementia significantly reduced.

The lead author Professor Gill Livingston from University College London stated, "It is never too early or too late to take action, with opportunities to make an impact at any stage of life."

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY 2024

It is time for action

STAR HEALTH DESK

World Hepatitis Day, observed on 28 July, raises awareness of viral hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver that causes severe liver disease and cancer. This year's theme is ***"It is time for action."*** With a person dying every 30 seconds from a hepatitis-related illness, we must accelerate action on better prevention, diagnosis, and treatment to save lives and improve health outcomes.

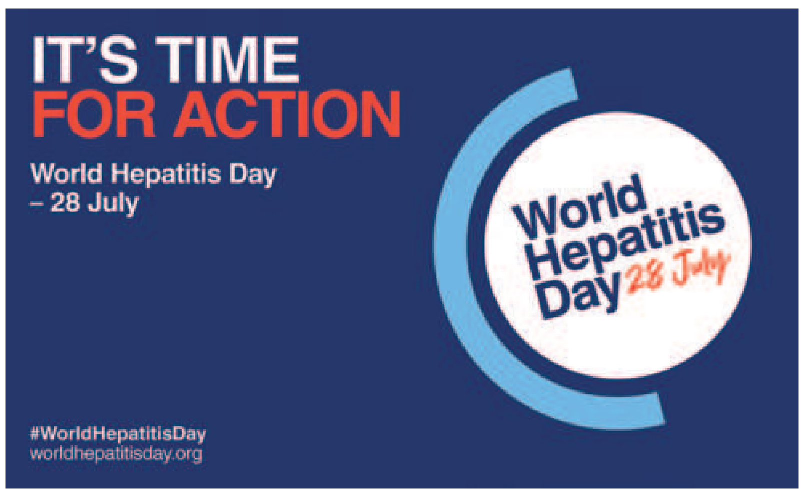
There are five main strains of the hepatitis virus: A, B, C, D, and E. Together, hepatitis B and C are the most common infections and result in 1.3 million deaths and 2.2 million new infections per year. Despite better tools for diagnosis and treatment and decreasing product prices, testing and treatment coverage rates have stalled. However, reaching the WHO elimination goal by 2030 should still be achievable if swift action is taken now.

KEY MESSAGES

1. The liver's vital role:
A liver performs over 500 vital functions every single day to keep us alive, which underscores the importance of testing, treating, and preventing viral hepatitis. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, usually caused by a viral infection or non-infectious agents (such as drugs, toxins, or alcohol).

While all hepatitis viruses cause liver disease, they differ in transmission modes, severity of illness, geographical distribution, and prevention methods. Types B and C lead to chronic disease and are the most common causes of liver cirrhosis, liver cancer, and viral-hepatitis-related deaths.

2. Rising deaths:
Deaths from viral hepatitis-related causes are increasing. Combined, hepatitis B and C caused 1.3 million deaths in 2022. Around 304 million people are living with chronic viral hepatitis infection. Every day, 3,500 people die from hepatitis B and C infections, which equates to one death every 30 seconds. Over 6,000 people are newly infected with viral hepatitis each day.



3. Undiagnosed and untreated:
Nearly 220 million people with hepatitis B and nearly 36 million people with hepatitis C are undiagnosed. Most symptoms appear only when the disease is advanced, leading to diagnoses when serious liver disease or cancer has developed. Even after diagnosis, treatment and care coverage is astonishingly low. Of the 304 million people with hepatitis B and C, only 7 million are treated for hepatitis B and 12.5 million are cured of hepatitis C.

4. Prevention and action:
To eliminate hepatitis and achieve WHO's targets by 2030, simplified care services must ensure that all pregnant women with chronic hepatitis B receive treatment and their infants get hepatitis B birth vaccines to prevent infection; 90% of people with hepatitis B and/or C are diagnosed; and 80% of diagnosed people are treated for hepatitis B or cured of hepatitis C. Despite the availability of affordable diagnostic tools and treatments, many people still face out-of-pocket costs, and services are often only available at specialised hospitals.

Key actions include expanding access to testing and diagnostics, strengthening primary care prevention efforts, decentralising hepatitis care to bring it closer to patients, integrating hepatitis care within existing health services, engaging affected communities and civil society, and mobilising new funding avenues to support hepatitis elimination programs.

It is possible to make elimination of hepatitis into a reality. Now is the time to prioritise testing, treatment, and vaccination to meet the 2030 targets.

Source: *World Health Organisation*

Support for all breastfeeding moms

World Breastfeeding Week, celebrated in the first week of August, is supported by WHO, UNICEF, and numerous health ministries and civil society partners. The theme for 2024 is ***"Closing the Gap: Breastfeeding Support for All."***

This campaign aims to celebrate the diversity of breastfeeding moms throughout their journeys, showcasing how families, communities, and health workers can support them. This year, the focus is on recognising breastfeeding moms, ensuring they are seen and heard, and sharing relatable experiences about the importance of multi-level support, including:

- Creating a societal environment that values women and breastfeeding.
- Establishing a women- and breastfeeding-friendly healthcare system.
- Respecting women's right to breastfeed anytime, anywhere.
- Offering robust community support.

Key messages for this year's campaign include:

- **Appreciation and support:** Let us appreciate breastfeeding moms and ensure they get the support they need.
- **Diverse forms of support:** Support ranges from staff welcoming breastfeeding in local cafés to maternity protections from governments.
- **Rights and protections:** Women everywhere have the right to respectful breastfeeding counselling and supportive laws and policies.
- **Normalisation and advocacy:** We can help ensure women feel able to breastfeed anytime, anywhere, and work to improve their position at home, work, and public life.

Join the campaign from 1 to 7 August with the hashtags #WorldBreastfeedingWeek and #TogetherForMoms, and let us work together to support breastfeeding moms everywhere.

Source: *World Health Organisation*

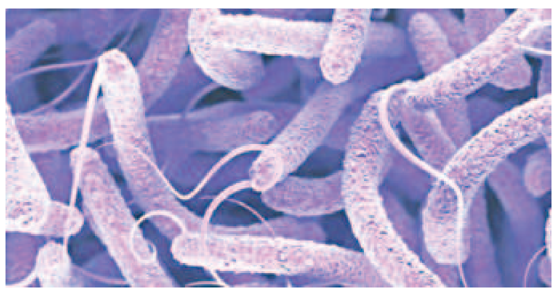
EL NIÑO AND CHOLERA

How climate events influence disease outbreaks

New research suggests that an El Niño event may have aided the establishment and spread of a novel cholera strain during an early 20th-century pandemic, supporting the idea that climate anomalies could create opportunities for the emergence of new cholera strains. Xavier Rodo of Instituto de Salud Global de Barcelona, Spain, and colleagues present these findings in the open-access journal PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases.

Since 1961, more than 1 million people worldwide have died in an ongoing cholera pandemic, the seventh cholera pandemic to have occurred since 1817. The drivers of past cholera pandemics have been unclear, but one hypothesis holds that anomalous climate conditions may act synergistically with genetic changes of Vibrio cholerae—the bacterium that causes the disease—to facilitate the spread and dominance of new strains.

To help clarify potential links between climate and cholera, Rodo and colleagues applied a variety of statistical and computational tools to historical records of climate conditions and cholera deaths in various regions of former British India during the sixth cholera pandemic, which lasted from 1899 to 1923. They also compared past conditions with climate and cholera data for the ongoing pandemic.



This analysis revealed that anomalous patterns of cholera deaths from 1904 to 1907 occurred alongside out-of-the-ordinary seasonal temperatures and rainfall levels associated with an El Niño event; the timing of these occurrences correlates with the establishment of a new invasive strain during the sixth pandemic. In addition, these historical climate conditions show similarities to strong El Niño events that have been associated with cholera strain changes during the ongoing pandemic.

These findings support the possibility that anomalous climate events could help facilitate the establishment and spread of new cholera strains.

The researchers then explored future possibilities for climate-facilitated emergence of new cholera strains using standard climate prediction models. They found that climate change-driven increases in climate variability and extremes could boost the chances of emergence of novel strains through the end of the current century.

Meanwhile, to deepen understanding of this deadly disease, the scientists call for further research focused on the interplay of cholera evolution and climate anomalies.

Recognising heart attack symptoms in women

STAR HEALTH DESK

Heart attacks can present differently in women compared to men, leading to potential misdiagnoses and delays in treatment. Understanding these differences is crucial for timely intervention and better outcomes.

Women do not always exhibit the classic heart attack symptoms that are often associated with men, such as intense chest pain radiating down one arm. While these symptoms can still occur in women, many experience more subtle or even silent symptoms that can be easily overlooked. Here are six common heart attack symptoms in women that everyone should be aware of:

1. Chest pain or discomfort:
Chest pain is the most common symptom of a heart attack in both men and women. However, women may experience it differently. It might feel like squeezing, fullness, or pressure anywhere in the chest, not just on the left side. It as a vise tightening around the chest. It is essential to note that this discomfort is usually significant and uncomfortable during a heart attack.

2. Pain in the arm(s), back, neck, or jaw:
Women are more likely than men to experience pain in these areas. This pain can be confusing, as it might not be centred on the chest or left arm but instead appear in the back or jaw. The pain can be gradual or sudden, waxing and waning before becoming intense. Report any unusual or unexplained pain above the waist, as it could be a sign of a heart attack.

3. Stomach pain:
Heart attack-related stomach pain is often mistaken for heartburn, the flu, or a stomach ulcer. Some women describe this pain as severe abdominal pressure, akin to an elephant sitting on their stomach.

4. Shortness of breath, nausea, or lightheadedness:
Difficulty breathing without an apparent reason can be a warning sign of a heart attack, especially when accompanied by other symptoms. It can feel like running a marathon without moving. If you experience shortness of breath alongside other symptoms, it is crucial to seek medical attention immediately.

5. Sweating:
Women having a heart attack often break out in a cold sweat, which feels more stress-related than exercise-induced perspiration. Check out if you experience this type of sweating without a clear cause, such as heat or hot flashes.

6. Fatigue:
Extreme tiredness, even after minimal physical activity, is a common symptom among women experiencing a heart attack. Patients often report feeling an unusual tiredness in their chest, making simple activities like walking to the bathroom difficult.

It is important to recognise that not everyone will experience all these symptoms. However, if you have chest discomfort, especially if accompanied by one or more of the other signs, it is critical to visit emergency department immediately. Early recognition and treatment are key to improving survival rates and outcomes for heart attack patients. By being aware of these symptoms, women can take proactive steps to protect their heart health and seek prompt medical attention when necessary.

A closer look: Understanding antidepressant discontinuation symptoms

Clinicians prescribing antidepressants often face the challenge of managing symptoms that patients experience when stopping these medications. While it is known that discontinuation symptoms occur, the frequency and severity have remained unclear. A recent meta-analysis published in Lancet Psychiatry aims to shed light on this phenomenon.

The analysis pooled data from 44 randomised trials and 35 observational studies, revealing that the incidence of at least one discontinuation symptom was significantly higher in patients taking antidepressants compared to those on placebo (31% vs. 17%). Among randomised trials that included both antidepressant and placebo groups, this difference was smaller (8 percentage points). Severe discontinuation symptoms were found in 3% of patients on antidepressants, compared to less than 1% on placebo.

A liberal estimate suggests that 15% of patients discontinuing antidepressants will experience symptoms, though severe cases are much rarer, around 2%. Gradual tapering of the medication and occasionally switching to a longer half-life antidepressant like fluoxetine can help mitigate these symptoms. Recognising whether symptoms are due to withdrawal or a recurrence of the original condition is crucial for appropriate management.

TIPS

The consequences of untreated mitral regurgitation

Mitral regurgitation (MR) is a condition where the mitral valve in the heart does not close properly, allowing blood to flow backward into the left atrium when the left ventricle contracts. This can lead to a range of complications if left untreated. Understanding the potential consequences is crucial for those diagnosed with MR to take appropriate action and seek timely medical intervention.

Progressive heart failure:
One of the most significant risks of untreated MR is the development of heart failure. When the mitral valve leaks, the heart has to work harder to pump blood effectively. Over time, this increased workload can weaken the heart muscle, leading to heart failure. Symptoms of heart failure include shortness of breath, fatigue, swelling in the legs and feet, and persistent coughing or wheezing.

Atrial fibrillation:
Untreated MR can also lead to atrial fibrillation (AFib), a type of irregular heartbeat. The backward flow of blood into the left atrium causes the atrium to expand and stretch, which can disrupt the heart's normal electrical signals. AFib increases the risk of blood clots forming in the heart, which can travel to the brain and cause a stroke. Symptoms of AFib may include palpitations, dizziness, and chest pain.

Pulmonary hypertension:
Pulmonary hypertension is another serious complication of untreated MR. The increased pressure in the left atrium can cause elevated pressure in the pulmonary veins and, subsequently, the pulmonary arteries. This condition leads to high blood pressure in the lungs, which can strain the right side of the heart and eventually lead to right-sided heart failure. Symptoms of pulmonary hypertension include shortness of breath, fatigue, chest pain, and fainting.

Endocarditis:
People with untreated MR are at a higher risk of developing endocarditis, an infection of the inner lining of the heart chambers and valves. The abnormal flow of blood through the damaged mitral valve can create a suitable environment for bacteria to adhere to the valve. Symptoms of endocarditis include fever, chills, night sweats, fatigue, and unexplained weight loss. If left untreated, endocarditis can damage the heart valves further and lead to severe complications.

Reduced quality of life:
The symptoms associated with untreated MR, such as fatigue, shortness of breath, and swelling, can significantly impact a person's quality of life. Daily activities may become challenging, and the individual may find it difficult to maintain an active lifestyle. This can lead to a decline in physical and mental well-being.

Mitral regurgitation is a serious condition that requires timely diagnosis and treatment to prevent potentially life-threatening complications. If you suspect you have MR or have been diagnosed with it, it is crucial to follow your doctor's recommendations and seek appropriate treatment. Early intervention can help manage symptoms, prevent complications, and improve overall quality of life. Ignoring the condition can lead to severe and potentially irreversible damage to your heart and overall health.

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SPORT
DHAKA SUNDAY AUGUST 4, 2024, SRABAN 20, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
Sri Lanka vs India
2ndODI
Live from 3:00 pm
GT20
Brampton vs Surrey
Live from 9:00 pm
Montreal vs Vancouver
Live from 2:00 am
(Monday)

SONY SPORTS 2
The Hundred
Northern Superchargers vs Manchester Originals
Live from 11:35 pm

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

ARCHERY
Men's Individual
6:46 PM
ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS
Men's Rings
7:00 PM
Women's Uneven Bars
7:40 PM
ATHLETICS
Women's High Jump
11:55 PM
Men's 100m
Monday, 1:50 AM
BADMINTON
Men's Doubles
8:10 PM
FENCING
Men's Team Foil
11:10 PM
GOLF
Men's Individual
1:00 PM
SHOOTING
Women's Skeet
7:30 PM
TABLE TENNIS
Men's Singles
6:30 PM

Romania athletes celebrate on the podium during the medal ceremony after the women's eight final rowing competition of the Paris Olympics at the Vaires-sur-Marne Nautical Centre yesterday, ensuring the country's first gold in the event since the 2004 Athens Games. The champions trailed silver-winner Canada at the halfway stage but then upped the pace and pulled away, winning by nearly 4.5 seconds. PHOTO: **AFP**

Paris erupts over Marchand, Riner's record riches

REUTERS, *Paris*

France have already collected more titles midway through the Paris Olympics than during the whole of the Tokyo and Rio Games after a crazy Friday night that had the home fans listening to three times.

Teddy Riner's record fourth Olympic title in judo, swimming poster boy Leon Marchand's fourth and Joris Daudet's victory in a sensational BMX 1-2-3 took Les Bleus's gold tally to 11 - one more than in Tokyo three years ago and Rio in 2016.

Marchand brought the host nation to a standstill once again and the 22-year-old did it in style, roared to the rafters by a rapturous crowd as he joined American greats Michael Phelps and Mark Spitz as the only male swimmers to have won four individual titles at a single Games.

"It's just crazy to be compared to those guys [Phelps and Spitz]. I don't think I realise from now. Maybe I will in a few days," said Marchand whose coach, Bob Bowman, also worked with Phelps.

Emphasising his status as the hottest property in the pool, Marchand shattered the 200 metres Individual Medley Olympic record of one minute 54.23 seconds set by Phelps at the 2008 Beijing Games and replaced it with a new best of 1:54.06.

It is the fourth such record set by the poster boy of the Paris Games, who has taken the burden of expectation and shaped it into another source of strength, in as many finals in the La Defense Arena.

Around the city, and at other venues, crowds celebrated and burst into the national anthem.

At the Stade de France, scene of France's momentous 1998 World Cup football triumph and venue for the track and field events, the decathlon 400m had to be delayed due to the noise from the stands.

"I don't think anything went wrong this week. It's been perfect," Marchand told reporters as the crowd chanted his name long into the night.

"Four gold medals is not what I thought I could possibly do," he added later. "I was trying to win one at first. I had four chances of doing it."

A few hours earlier, Frenchman Riner sent the partisan crowd into near madness when he left it late to beat world number one Kim Minjong of South Korea and claim the title in the +100kg category.

The 35-year-old, judo's most decorated athlete at the Olympics with six medals, now shares the French Summer Olympics record of four titles after claiming individual golds at the London and Rio Games and a team title in Tokyo.

The roar the crowd let out was deafening, and when Riner was awarded his medal by former biathlete Martin Fourcade, who holds the French record of five golds across Winter and Summer Olympics, it triggered another ear-splitting moment when the first official rendition of France's national anthem "La Marseillaise" resonated at the venue.

Meanwhile, French fans broke into an impromptu rendition of the Marseillaise in the middle of a Brazil v Netherlands beach volleyball game at the nearby venue by the Eiffel Tower as the news filtered through.

"I often said it but now it is just pure happiness, pure happiness," said Riner, who has surpassed Japanese judoka Ryoko Tani's five Olympic medals tally collected over five consecutive Games from 1992 to 2008.

Imranur, Sonia cap off Bangladesh's sorry campaign

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's 11th campaign in the Summer Olympic Games finished yesterday as disappointingly, if not more, as the country's previous 10 campaigns.

Sprinter Imranur Rahman pulled the curtains down on a sorry campaign, which had generated some expectation due to his presence and that of archer Sagor Islam, who had qualified directly for Paris 2024.

Imranur, the country's three-time fastest man and national record holder, failed miserably in his attempt to qualify for the main heats of 10m sprint event.

The 31-year-old Bangladeshi sprinter clocked 10.73 seconds to finish his race -- 0.62 seconds slower than his personal best at the Stade de France.

Imranur eventually finished 25th among 45 competitors, with top 16 among them qualifying for the main heats.

Around the same time at the Paris La Defense Arena, swimmer Sonia Khatun finished 64th among 79 competitors in the heats of the 50m freestyle event. The 25-year-old was 0.42 seconds off her personal best mark.

The two frustrating results capped off another humiliating campaign for Bangladesh, the most populous nation to have never produced an Olympic medallist.

Enthekhabul Hamid, Bangladesh delegation's chef de mission, said he wasn't surprised by the performance of the athletes.

"Those who came with wildcards were expected to perform like these" Hamid, also the general secretary of Bangladesh Shooting Sports Federation, told The Daily Star yesterday over phone from Paris.

The Games started with frustration for Bangladesh as archer Sagor, the only athlete to have qualified for these games, finished 45th among 64 in the ranking round before losing in straight sets against three-time Olympic medallist Mauro Nespoli of Italy.

Hamid felt that stage fright and lack of experience at big events was the undoing of Sagor.

"Everyone had high hopes of Sagor. But he's only 18 and he got nervous in the main event," Hamid said. "This is symptomatic of all athletes. They don't often participate in such premier events, where only top athletes participate. So it's natural to fail if you're not used to competing at this level."

Shooter Robiul Islam was the next to be eliminated from the Games, finishing 43rd among 49 competitors in 10m air rifle event.

Only swimmer Samiul Islam Rafi managed to improve on his previous best timing. Even though he finished 69th among 79 competitors in 100m freestyle, Rafi's timing was 0.02 second better than his previous best.

Hamid felt that long-term training was what helped Rafi and he believes training and quality coaching is the only way to achieve success in such global events.

"The reason Rafi did relatively well is the one-year training he was given in Thailand," Hamid opined. "There is no alternative to long-term training under good coaching staff. Government should increase sports budget so that we can send our athletes to more international tournaments to give them exposure."

No reason we can't do well in Pakistan: Adams

Former New Zealand pacer **Andre Adams** has been working as Bangladesh's pace bowling coach since February this year and has overseen the pacers in home series against Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe and the ICC T20 World Cup in June. Bangladesh's next assignment is a tour to Pakistan for a two-Test series later this month. On Saturday, Adams spoke with **The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan** about the Tigers' chances in the series and shared his observations about the pacers. Here are the excerpts:

The Daily Star (DS): What will be the biggest challenge for our pacers in Pakistan?
Andre Adams (AA): I think patience. If you look at their [Pakistan] Test series against Australia and New Zealand, those wickets were really flat. There is a trend at the moment in world cricket that Tests don't go beyond three or four days. I think in Pakistan, you got to have the will to take the game to five days. So, the pacers need to bowl with a lot of patience. Basically, I think the biggest challenge playing in Pakistan is accepting that it's not going to be like how you want it to be but you have to do what needs to be done.

DS: What skills the pacers need to be successful in Pakistan?
AA: One of the biggest things while playing in Pakistan is the ability to use the movement in the air with the new ball as well as the older ball, when you get some reverse swing. And certain variations are obviously going to be very crucial. Whether it's cross seam or wobble seam or even just wide of the crease or close to the stumps, you need to try some variations and see what the ball does.

DS: Tanzim Sakib had a fantastic T20 World Cup, how do you rate him as a red-ball prospect?
AA: I think he is exciting. For him, it's just going to be about learning what he needs to do and doesn't need to do. It's going to take a little bit of time. He's certainly an exciting prospect like [Nahid] Rana and Hasan [Mahmud]. I'm happy that I'm dealing with a group of bowlers who really want to do well.

DS: BCB has recently given Taskin Ahmed the green signal for red-ball cricket. Do you think he is ready to return to Tests?
AA: I don't think so, it's too early. He needs to get the opportunity to bowl before becoming a candidate. I think it's very exciting for Bangladesh that Taskin wants to play red-ball cricket. We should be grateful for that as he can easily go and chase cash around the world. He just needs time. You need to be fit and strong and there's no getting away from that. Taskin is certainly working hard on that aspect. The unfortunate thing is fast bowlers do get injured. But if he wants to play and gets fit, there is no reason why he can't play.

DS: Bangladesh's record in Pakistan is really poor. Do you think they have a good chance of doing well this time?
AA: Yes, I think we do. It's going to be a huge challenge. They are ranked above us in Test cricket. We just need to be prepared to play the long game. But there's actually no reason why this group of batters can't score runs. No reason as well for the bowlers to not take all wickets. Just because we haven't done it yet, doesn't mean we can't.

Tensions spilt over after France's 1-0 quarterfinal win over Argentina in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in Bordeaux yesterday. Players and staff members clashed on the pitch and confrontations continued down the tunnel, fuelling an already-heated rivalry. It was the first meeting of the nations since the FIFA World Cup final in 2022. France will now take on Egypt in the semifinal, while Spain await Morocco for a spot in the gold-decider. PHOTO: **AFP**

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AL activists to take positions on streets from today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League has decided to take positions on the streets from today and continue to do so throughout August while holding programmes to mark the National Mourning Day (August 15).

Today, they will gather at every ward of the capital, all districts, metropolitan areas, and thana headquarters.

They party yesterday communicated the decision with its district-level leaders.

It also announced a mourning procession from the Engineers Institute to Bangabandhu Bhaban in Dhanmondi-32 on Monday. According to sources, the ruling party will try to ensure maximum participation "to show its strength".

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader made the announcement of the programmes at a press conference at the party president's Dhanmondi office yesterday.

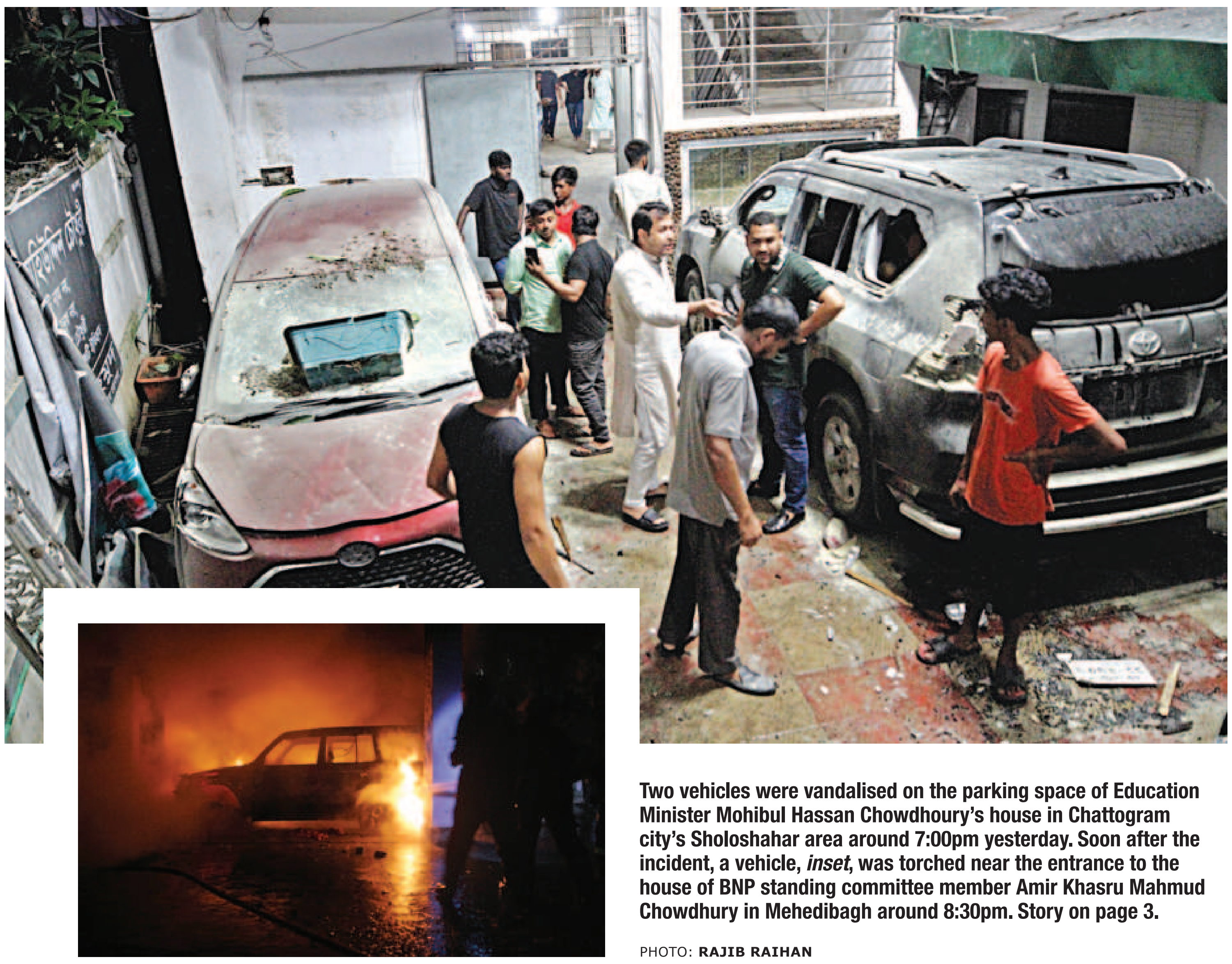
"We had scheduled programmes for yesterday [Friday] and today [yesterday]. We avoided those as we don't want any conflict," he said.

"The demands of the quota reform protesters have been met. The movement is now in the hands of a third party that wants to make Bangladesh a failed state. We can't allow their evil efforts to succeed."

He called upon the students to behave responsibly and alleged that vested quarters are spreading propaganda on social media.

Quader said the incumbent AL government was democratically elected under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, but now the BNP-Jamaat alliance is attempting to overthrow it.

"BNP-Jamaat is trying to turn the quota movement into an anti-government movement. The Sheikh Hasina government is addressing the situation with patience and restraint."



Two vehicles were vandalised on the parking space of Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhoury's house in Chattogram city's Sholoshahar area around 7:00pm yesterday. Soon after the incident, a vehicle, *inset*, was torched near the entrance to the house of BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury in Mehedibagh around 8:30pm. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

Ensure the security of people's lives, properties

Army chief tells officers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman yesterday directed the army personnel to ensure security of people's lives, properties, and important state establishments in any circumstances.

"Bangladesh Army is the symbol of trust of the people. It always stood by the people and will do so for the sake of people and in any need of the state," he said at a programme at the Army Headquarters, said an ISPR press release.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

QUOTA PROTESTS

104 more students get bail in cases over violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 104 students, including 68 HSC examinees, who were arrested over the recent violence centring the quota reform protests across the country, secured bail yesterday.

With this, a total of 182 students got bail, in the last two days.

Yesterday, 55 students got bail in Dhaka, 15 in Rajshahi, 12 in Rangpur, eight in Chattogram, six in Sylhet, and four each in Mymensingh and Khulna divisions, according to law ministry sources.

During a meeting with Peshajibi Somonnoy Parishad (Professionals' Coordination Council) at Gono Bhaban, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the authorities concerned to release the general students who have been detained over the recent violence.

Earlier on Friday, different courts in Dhaka, Chattogram and Khulna divisions granted bail to 78 HSC examinees following an initiative taken by the law ministry.

Earlier on Friday, different courts in Dhaka, Chattogram and Khulna divisions granted bail to 78 HSC examinees following an initiative taken by the law ministry.

On Thursday, separate press releases from the home and education ministries stated that if any detainees involved in recent violent incidents are current HSC examinees, they would be provided legal assistance for securing bail.

The education ministry requested that any information regarding the detention of other HSC examinees be sent to helphsc24@gmail.com.

AFTERMATH OF HAMAS LEADER'S KILLING

Fears of Middle East war grow

US to deploy more warships, fighter jets to ME; Iran says expects Hezbollah to hit deeper inside Israel

AGENCIES

Fears of a regional Middle East war grew yesterday after the assassination of Hamas's political leader, blamed on Israel, triggered vows of vengeance from Iran-backed Middle East groups.

The United States said it would move additional warships and fighter jets to the region as the Iran-aligned "Axis of Resistance" readied its response to the killing of Ismail Haniyeh.

The groups from Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria have already been drawn into the nearly 10-month war in Gaza between Israel and the Palestinian movement Hamas.

Iran yesterday said it expects one of those groups, Lebanon's Hezbollah, to hit deeper inside Israel and to no longer be confined to military targets.

- Britain says situation worsening in the region rapidly
- Iran says 'short-range projectile' killed Hamas chief
- Five killed in Israeli West Bank air strike

With such talk growing, the Pentagon said it was bolstering its military presence in the Middle East to protect US personnel and defend Israel.

An aircraft carrier strike group led by the USS Abraham Lincoln will replace one helmed by the USS Theodore Roosevelt in the region, the Pentagon said.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin also ordered additional ballistic missile defence-capable cruisers and destroyers to the Middle East and areas under United States European Command, as well as a new fighter squadron to the Middle East.

On Friday, thousands of people in Qatar attended funeral prayers for Haniyeh, who was buried north of the capital Doha two days after his death.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards yesterday said he was killed by a "short-range projectile" fired "from outside the accommodation area" where he was staying.

Haniyeh had been in Iran to attend the swearing-in of President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday.

ABU SAYED MURDER

ASI, constable suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two police personnel, including an assistant sub-inspector and a constable, were suspended over the killing of Rangpur Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed during a quota protest on July 16.

They are ASI Amir Hosain and constable Sujan, Rangpur Metropolitan Police Commissioner Md Moniruzzaman told The Daily Star yesterday.

They were suspended due to their unprofessional behaviour, negligence in discharging duty, and violation of legal order given by the high-ups, he said.

Earlier, police formed a four-member committee led by Additional Commissioner Saifuzzaman Faruki to investigate the incident.

The committee submitted a preliminary report and based on the findings, they were suspended on Thursday, the police commissioner said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Committee on nat'l security to sit today amid protests

PM to chair meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee on Security Affairs will hold a meeting today amid nationwide protests demanding the government's resignation.

The meeting is scheduled for 11:00am at the Gono Bhaban with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

This will be the first meeting of the committee, which is the highest policy-making authority on national security, since November 15, 2023, about one-and-a-half months before the January 7 national election.

All members of the 27-member committee, including the ministers for home affairs, information, law, finance, foreign affairs, planning, industries and commerce; the cabinet secretary; principal secretary at the Prime Minister's Office; and the chiefs of the army, navy, and air force, among others, have been asked to attend the meeting.

Between July 16 and July 22, at least 203 people, including children, died from bullet wounds in Bangladesh. Two more

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

ABUSES IN BANGLADESH

See that govt officials complicit in those punished

22 US congressmen write to State Dept; UN rights chief for steps to prevent violence

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-two US congressmen have urged the State Department to take actions to hold complicit Bangladesh government officials accountable for the abuses against the people.

"In order to prevent the further deterioration of democracy, the US must partner with the international community to support the right of the people to a representative democratic government that upholds human rights and respects individual freedoms," they said in a bipartisan letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Friday.

"The US must condemn all acts of violence, ensure critical civil liberties, such as the freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, are protected, and take action to hold complicit government officials accountable for the above abuses against the Bangladeshi people," the letter said.

More than 200 people were killed and thousands injured during the recent violent clashes surrounding students' protests demanding reforms to the quota system in government jobs. More than 11,000 have also been arrested in the last couple of days.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

ETHIOPIA
ARECAWI
USA
FISHER
UGANDA
CHEPTEGEI
ETHIOPIA

Uganda's Joshua Cheptegei wears a broad grin as he crosses the finish line to win the men's 10,000 metres gold medal at the Paris Olympics on Friday, the first track medal of the athletics programme. Cheptegei produced a record-breaking performance, timing 26 minutes 43.14 seconds to break Kenenisa Bekele's 16-year-old Olympic record.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Cheptegei relishes 'special day'

REUTERS, *Paris*

World record holder Joshua Cheptegei claimed the Olympic 10,000 metres title he so desperately wanted on Friday when he found a late surge to win a fantastic race and take the Games' first track gold.

The 27-year-old Ugandan, who took silver in Tokyo and gold over 5,000m, produced a devastating last 600 metres to come home in 26:43.14 minutes.

"I said, 'one day I want to be Olympic champion'. It is the most special day. I can't describe the feeling," Cheptegei told reporters as he was overwhelmed at the prospect of his dream coming true.

"I've wanted this for a long time. When I took silver in Tokyo I was so disappointed. I just wanted to win the 10,000m.

Cheptegei's run at the revolutionary purple track -- introduced at the Games for the first time

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

FINESSE IN
KITCHEN
SINK
ROSA
BEYOND BEAUTY

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW
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DHAKA MONDAY AUGUST 5, 2024

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At least 93 dead as violence grips the country

STAR REPORT

At least 93 people were killed and more than a thousand others injured, many with bullets, as a new wave of violence convulsed Bangladesh yesterday.

Ruling party activists and police clashed with anti-government protesters in at least 20 districts on the first day of the student-led non-cooperation movement designed to keep pressure on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to step down.

With yesterday's count, the total death toll in anti-government protests crossed 300 in just three weeks, making it the bloodiest period in the history of Bangladesh's civil movement.

The day began with an eerie calm, but it turned violent after supporters of the ruling Awami League descended on the streets to subdue anti-government protests.

As violence spread, an angry mob attacked a police station in the northern district of Sirajganj, beating 13 police personnel to death. Separately, at least five people died in clashes in Raiganj upazila of Sirajganj, taking the total death toll to 18 in the district, the highest tally among all.

In the capital, at least 12 people were killed. Most of them were brought dead to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

With the country already on the boil, attackers torched or vandalised the homes of some ruling party lawmakers, Awami League offices, police stations, law-enforcement vehicles, prison vans and hospital buses throughout the day, forcing the authorities to tighten a nationwide curfew and block 4G mobile internet to quell the violence.

With yesterday's count, the total death toll in anti-government protests crossed 300 in just three weeks, making it the bloodiest period in the history of Bangladesh's civil movement.

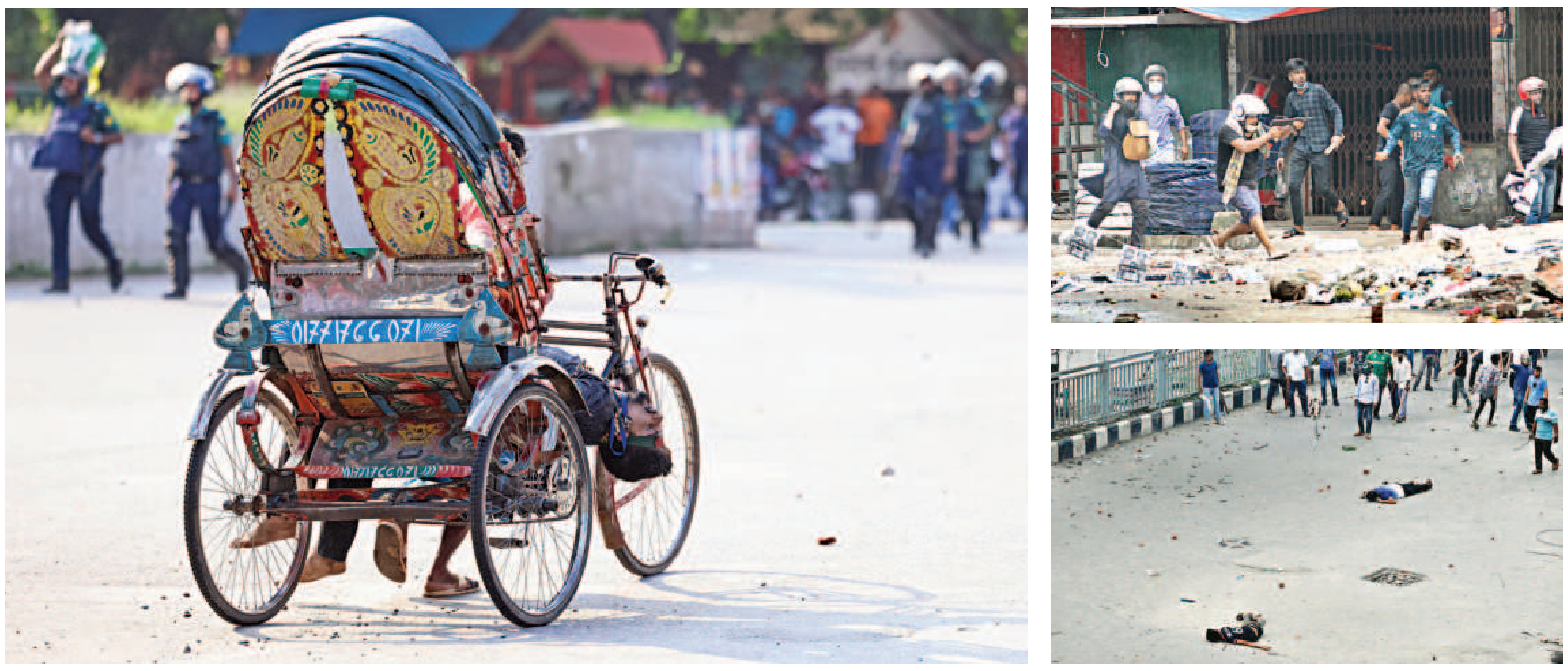
Details of death and destruction kept coming from across the country until late last night. The death toll is likely to rise as many were hospitalised with grievous injuries, according to reports filed by The Daily Star's district correspondents. At least 70 establishments owned by individuals or the government were set on fire, according to fire service data.

Bangladesh announced the shutdown of public and private offices, including banks, for three days, while students scheduled a long march for today, setting themselves on a potential collision course with pro-government groups.

It all came as protesters whittled their demands down to just one: the resignation of Hasina and her cabinet members. Simultaneously, they started a non-cooperation movement, urging citizens not to pay taxes and migrant workers not to send remittances from abroad through banking channels.

The latest spell of violence was born out of job quota reform protests led by students. The protests entered a

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A wounded protester is being carried on a rickshaw in the capital's Farmgate area. *Top right,* an alleged ruling party activist chases protesters brandishing a firearm in Enayet Bazar area of Chattogram during a clash between the protesters, and police aided by ruling party men. *Bottom right,* two bullet-hit persons lie motionless on the street in Azampur of Uttara in Dhaka.

PHOTO: **REUTERS, STAR, COLLECTED**

'ONE-POINT DEMAND'

Protesters call for 'March to Dhaka' today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The anti-discrimination student movement has moved up the "March to Dhaka" programme from Tuesday to today to press for their one-point demand – the resignation of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

They called upon the students and people from across the country to join the march towards the capital.

Earlier around 2:00pm yesterday, the March to Dhaka was announced for tomorrow. However, as incidents of violence and deaths unfolded throughout the day, the protesters decided to move it forward.

They made the fresh announcement around 5:00pm through social media, and also rejected the nationwide curfew announced from 6:00pm last evening.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

13 cops killed in attack on police station in Sirajganj

Another cop murdered in Eliotganj; 4 offices of SPs, 20 police stations attacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 13 policemen, including an officer-in-charge, were beaten to death at the Enayetpur Police Station in Sirajganj yesterday.

Another policeman died following and attack on Eliotganj Highway Police Station in Cumilla.

Police headquarters in a release said officer-in-charge Abdur Razzak of Enayetpur Police Station was among those killed in the brutal attack by goons.

Mohammad Hannan Miah, additional superintendent (crime) of Sirajganj, said a mob tried to attack the police station and police opened fire and used teargas to disperse them.

"At one stage, the police officers thought they were safe. But hundreds of people made a sudden attack on the station," said Hannan.

They have so far recovered the bodies of 13 policemen, including the officer-in-charge, four sub-inspectors, one assistant sub-inspector, and seven constables, he said, adding that the attackers also torched the police station.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Houses of 2 ministers, 9 MPs come under attack

AL offices, several business establishments vandalised

STAR REPORT

Residences and businesses of lawmakers and Awami League leaders, AL party offices, as well as government offices came under attack by agitators in at least 19 districts yesterday.

In Khulna, the homes of parliamentarians Sheikh Helal and Sheikh Salauddin Jewel, also family members of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, were vandalised and set on fire.

Helal is an MP from Bagerhat-2 and Jewel is an MP from Khulna-2.

The house, in the city's Sher-e-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

DISTRICT	Sirajganj	Dhaka	Lakshmipur	Feni	Narsingdi	Bogura	Magura	Rangpur	Sylhet	Kishoreganj
DEATH	18	14	8	8	6	5	4	4	4	3
DISTRICT	Munshiganj	Pabna	Cumilla	Sherpur	Joypurhat	Bhola	Habiganj	Barishal	Cox's Bazar	Gazipur
DEATH	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	1

TOTAL 93

SOURCE:
POLICE & HOSPITALS

Clashes spill over into BSMMU

24 vehicles torched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 24 vehicles parked inside Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University in the capital's Shahbagh were set on fire and several others vandalised during chase and counter-chase between ruling party activists and protesters yesterday.

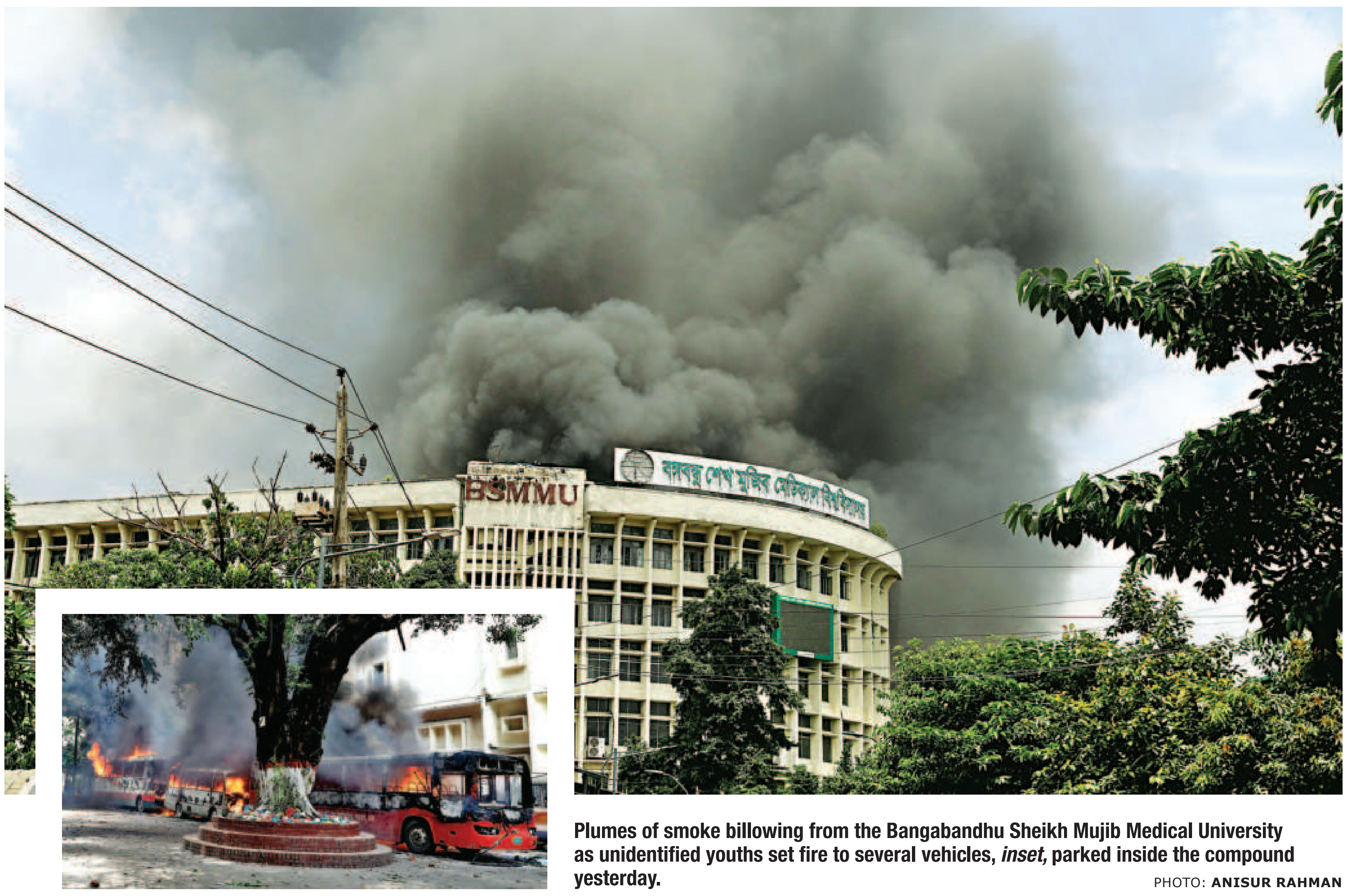
According to witnesses, the protesters gathered at Shahbagh intersection while a group of leaders and activists of the Awami League and its front bodies took position in front of Birdem Hospital.

Around 10:45am, the ruling party activists tried to chase the protesters away from the area.

When the agitators retaliated, the AL men entered the BSMMU through gate-1 for shelter.

They hurled brick chunks from inside and from the roof, and the protesters too threw brick

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Plumes of smoke billowing from the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University as unidentified youths set fire to several vehicles, *inset,* parked inside the compound yesterday.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Resist the saboteurs with an iron hand

PM urges people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked people to deal with saboteurs with an iron hand.

"Those who are now causing the violence are students. They are criminals," Hasina was quoted as saying by Assistant Press Secretary ABM Sarwer-E-Alam Sarker.

The government in a press release urged students and parents to return home and stay safe.

"Militant attacks are taking place in various places. Strict action will be taken against the attackers," it reads.

Besides, the ruling Awami League said the party had reached the end of its patience and would resist those engaged in terrorism and anarchy.

Briefing reporters at the AL president's Dhanmondi office, presidium member Jahangir Kabir Nanak urged people to resist militant groups and BNP-Jamaat.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

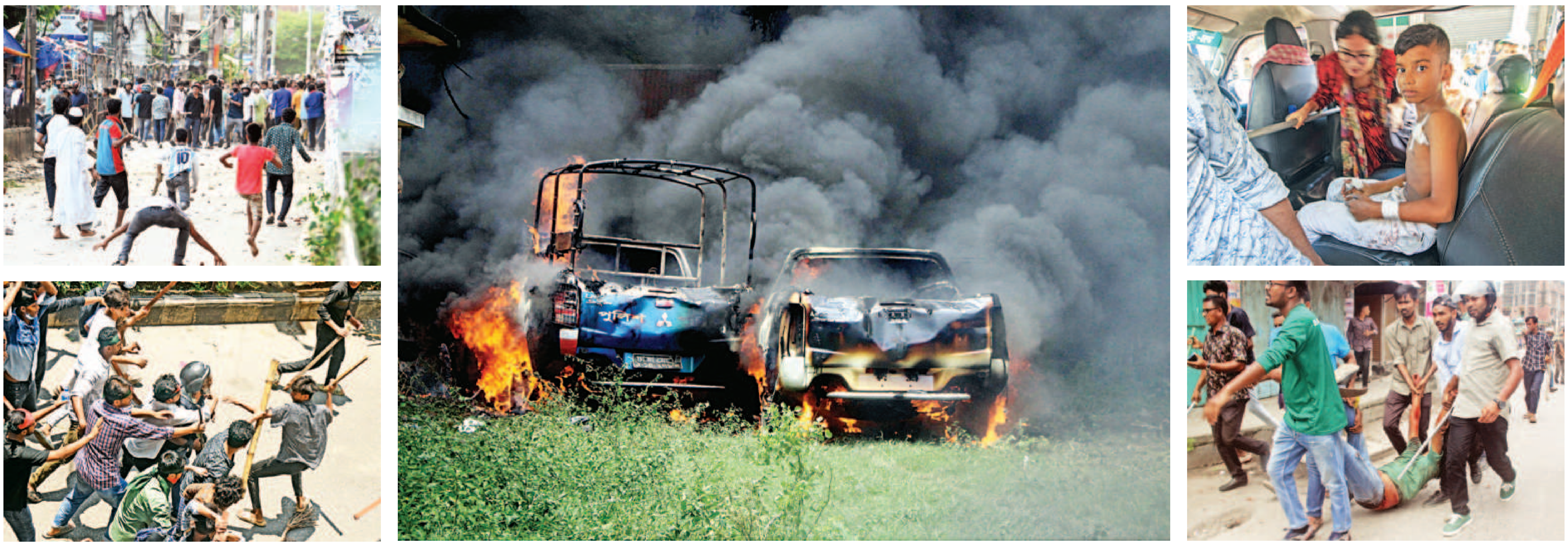


PHOTO: COLLECTED, RASHED SHUMON, UDAY CHANDRA BURMAN, PALASH KHAN

Photos capture moments from fierce clashes that erupted across the country on the first day of the nationwide non-cooperation movement announced by the Anti-Discrimination Students' Movement yesterday. *Clockwise from bottom left,* agitators swoop on The Daily Star's photojournalist Amran Hossain at the BSMMU. Protesters and ruling party supporters clash in the capital's Paltan. Two police vehicles burn inside Dinajpur Sadar Police Station. A child suffered shotgun pellet injuries to his arm and torso in front of Shimanto Square in the capital's Dhanmondi. The body of Rangpur district unit Swechchhasebak League member Khairul Islam Sabuj being taken to a hospital after he was killed in violence in the city's Supermarket area.

At least 93 dead as violence grips the country

FROM PAGE 1

dangerous phase after at least 208 people were killed in indiscriminate firing by law enforcers, members of Border Guard Bangladesh and ruling party activists, in a spasm of violence from July 16 to August 3.

Tension in Bangladesh has been simmering since Saturday night, following AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader's announcement that the ruling party activists would be on the streets to maintain their positions against protesters.

In Dhaka, some areas felt like battlefields yesterday as police, ruling party activists and protesters engaged in three-way violence at Farmgate, Dhanmondi, Mirpur 10, Uttara, Shahbagh and Gulistan.

Hundreds of ruling party supporters wielding sticks walked down Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue towards the Karwan Bazar intersection around 12:50pm, raising fears of violence.

The road stretching from Farmgate to Bangla Motor resembled a "battlefield" as police and ruling party men fired indiscriminately on a huge crowd of protesters, who were advancing towards Farmgate with sticks in hand. They were also carrying drums and plastic traffic barriers to the protest site. At times, they threw brickbats at the police and Awami League supporters along the way.

A clash broke out between protesters and ruling party men near the Awami League office in the capital's Dhanmondi around 12:30pm when protesters from Dhanmondi-2 moved to Dhanmondi-3. Sounds of gunshots and stun grenades rang out in the area.

Most shopping malls, shops, bank branches and other establishments were closed. Public transport disappeared from the streets, forcing people to walk home or to workplaces, while long-haul buses and trains suspended their services.

In Old Dhaka, a clash between police and protesters halted proceedings at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court premises.

Over a hundred protesters, along with pro-BNP lawyers, broke a collapsible gate to the court premises, which the police had cordoned off since morning. The protesters threw brickbats at the doors and windows in the court area, witnesses said. Two prison vans and two police cars were vandalised by unidentified people as violence broke out.

The Shahbagh intersection was on edge after rival groups gathered since morning, leading to a violent clash. Both groups barged into the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University premises and engaged in another round of clashes. At least 24 vehicles were set on fire with black smoke billowing skywards.

Meanwhile, the Mirpur-10 intersection turned into a hotspot as protesters arrived in droves. AL men, some of them with firearms, had already occupied the area, backed by police. Numerous gunshots rang out, sending panic through the area.

VIOLENCE BEYOND DHAKA

In Laxmipur, eight people were killed and 100 others were wounded in a clash between protesters and members of Jobo League and Chhatra League, police said. Three of the victims suffered gunshots, while five were beaten dead.

In Narsingdi, at least six AL leaders were beaten to death and several others injured in a clash between AL supporters and protesters. The incident took place in front of a mosque next to the Madhabdi Municipal Building, according to KM Shahidul Islam Shohag, additional superintendent of police.

In Feni, at least eight people were killed in clashes as Awami League men attacked protesters. Several people were injured in the incident, reports our correspondent. Their identities could not be immediately confirmed.

In the northern city of Rangpur, four people died in clashes. Abdul Jalil, an official of the Rangpur Medical College and Hospital, confirmed two of the deaths.

One of the dead was identified as Haradhan Roy, president of the Parshuram Thana Awami League and councillor of Ward 4 in Rangpur city. The second man was his driver whose name could not be known.

In Sylhet, four people were shot dead and at least 25, including policemen and members of Border Guard Bangladesh, were injured in a clash. One of the deceased was identified as Taj Uddin, 43, a businessman of Dharabohor village in Sylhet's Golapganj upazila.

Meanwhile, protesters and police clashed around 12:00pm, half an hour after hundreds of demonstrators gathered at the Court Point area in Sylhet city. Police fired shotguns, tear shells and stun grenades to disperse the protesters.

In Bogura, separate clashes left at least five people dead and many others injured, with 32 hospitalised.

One of them, Manirul Islam, 24, was shot dead as police opened fire on protesters after they attacked Dupchanchia Police Station. He was brought dead to a local hospital, according to a doctor. Besides, two others were brought dead to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College in Bogura.

"It seems they died of gunshot wounds. But we could not confirm it," Abdul Wadud, deputy director of the hospital, told The Daily Star. At least 32 people are currently undergoing treatment at the hospital.

In Pabna, at least three people were killed and 50 others injured during a clash between protestors and ruling party men. One person was brought dead, while two others died of their injuries at the Pabna Sadar Hospital, said its assistant director, Rafiqul Hasan.

In Munshiganj, at least three persons were killed and 20 others injured near the Super Market area.

Abu Hena Mohammad Jamal, superintendent of Munshiganj General Hospital, said two persons were brought dead and many were hospitalised with injuries. The doctors, however, could not give details on the nature of the injuries.

Police did not open fire, Munshiganj Additional Superintendent of Police Khairul Hasan said, adding that he was unaware of any casualty.

In Magura, at least four people were killed and 20 others were injured in clashes that involved protesters on one side and police and ruling party men on the other.

In Kishoreganj, at least three people, including a woman, were killed and over 100 injured in a clash between protesters and AL activists.

Witnesses reported that the AL office was vandalised and set on fire during the conflict. Subsequently, the protesters blocked the road for three hours.

In Cumilla's Debidwar upazila, three persons were killed and several others were injured in a clash. One of them was Md Rubel, 33, who was rushed to a local hospital with a head injury, where a doctor declared him dead.

The clash started as AL supporters attacked protesters with sharp weapons in the New Market area in Debidwar upazila.

In Chattogram, at least 172 people have been admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital, after they were wounded with bullets in a clash between protesters, police and AL activists.

In Khulna, unidentified people torched the Khulna Zilla parishad office.

In Faridpur, the district Awami League office was vandalised, while a BCL office was torched allegedly by protesters. The protesters also set fire to 10 motorcycles in front of the district AL office in the town. Besides, police fired rubber bullets, sound grenades and teargas shells when the Kotwali Police Station was attacked.

Houses of 2 ministers, 9 MPs come under attack

FROM PAGE 1

Bangla road known as "Sheikh Bari", was ransacked once at noon, and then again at 3:30pm.

In addition, the district's AL office and the district magistrate's office were ransacked.

In Chandpur, Social Welfare Minister Dipu Moni's home in the town's Natun Bazar, was vandalised. She was not home at that time, sources said.

In Habiganj, the residence of Habiganj-3 MP Md Abu Zahir was besieged for four hours and then set on fire. The fire completely engulfed the first and second floors. The protesters had taken control of the house around noon. Later, the army had intervened and convinced the protesters to leave around 10:00pm.

In Dinajpur, the residence of Jatiya Sangsad Whip Iqbalur Rahim, also the Dinajpur-3 lawmaker, was attacked, looted, and torched in the town's Munshipara area around 11:45am.

In Barishal, the residence of State Minister for Water Resources Zaheed Farooque was vandalised at the city's Nobogram road area around noon.

In Sylhet, the offices of Sylhet-3 MP Habibur Rahman was vandalised and set on fire, around 3 pm in the afternoon. The office is in the district's South Surma upazila.

In Tangail, the residence of Tangail-2 MP Tanvir Hasan Choto Moni came under attack in the town's Adalatpara area around noon. Around an hour later, a petrol pump owned by Choto Moni was torched in the town's Turun area.

Besides, district unit AL General Secretary Zuaryer Islam's personal vehicle was vandalised around 11:00am in the town's Bot Totala area.

Later in the afternoon, the municipality building and the district unit AL office were torched. Tangail Sadar UNO office in Ashekpur was also vandalised.

In Nilphamari, the residence of Nilphamari-2 AL lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor in the Upazila Parishad Road area came under attack around 2:00pm. Around 15 motorbikes were torched there at that time.

Earlier in the day, the AL office in the town's Chaurangi intersection was vandalized around 12:30pm.

In retaliation, AL men attacked the office of the district unit BNP President Alamgir Sarder in the Babupara area.

In Narayanganj, the office of the deputy commissioner was attacked around noon and a state-run amusement park came under arson attack.

Besides, the attackers also set fire to the Rifles' Club in the city's Chasara area.

In Jamalpur, the Bakshiganj upazila unit AL office was vandalized and torched. Bagarchar union parishad chairman's vehicle was also set on fire.

Witnesses said the protesters brought out a procession from Noor Mohammad High School and marched on different streets of the upazila.

Later, the protesters attacked the AL office at around 1:00am. AL leaders left the office at that time. The vehicle that was kept near the AL office premises was torched.

In Sirajganj, protesters attacked the Raiganj upazila AL office and beat up AL men at the office. A few of them rushed to the nearby Press Club for shelter where they were again attacked, said witnesses.

In Pabna, a vehicle of Abu Sayeed, organising secretary of Pabna Sadar upazila unit, was torched around 12:30pm at the town's Joykali Bari area.

Besides, a local Jubo League office at Bulbul College area was also vandalized around that time, said witnesses.

Besides, around 30 motorbikes that were kept in front of his home were torched.

Around half an hour later, agitators vandalised six more motorcycles of AL men and an ambulance in the Chaumatha area.

Later, AL men set fire to the BNP office in the city's Sadar road area.

In Chandpur, protesters attack the Haziganj municipality office, torching 12 motorbikes, three vehicles, and vandalized the office.

In Kushtia, protesters vandalized AL office and a traffic police box at Saddam Bazar intersection area at around 12:00pm.

In Bogura, the offices of Dupchachia UNO and assistant commissioner (AC-land) came under attack around noon.

In Gaibandha, the town's municipality office was vandalised around 2:00pm and several motorbikes were torched there.

In Rajshahi, Mohonpur upazila food warehouse and upazila AL office were attacked in the morning.

In Gazipur, AL office was vandalised at Kapasia upazila in the morning.

In Bogura, the residence of Bogura-6 MP Ragibul Ahsan Ripu, also general secretary of the district unit AL, at the town's Shibbari area was vandalised around noon.

In Thakurgaon, the district AL unit's office was vandalised and torched around 1:30pm in the town. Many shops were also vandalised at that time.

In Panchagarh, the house and two vehicles of lawmaker (reserved seat for women) Rejia Islam were set on fire yesterday afternoon. They later torched the houses of Panchagarh Municipality Mayor Zakia Khatun, former upazila chairman Amirul Islam, and councillor Shafiqul Islam.

In Faridpur, protesters attacked the district unit AL office in the town's Niltoli area around 11:00am and the district unit BCL office near Rajendra College area around 11:30am.

In Brahmanbaria, an office of Housing and Public Works Minister RAM Obaidul Muktadir Chowdhury in the district headquarter came under attack.

BUSINESSES ALSO ATTACKED

At least five garment, textile, and plastic factories came under arson attacks yesterday in Dhaka's Ashulia and Gazipur's Sreepur.

Rozina Islam, duty officer at the Central Control Room of the Fire Service and Civil Defence in Dhaka, said Sinha Textile, Beximco Synthetics, a warehouse of scrap fabric owned by Ha-Meem Group, Bengal Plastic at Zirani in Ashulia area were set on fire between 6:30pm and 7:30pm.

In Gazipur, a spinning mill was set on fire in Sreepur area.

In the capital's Dhanmondi, a showroom of the clothing brand "YELLOW" was set ablaze around 3:30pm.

Mentionable, Faridpur-3 MP AK Azad is the managing director of Ha-Meem Group; Salman F Rahman, adviser to PM, is the co-founder and vice chairman of BEXIMCO Group, which owns YELLOW; and Noakhali-2 MP Morshed Alam is the chairman of Bengal Group.

In Manikganj, a business establishment owned by Manikganj municipal unit AL General Secretary Zahidul Islam was vandalised around 11:00am.

Protesters also vandalised the AL office and DC office there. In retaliation, AL men vandalized the district BNP office in the evening.

[Our respective districts correspondents contributed to this report.]

Clashes spill over into BSMMU

FROM PAGE 1

chunks back at them, witnesses said, adding that around 11:30am, some unidentified people got inside the hospital through the main entrance, and set at least two dozen vehicles on fire and damaged several others.

Around 11:50am, this correspondent found at least 10 cars and 14 motorcycles set ablaze. Two ambulances, eight cars belonging to doctors, and one microbus were vandalised.

The office of the hospital's basic medical science building and various office equipment and valuables were also damaged.

Requesting anonymity, a driver of a hospital vehicle said, "A group of people carrying sticks and rods torched and vandalised the cars outside.

"During the clash, one of the groups was about to vandalise around 40 vehicles parked underground. They left at the drivers' request. We're too scared to leave the hospital," he told this correspondent around 5:30pm.

The mural of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the hospital was smeared with black spray paint and its nameplate was removed.

The whole incident caused panic among the patients, attendants, doctors and staffers.

Speaking to The Daily Star, a patient's relative Rumina Islam said, "I went outside the hospital to get some food. Around five to six people charged at me to attack and I ran back inside... I've never been in a more frightening situation in my life."

Didar Hossain, a patient, said, "I've been in the hospital for treatment. I saw from my room that around 30 people were attacking different parts of the building. We all [patients] locked our rooms from fear."

Resist the saboteurs

FROM PAGE 1

The one-point demand for ouster of the government is the demand of BNP-Jamaat conspirators.

"Don't destroy the country's stability and state properties. We don't want conflict, we want peace. Everyone will have to behave responsibly," said Nanak, adding that the leader of the ongoing movement will have to take the responsibility for all the killings and violence.

He added that yesterday's violence was caused by cadres of BNP, Jamaat, Chhatra Dal, and Shibir.

He urged the parents not to be confused by the propaganda and keep children at home.

The AL also postponed a mourning procession, which was supposed to be held from the Engineers Institute to Bangabandhu Bhaban on Dhanmondi-32 today over the curfew.

At another briefing, Mohammad Ali Arafat, state minister for information, said the government was willing to resolve the crisis through talks, but "if the terrorists carry out violence, the law will be enforced," he told reporters at a briefing on Jatiya Sagsad Bhaban premises, reports BSS.

The student movement has lost its direction and now it has turned into terrorism and violence, he said.

The judicial commission has invited the foreign experts to help in the investigation process to ensure full transparency of the probe, Arafat said, adding that the perpetrators will be brought to justice.

13 cops killed in attack

FROM PAGE 1

Police sources said eight bodies were found near a mosque, three in a pond, and one in a field. Another body was found hanging from a tree. Most of the bodies did not have any shirts on.

"We are verifying how many people were on duty at the police station and whether anyone is missing," Hannan said.

At least 15 policemen of the station were admitted to a hospital and 20 others had primary treatment.

He said police took control of the station with the help of the army around 7:00pm.

Locals said a group of protesters were marching in the morning when police dispersed them by firing shots and teargas. This enraged locals and the protesters who around 1:00pm attacked the police station.

In Eliotganj, the agitators attacked the police station around 1:30pm, said police headquarters. They assaulted policemen and set fire to the station. Many policemen went to the roof of the station to save themselves.

Highway DIG Eastern Zone Khairul Alam told The Daily Star that constable Ershad was killed.

Firearms kept at the Hatikumrul Highway Police Station in Sirajganj were looted and the station was set on fire, said Officer-in-Charge Abdul Wadud.

He said numerous protesters suddenly attacked the police station and beat up policemen. He could not say how many firearms were taken.

In Netrakona, police sources said criminals attacked and looted a vehicle carrying arms and ammunition from the police lines.

Several high officials at the police headquarters yesterday said they have never seen such attacks on police.

At least 300 police personnel were injured in attacks on establishments belonging to the police.

The police headquarters said at least four offices of the superintendentsof police, 20 police stations, two police outposts, and a range office were vandalised and torched.

They said the SP offices in Narayanganj, Bogura, Pabna, and Sirajganj were attacked.

Jatrabari and Khilgaon police stations in Dhaka; Gorai Highway Police Station in Tangail; Dupachachia and Sadar police stations in Bogura; Sherpur Police Station; Joypurhat Sadar Police Station; Gongachara, Mithapukur, Pirgachha, Pirganj, Badarganj and Gongachora police stations in Rangpur; Sadar and Ashuganj police stations in Brahmanbaria; Ullapara, and Shahjadpur police stations in Sirajganj; and Dinajpur Sadar Police Station were also attacked, according to the police headquarters press release.

Naruli police outpost in Sherpur, Madhabpur outpost in Habiganj, and the range police office of Mymensingh also came under attack, the release added.

In Old Dhaka, protesters vandalised four police vehicles and two prison vans on the premises of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court around noon. They also torched a police car near Roy Saheb Bazar.

Protesters set fire to a police pickupnear Madrasa Bazar in Narail. Police later reached the scene and used teargas and rubber bullets to disperse the crowd.

Narail Additional Superintendent of Police Tarek Al Mehdi said everything was under control, adding that five officers were injured after they were hit by brick chunks.

The attacks come on the first day of a call for nationwide non-cooperation by the organisers of Anti-discrimination Student Movement on Saturday.

Since July 16, four police officials and an Ansar member were killed in violence.

The three deceased are inspector Masud Parvez Bhuiyan, assistant sub inspector Muktadir, and nayek Gias Uddin.

The deceased Ansar member was identified as Jewel Sheikh.

On Friday, police constable Suman Gharami was beaten to death in Khulna.

পূবালী ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং
শরী'আহ্ ভিত্তিক ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা
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PUBALI BANK PLC.
Open your Account from anywhere
PI Banking - a Pubali Bank apps
Islamic Banking services are provided through online from all our branches and sub-branches

Live bullets can't be used if there's no riot or law violation: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that law enforcers can use rubber bullets, teargas shells and then live bullets if anyone violates the law.

Live bullets cannot be used if there are no riots or violation of the law, the court added.

The bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice SM Masud Hossain Dolon made the observation while delivering an order on a petition that challenged the legality of keeping six coordinators of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement in the DB custody and the use of live rounds on demonstrators.

The bench, however, rejected the petition saying that it has become infructuous after the release of six coordinators of the movement.

The petition was filed by Supreme Court lawyers Aynunnahar Siddiqua and Manzur-Al-Matin on July 30.

The six coordinators were freed on Thursday.

Yesterday, the HC observed that "every citizen shall have the right to participate in peaceful procession, assembly and public meetings as per the directions of the constitution.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 5

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

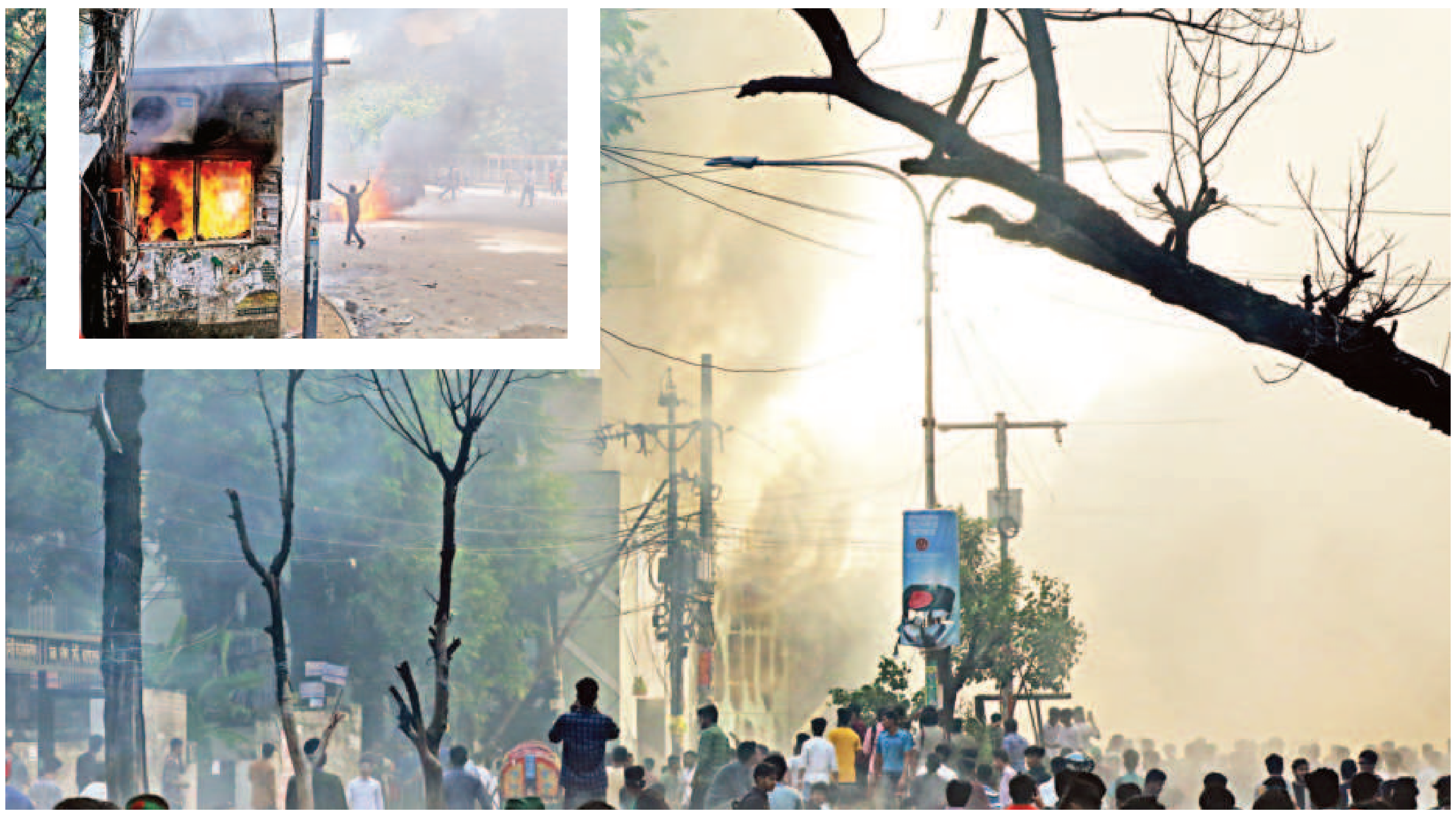


PHOTO: PALASH KHAN, ANISUR RAHMAN

Lives were lost, scores suffered injuries, establishments were vandalised and vehicles were torched in Dhaka on the first day of the non-cooperation movement announced by the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement yesterday. *Top*, a building set on fire in Dhanmondi-2. *Bottom left*, law enforcers firing tear shells to disperse crowd in Segunbagicha. *Right*, protesters at Shahbagh. *Inset*, a torched poilce box near Jatiya Press Club.

Violence rocks Dhaka

STAR REPORT

Dhaka wore the grim hue of a battleground yesterday, witnessing mass demonstrations and violent clashes across different areas, leaving at least 12 people dead and many others injured on the first day of the non-cooperation movement declared by the Anti-Discrimination Students' Movement.

The violence that ensued between Awami League affiliates and the protesters left the city dwellers largely unnerved and traumatised.

Tahidul Islam, 22, Abdullah Siddique, 22, Ramizuddin Rouf, 24, Selim, 40, Riazuddin, 36, and four others who are yet to be identified were brought dead or died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Bachchu Mia, in-charge of DMCH police outpost.

Another youth named Rezaur Rahman, 23, was brought dead at Sir Salimullah Medical College Mitford Hospital, from Gulistan area around noon, said Abdul Ahad, Ansar commander of the Mitford Hospital.

An unidentified person was brought dead to Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital.

Meanwhile, the activists of AL and its affiliates, many of them brandishing weapons and canes, took positions at different points to politically counter the non-cooperation movement.

The capital remained almost disconnected from the rest of the country throughout the day. Except for those joining the rallies and demonstrations, people rarely ventured out of their homes, leaving the streets largely deserted, while most shops remained closed.

Meanwhile, the students' platform yesterday declared a long march to Dhaka for today.

SHAHBAGH

In Shahbagh, protesters kept the intersection blocked from 10:00am to 6:00pm. By 11:40am, the Shahbagh intersection and adjoining areas became crowded with demonstrators carrying banners and posters and chanting anti-government slogans. They also marched from Shahbagh to Banglamotor area during this time. In the afternoon, more protesters joined the rally, some carrying sticks and iron rods. Amid this, sporadic clashes, chases, and counter-chases occurred around the area.

Around 10:45am, a clash ensued between

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Take back armed forces from streets
Say retired officers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of senior and mid-ranking retired officers of the armed forces yesterday called upon the government to withdraw the armed forces from the streets and send them back to barracks in these difficult times.

They came up with the statement while addressing a briefing at the RAOWA Club in the capital's Mohakhali DOHS.

Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan, the former chief of army staff, read out the statement on behalf of the retired armed forces officers.

The retired officials organised the press briefing to make their stand clear amid the ongoing situation in the country.

While reading out the statement, Iqbal Karim said the patriotic military "must not accept any responsibility for the current situation".

"We appeared here because we are deeply concerned, troubled, and saddened by all the egregious killings, tortures, disappearances, and mass arrests that have been tormenting Bangladesh over the past three weeks," he said.

"Witnessing all these as guardians, we simply cannot absolve ourselves from the responsibilities

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Teachers lay out 5-point outline for interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh University Teachers' Network yesterday proposed an outline to form an interim government consisting of teachers, judges, lawyers, and civil society stakeholders, based on the opinions of civil and political forces for a democratic transition.

According to their proposal, the protesting students will play a key role in the election of members of this government, and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government will resign to this interim government.

On behalf of university teachers, former Jahangirnagar University teacher Prof Anu Muhammad announced the proposal at a press briefing held at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

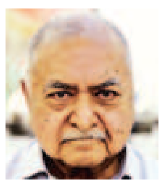
Prof Anu said this resignation and democratic transition can be possible in a few steps. A shadow government led by citizens, including students and teachers, will be formed with organisations representing the stakeholders of the main forces of the protesting students, he said.

"It will ensure accountability and transparency of this interim government so that a conducive

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

It's a clear violation of human rights
Says Dr Kamal Hossain about law enforcers using lethal weapons on protesters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Excessive force and lethal weapons used by law enforcement agencies on unarmed protesters during recent quota reform protests was in clear violation of human rights and contradictory to democracy and justice, Gonoforum founder Dr Kamal Hossain said yesterday.

In a statement, Dr Kamal, also an eminent jurist, called for a neutral probe into the killings and tortures during the protests.

He said the probe should be done under the stewardship of international expertise and culprits be brought to justice.

"However, suppressing dissents or harassing common people on this pretext will in no way be acceptable," he added.

He slammed the government order to "shoot on sight" and denounced "extra-judicial killings"

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

CLASHES IN CAPITAL
At least nine bodies brought to DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid widespread violence in the capital, at least nine bodies were brought to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Among them, four of the deceased have been identified. Four bodies couldn't be identified as their information was not registered in the system, and one body was taken away without autopsy.

According to our correspondent, Abdullah Siddique, a 3rd year BBA student from Habibullah Bahar Univerisity was brought dead to DMCH with a bullet wound in his chest. He was shot during a clash in Jigatola.

They said the body of Ramijuddin Rouf, who was also shot in the head, was brought to the hospital around 6:30pm but was taken away without autopsy. Rouf was a 2nd-year-student from Daffodil University.

He was injured in a clash in the Karwanbazar area and died before reaching the hospital, they said, adding that a bullet pierced through his eye.

Tahedul Islam, 22, a junior office assistant in a consultancy firm in Mirpur DOHS, was brought dead to the hospital from the Farmgate overbridge area where a clash broke out between protesters and revolver-carrying men in civil clothes and police.

Of the four more unidentified bodies, two were snatched away from the hospital by the protesters. They took the bodies to Central Shaheed Minar in a procession chanting anti-government slogans. The bodies belonged to 14 to 20-year-olds, said DMCH sources.

There was a rush of injured people at DMCH between 4:30pm and 6:30pm. Most of the 234 people who were treated at the hospital had bullet injuries. Of them, 53 were admitted to the hospital.

In Uttara's Azampur, around 11:30am, Awami League men took position in the area. As a clash ensued, a protester was allegedly shot dead there. His body is currently at DMCH as one of those unidentified.

There was a rush of injured people at DMCH between 4:30pm and 6:30pm. Most of the 234 people who were treated at the hospital had bullet injuries. Of them, 53 were admitted to the hospital.

Another youth named Rezaur Rahman, 23, was brought dead at Sir Salimullah Medical College and Hospital, from Gulistan around noon, said Abdul Ahad, Ansar commander of the hospital.

BNP supports one-point demand
Fakhrul urges party members to stand by students

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP yesterday extended full support for the one-point demand of the student-led Anti-Discrimination Movement, urging its leaders, activists, and people from all walks of life to stand by the protesters.

Speaking at a press conference at the BNP Chairperson's Gulshan office, party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir called on the government to step down amid the mass upsurge.

He said the entire nation has rallied behind the one-point demand for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation and the immediate transfer of power to a neutral government.

"BNP declares full solidarity with the one-point declaration...," he said.

"In this extreme crisis facing the nation, democracy-loving people and the leaders, workers, supporters, and well-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

3rd DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF MUSLEHA ISLAM

Musleha Islam, wife of Late Farukul Islam, left us on this day three years ago. Widowed at the age of 29, she raised her 4 young children alone braving many obstacles and social taboos. She was loved and admired for her warmth, generosity and affection by all who knew her. She was a staunch supporter of our freedom struggle. She allowed her house to be used by freedom fighters as a safe house and to store arms, ammunition, medical supplies, blankets, etc. Her house was raided by the Pak army on August 30, 1971 to arrest her eldest son freedom fighter Wasif Islam and not finding him wanted to take away her youngest son, Rizwan Faruk, who she saved with her wit and courage.

It has been 3 years yet we miss her every day and remember her with profound gratitude, admiration and love. She remains forever in our hearts as a source of strength and inspiration.

All are requested to pray for her everlasting peace in Jannat Ul Ferdous.

Syed Wasif Islam, Shaheen Anam, Sheraz Faruk, Rizwan Faruk, Mahfuz Anam, Sonia Faruk. Grand Children: Tahmima, Yasin, Usama, Shahzad, Hafsa, Sahar, Shaveena. Rayid, Samanzar, and 6 great grandchildren.

Entire state structure must be overhauled

Says TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday condemned the unlawful use of lethal weapons and the disproportionate use of force by law enforcement agencies.

"The entirely peaceful, non-violent and apolitical anti-discrimination student movement has been subjected to imposed violence, leading to an unprecedentedly tragic loss of hundreds of lives and a reign of terror over the past two weeks," said TIB in a statement.

"The entire state structure must be overhauled including all institutions associated with the rule of law, particularly the law enforcement and intelligence agencies through an initiative grounded on national consensus," it said.

Those responsible for ordering and approving this unprecedented brutality must be subjected to exemplary accountability, TIB said in the statement.

Other than what TIB termed "cruel killings", these weeks have been characterised by arbitrary filing of cases, indiscriminate attacks, mass arrests through block raids, illegal remand, detainment, and torture in detention by the Detective Branch, unjust warrants, online and offline threats, and systematic violation of constitutionally guaranteed human rights including freedom of speech, right to protest and freedom of association.

"According to independent assessments, at least 200 students and ordinary individuals, including children, teenagers, journalists, and other professionals, have been killed by law enforcement agencies. At least 213,000 individuals have been implicated in more than 200 cases in the police stations of the capital alone."

In the statement, TIB demanded that proper accountability for human rights violations of all types must be ensured via an internationally acceptable investigation conducted by a United Nations-engineered initiative.

PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

An injured person being taken to Chattogram Medical College Hospital yesterday. The atmosphere at CMCH turned grim from 11:45am as a continuous stream of injured individuals arrived. A total of 172 people were admitted to the hospital as of 9:00pm.

CHATTOGRAM CLASHES

Most of the injured bullet-hit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

At least 172 people were admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday after sustaining injuries during clashes between protesters and the police, along with ruling Awami League and Chhatra League activists across the port city and neighbouring upazilas.

Tuhin Shuvro Das, an emergency medical officer at CMCH, confirmed the matter, saying that most of the injured were hit by bullets.

He said as of 9:00pm yesterday, at least 110 people were admitted with bullet wounds while 62 were admitted with other injuries. Of them, three are in ICU.

The atmosphere at CMCH turned grim from 11:45am as a continuous stream of injured individuals arrived. A total of 90 people were admitted to the casualty ward alone by 6:00pm, with many patients being referred to other wards due to overcrowding.

Md Shahadat, 11, from West Madarbari, was admitted to the Paediatric Surgery ward around 4:50pm with injuries from rubber bullets. Shahadat said he was standing by the roadside in New Market area when he got hit by a rubber bullet.

A clash was ongoing in the area at that time.

Mohiuddin, a madrasa student from Patiya upazila, was admitted to the casualty ward with a bullet injury in his right hand. He was caught in a clash between protesters, police, and AL men.

Hospital sources reported that around 12 madrasa students were injured and admitted to CMCH, most of them with bullet wounds.

Meanwhile, a tense situation prevailed across Chattogram district yesterday, with very sparse movement of public transport. No long-haul buses were seen on the roads, and hardly anyone ventured outside unless it was an emergency.

Numerous clashes occurred throughout the day between protesters and police, AL, and BCL men in areas including New Market, Jubilee Road, and Kazir Dewri.

Eyewitnesses reported seeing ruling party men firing at protesters. There were also numerous chases and counter-chases between them.

At one point, protesters were besieged by AL and BCL men from three sides at Wasa intersection.

Meanwhile, army personnel were seen posted and checking vehicles at various points in the port city, including GEC, Wasa, Lalkhan Bazar intersections, and Chatteshwari Road.

Innocent people get caught up in violence

SIFAYET ULLAH *and* **FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN,** *Ctg*

Mohammed Ashik, 23, who works at a mobile repairing shop in Chattogram city's Reazuddin Bazar, was going to his workplace around 11:20am when he found himself in the line of fire as activists of Jubo League and Chhatra League were shooting at protesters yesterday.

Admitted to the casualty ward at Chattogram Medical College Hospital, Ashik was seen in agonising pain. "My employer asked me to join work, so I was heading there when suddenly a bullet hit my right leg and I fell down," he said.

Ashik's father Jalal Majhi said he had asked his son to leave for their hometown in Noakhali as the situation in the port city was worsening. "Even before he could leave, he got shot," he added.

Abul Hasnat, a staff member at Chattogram lawyers' canteen, was struck on his head with a sharp weapon by unidentified people who stormed into his house on the third floor of Gazi Tower in New Market around 11:30am.

"I was standing on the third floor when a violent clash was going on outside. Some armed men came up and hit me on the head with a sharp weapon, leaving me unconscious," he recounted while lying on a hospital bed.

Shipon, a rickshaw puller, was shot when he went outside their home to call his son back inside as violence ensued nearby in the Tigerpass area.

A child being taken to CMCH after he got hit by rubber bullets amid clashes in the port city yesterday afternoon. PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

"We live hand to mouth. We neither harmed anyone nor got involved in any movement, then why are we paying the price?" asked his wife.

The port city's New Market area turned into a battlefield yesterday as BCL and JL members, brandishing firearms and sharp weapons, engaged in hours-long fierce clashes with protesters at 11:15am near Shah Amanat Market.

According to witnesses, the BCL and JL members were seen firing at the protesters, and numerous gunshots and crude bomb explosions were heard.

BNP supports one-point demand

FROM PAGE 3

wishers of the BNP and its affiliated bodies at all levels should take to the streets and unite with the students to accelerate the fall of the 'autocratic' government in the larger interest of the country and the nation," he said.

He also called upon all political parties, organisations, individuals, professionals, workers, farmers, and people to make the non-cooperation movement a success.

Fakhrul said a wave of mass uprisings is sweeping across the country against the government.

Live bullets

FROM PAGE 3

"The law enforcement agencies will place highest priority on the protection of human lives," the bench said.

The HC judges said law enforcers may use force only when necessary.

The bench said, "Freedom of peaceful assembly is to be enjoyed equally by everyone and the authorities must not discriminate against any individual or group or organisation."

"The authorities concerned must comply with the legal obligations and should be accountable for any failure to do so," the HC said.

"What will the police do when a general assembly or procession turns into an unlawful assembly?" the bench asked.

"Police will continue using respective articles of the constitution, penal code and procedural laws of our land in the enforcement of unlawful assemblies, riots, and other offences against public tranquility," it said, adding that in this situation, the police will follow the relevant articles of the constitution as well as domestic laws," it said.

Hence, in a democratic state, it is essential that the police should act within the four corners of the law and then respect of the constitutional right of the citizens, the HC added.

The details of the observations and grounds, on which the court delivered the order, will be known after its full text is released.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested **Firm/Organization to undertake videography and photography assignments displaying the impact of ILO's work and amplifying constituent and/or stakeholder views on topical issues**. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ***United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM)*** at **https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/242574**

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Tuesday, September 03, 2024, by 04:30 PM (BST time)**.

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Chief Controller of Stores
Bangladesh Railway
Pahartali, Chattogram-4202
Phone: +88-031-659604, email: ccspht@railway.gov.bd

No: **54.01.1543.335.08.019.24** **Date: 30/07/2024.**

Corrigendum to Notice-1

The following corrigendum to tender document have been carried out in respect of Tender Last selling date, Tender closing date & Opening date of tender no. **54.01.1543.335.08.019.24**, Date: 11/06/2024, Opening Date: 05/08/2024 of this Procuring Entity:

SL. No:	Description of Corrigendum	Read	For
1.	Tender Last selling date	27/08/2024	04/08/2024
2.	Tender Closing date and Time	28/08/2024, 12.00 PM	05/08/2024, 12.00 PM
3.	Tender Opening date and Time	28/08/2024, 2.00 PM	05/08/2024, 2.00 PM

This corrigendum to tender document shall be treated as an integral part of the Tender Document. All other terms and conditions of the tender shall remain unaltered and unchanged.

This is issued with the approval of the Chief Controller of Stores, Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chattogram.

S(24)(176)

30.7.24
(Md Mizanur Rahman)
Assistant Controller of Stores (P-1)
For the Chief Controller of Stores
Bangladesh Railway
Pahartali, Chattogram.

GD-115

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Madaripur
Website: ced.madaripur.gov.bd

Memo No. EED/Mad/Vertical Ext. Fur/4931-TMED/2024/01 Date: 04/08/2024

e-Tender Notice No. 01/2024-25
Open/Limited Tendering Method

This is to notify all concerned that e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of following works. Details are given below:

SL No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of work	Document last selling (date & time)	Tender closing (date & time)
01	1005397	EED/Mad/Vertical Extension /Furniture/2024/GD-01	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building to Selected Non-Govt. Secondary Schools at Hossainpur High School, Sadar, Madaripur.	19-Aug-2024 16:00	20-Aug-2024 13:00
02	1005398	EED/Mad/Vertical Extension /Furniture/2024/GD-02	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building to selected Non-Govt. Secondary Schools at Alhaj Amin Uddin High School, Sadar, Madaripur.	19-Aug-2024 16:00	20-Aug-2024 13:00
03	1005431	EED/Mad/4931/TMED/ 2023-24/WR-01	Repair & Renovation Works of Administrative Buildings, Workshops and Labs at Madaripur Technical School and College, Sadar, Madaripur.	19-Aug-2024 16:00	20-Aug-2024 13:00
04	1005432	EED/Mad/4931/TMED/ 2023-24/WR-02	Construction Works of Internal Road at Madaripur Technical School and College, Sadar, Madaripur.	19-Aug-2024 16:00	20-Aug-2024 13:00

The interested persons/firms may visit website (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) to get the details of the tender. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information & guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk; (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

04.08.24
Md. Tanvir Islam
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Madaripur
Email: cc_mad@eedmoc.gov.bd

GD-112

SGFL
সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড
(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানি)
Sylhet Gas Fields Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)

গ্যাস জাতির সম্পদ।
এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতির
দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

Ref: 28.20.9153.142.14.019.24/Corrigendum Dated: 04-08-2024

Corrigendum Notice

Subject: Amendment of e-Tender Ref. no. 28.20.9153.142.14.019.24, Dated:28-07-2024
Tender ID: 997990
Description of Goods: Procurement of Desktop Computer, Laptop Computer, Printer, Scanner for Head Office, Chiknagool, Sylhet under Sylhet Gas Fields Limited.

Price & Delivery Schedule Item No.	Description of Item	Existing Quantity (Nos.)	Amended Quantity (Nos.)
1.	Desktop PC	7	5
4.	Printer	7	3
5.	Scanner	8	5

(Tarak Ahmed)
Deputy General Manager (Procurement)
E-mail: dgmpr@sgfl.org.bd

GD-114

CHILD MURDERS

UK grapples with worst riots in 13 yrs

AFP, *London*

UK authorities yesterday faced growing pressure to put an end to England's worst rioting in 13 years after disturbances linked to child murders and involving far-riot agitators flared across the country.

Unrest related to misinformation about a mass stabbing that killed three young girls last week spread to multiple towns and cities on Saturday as anti-immigration demonstrators clashed with police.

The violence is posing a major test for Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who was elected only a month ago after leading Labour to a landslide win over the Conservatives.

About 90 people were arrested after skirmishes broke out at far-right rallies in numerous places including Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol, Blackpool and Hull, as well as Belfast in Northern Ireland.

Palestinians mourn the dead in the aftermath of an Israeli strike that hit tents used as temporary shelters by displaced people in the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

23 killed as Sudan paramilitaries shell Darfur city

AFP, *Port Sudan*

Shelling by Sudanese paramilitaries killed at least 23 people on Saturday in the besieged Darfur city of El-Fasher, activists said.

The capital of North Darfur state is the largest city in the vast western region not yet under the control of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), who have been battling the regular army for more than a year and have laid siege to El-Fasher since May.

The El-Fasher Resistance Committee said in a statement published on its Facebook page that "deliberate bombing" by the paramilitary forces resulted in "23 martyrs", all civilians, and 60 wounded.

RSF shelling of El-Fasher last week killed at least 65 people, said the committee, one of hundreds across Sudan that used to organise pro-democracy protests and have coordinated frontline aid since the war began in April last year.

Medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) has said that by late June, at least 260 people had been killed in the fighting in El-Fasher.

The war, which pits the RSF, led by Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, against the army headed by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, has killed tens of thousands of people with some estimates as high as 150,000, according to United States envoy Tom Perriello.

The United Nations says Sudan faces the world's largest internal displacement crisis, with more than 10 million forced to flee internally or abroad.

'We have never been so strong'

Says Venezuela opposition leader despite arrest

AFP, *Caracas*

Venezuela's opposition leader emerged from hiding on Saturday, declaring "We have never been so strong," as President Nicolas Maduro slammed what he called attempts to "usurp the presidency" following last week's disputed election.

Thousands gathered peacefully across Venezuela, including in the capital Caracas where Maria Corina Machado thrilled supporters with a surprise appearance in a truck bearing a banner reading "Venezuela has won!"

Machado, who spent much of the week in hiding after Maduro threatened her with arrest following deadly post-election protests, had backed the candidacy of Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia after she herself was banned from running.

Supporters say he won 67 percent of the July 28 vote, and several Latin American countries and the US have recognized him as president-elect.

Others have called on Venezuela to release detailed vote tallies, including EU states France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

ASSASSINATION OF HAMAS' LEADER

Biden voices hope Iran will stand down

Hamas begins consultations to choose Haniyeh's successor

REUTERS, *Wilmington*

US President Joe Biden expressed hope Iran would stand down despite its threat to avenge the assassination of Hamas' leader in Tehran, as fears mounted that Israel's offensive in Gaza could escalate into a wider Middle East conflict.

Regional tensions have soared following the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas' top leader, on Wednesday, a day after an Israeli strike in Beirut killed Fuad Shukr, a senior military commander from the Lebanese group Hezbollah, which like Hamas is backed by Iran.

Iran and Hamas have blamed Israel for Haniyeh's killing, and they, together with Hezbollah, have vowed revenge. Israel has not claimed or denied responsibility.

Asked by reporters whether Iran would stand down, Biden said on Saturday in response to a shouted question, "I hope so. I don't know."

Seeking to bolster defenses in the Middle East in response to threats from Israel's foes, the Pentagon said on Friday it would deploy additional fighter jets and Navy warships to the region.

Haniyeh's death was one in a series of killings of senior Hamas figures as the Gaza offensive nears its 11th month, and it fuelled concern that the conflict in Gaza was turning into a wider Middle East war, reports Reuters.

Hamas said it had begun a "broad consultation process" to choose a new leader three days after the assassination of Haniyeh, who was the face of the group's international diplomacy.

The US and international partners including France, Britain, Italy and Egypt continued diplomatic contacts on Saturday seeking to prevent further regional escalation.

The US urged its citizens who wish to leave Lebanon to start making plans immediately, and the British government advised its nationals to "leave now." Canada warned citizens to avoid all travel to Israel, saying the regional armed conflict endangered security.

Violence continued on Saturday in the Palestinian territories.

An Israeli airstrike on a school sheltering displaced persons in Gaza City killed at least 15 Palestinians on Saturday, hours after two strikes in the occupied West Bank killed nine people including a local Hamas commander, Hamas said.

The Israeli military said the first of two West Bank airstrikes hit a vehicle in a town near the city of Tulkarm, targeting a Hamas cell it said was on its way to carry out an attack.

Two migrants dead after rescue at sea

Says Italian coastguard

AFP, *Rome*

Italy's coastguard said yesterday two migrants died after they were rescued along with more than 30 others in the Mediterranean off the eastern coast of Sicily.

The coastguard said it received a distress call late Saturday from a boat located about 17 miles southeast of Syracuse carrying Syrian, Egyptian and Bangladeshi migrants.

Search and rescue operations began after the coastguard dispatched a patrol boat and plane to the area, but "the occupants of the vessel ended up in the water as the patrol boat approached," it said in a statement.

Although 34 people were recovered from the water, put onto the patrol boat and transferred to Syracuse's port, one died upon arrival and another after reaching the hospital.

"The search at sea for a missing person who was on board the vessel, which later sank, is currently under way," it said.

The coastguard said it was investigating how the migrants ended in the water as the boat approached.

California wildfire now fourth-largest in state history

Hot weather offers no relief

REUTERS

More than 6,000 firefighters in California's Central Valley continued to battle the largest blaze in the US on Saturday, which burned its way into the history books as the state's fourth-largest conflagration on record.

There was barely a taste of rain on Saturday from thunderstorms that brought wind and rainfall of zero to one-tenth of an inch.

The heat of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 Celsius) along with winds up to 25 mph or more in some spots, offered little relief to the firefighters trying to contain the Park Fire, scorching the wilderness terrain some 100 miles (161 km) north of Sacramento, the state capital.

"We had some thunderstorms that just brought us down-drafts, that's a problem," said Christopher Young, a spokesman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire. "Lightning is a factor we worry about."

Blazes from the Park Fire, started by an alleged arsonist who pushed a flaming car down a 60-foot gully near Chico, California, on July 24, has since burned more than 400,000 acres or more than 600 square miles, an area larger than the city of Los Angeles. The 42-year-old man arrested had not entered a plea as of Saturday, but was charged with arson and held without bail, officials said.

More than 560 homes and other structures were destroyed since the blaze started 11 days ago, feeding off of downed timber and tinder-dry grass and brush. The fire was 27 percent contained on Saturday, officials said.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
NATORE.
E-Mail : ee_nat@eedmoe.gov.bd

Memo No-37.07.6900.004.13.013.24-173 Date:-04/08/2024.

e- Tender Notice No: 05/2024-25

Open Tendering Method (OTM)

e- Tenders are hereby invited in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of the Works stated as below.

Sl no	Package no.	Name of Work	Tender ID no.	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
01	XEN/EED/NAT/ POLYTECHNIC/ WD-44	CONSTRUCTION OF 6(Six)-STORIED ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING WITH 6(Six)-STORIED FOUNDATION INCLUDING SANITARY AND WATER SUPPLY WORKS ALONG WITH ELECTRIFICATION AND OTHER WORKS AT NATORE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE UNDER SADAR UPAZILLA OF NATORE DISTRICT.	1004500	04.09.2024 Time: 16.00	05.09.2024 Time: 12.00

a) This is an online Tender Notice, where only e- Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no Offline/Hard Copy will be accepted.
b) To submit e-Tender(s), registration in the National e-GP portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
c) The fees for downloading the e- Tender Documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online at any branch of registered banks.
d) Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP systemPortal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@ eprocure.gov.bd).
e) The Tender Notice will be available on the website: www.eedmoe.gov.bd & www.eed.natore.gov.bd

4.8.24
Executive Engineer
EED, Natore

GD-116

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Roads and Highways Department
Office of the Additional Chief Engineer
Gopalgonj Zone, Gopalgonj
www.rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.3532.016.07.016.09-2019 Date: 04-08-2024

Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in e-GP System (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Gopalgonj Zone, Gopalgonj for the procurement of following works:

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Tender Reference No.	Description of work	Tender publication date	Tender last selling	Closing date & opening date
1.	1007060	e-GP/04/GZ/ 2024-2025 PMP Road (OSTETM)	Periodic Maintenance Programme (PMP-Major Road) Providing Strengthening & DBS-Wearing Course work from Ch. 00+000 Km (Tungipara) to Ch. 18+260 Km (Majhbari) of Tungipara-Kotalipara (Majhbari) Road (Z-8430) under Gopalganj Road Division during the FY 2024-2025.	04-08-2024 14:00	04-09-2024 17: 00	05-09-2024 12: 00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

08/08/28
Shishir Kumar Baral
ID No. 602062
Assistant Engineer, RHD
Gopalgonj Zone, Gopalgonj

08/08/2028
Md. Sadequl Islam
ID No. 006003
Additional Chief Engineer (C.C) RHD
Gopalgonj Zone, Gopalgonj
Phone/Fax: 02478821071/02478821509
acegopalgonj@gmail.com

GD-112

DHAKA MONDAY AUGUST 5, 2024, SRABAN 21, 1431 BS ● starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Star BUSINESS

Garment factories shut down for indefinite period

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Out of fear of vandalism and subsequent losses amid the current spell of violence, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) yesterday instructed all the factory owners to keep their units shut until further notice.

The garment exporters' platform circulated the message among the members through WhatsApp, said Md Ashikur Rahman Tuhin, a director of the BGMEA.

This is yet another blow to the sector as the apparel factories were shut down for four days during the first round of violence two weeks ago though this is the peak season for Christmas shipments and taking work orders for the next summer and spring seasons.

During the violence in mid-July, the exporters could not communicate properly with their business partners abroad because of an internet blackout.

Exporters now fear mounting losses as export performance had already been poor over the last two years because of the severe fallout of Covid-19 pandemic, Russia-Ukraine war, runaway inflation in the Western world, Red Sea crisis and a labour unrest at home.

Amid violence across the country, majority of garment factories were shut down yesterday on the first day of a countrywide non-cooperation movement called by the organisers of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

At least 73 people, including 14 policemen, were killed and dozens injured yesterday as fierce clashes took place in different areas in Dhaka and other parts of Bangladesh.

More than 400 garment factories in Narayanganj, Narayanganj BSCIC and Fatullah areas were closed though many of the units ran for some time in the morning.

Some factories were operational in Rupganj and Araihazar areas of Narayanganj district, said Mohammad Hatem, executive president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA).

Also, almost all the factories in Ashulia, Savar, Maona, Tongi and Chattogram had started production in the morning, but after a few hours the student protests began and some factories were vandalised, leading to the closure of the units.

At least six garment factories were vandalised in Narayanganj BSCIC and its adjacent areas, Hatem said, adding that fearing further escalation of the vandalism, the other factory owners have shut down their units.

Hatem confirmed that the workers left their workplaces peacefully after the shutdown.

"We will sit in meetings soon with the owners, the government and other high-ups on how to run our factories," Hatem said, adding that they will monitor the situation at least for two days.

কারফিউ জারির জন্য:
কারখানা বন্ধ।

A sign on the wall of a garments unit states that the facility is closed due to the imposition of an indefinite curfew by the government because of heightened unrest around the country on the first day of a non-cooperation movement called by students. PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

- Garment factories have been shut for an indefinite period
- Factories had to close for four days two weeks ago
- International retailers are concerned about timely shipment
- The sector lost Tk **6,400**cr due to factory closure and shipment disruption
- The primary textile sector lost $**58.8**m amid the unrest in July
- Now is the peak time for shipping ahead of Christmas
- Garment exports fell **5.2**% in Jul-May FY24
- Exporters take orders for summer shipments a year in advance

Factories in Konabari and Kashimpur under Gazipur district were shut down although those were opened in the morning, said Arshad Jamal Dipu, vice-president of the BGMEA.

The factories were shut down anticipating violence, he said but could not confirm how many factories were closed.

He said the factory owners are fearing a shutdown of internet again as two weeks ago they suffered a lot and lost business because of the internet blackout. Exporters could not communicate online with their foreign retailers and brands.

Moreover, this is the time for bond renewal of the export-oriented garment factories and already seven factories have complained to him that they cannot renew the bond licences because of the current crisis, Dipu also said.

The owners are also facing trouble in garment shipment and import of raw materials, he added.

Md Towhidur Rahman, president of Bangladesh Apparel Workers Federation, confirmed that all the garment factories in Kaliakoir area have been shut down by the owners fearing escalation of unrest in the sector.

The owners announced closure to save their factories and other assets, he said.

Nazma Akter, president of Sammilito Garment Sramik Federation, a workers' platform, said that the BGMEA leaders held a meeting with the union leaders on Saturday and asked them to be more responsible during the crisis so that the garment factories could remain safe.

The owners are announcing closure of the factories fearing spread of violence in the sector, she said.

The garment exporters fear that if their workers join the ongoing movement across the country, it will further dent the sector, which was hamstrung for four days when factories were completely shuttered due to violence in mid-July.

The sector also suffered serious repercussions because of a five-day internet blackout, which hindered communications between garment suppliers and international retailers and brands, meaning they could not make business deals or hold meetings.

Last week, international retailers and brands expressed concern at a meeting with the leaders of the BGMEA, flagging the difficulties in communication with their headquarters and local suppliers.

The months of July, August and September comprise the peak season for both shipment of goods for next Christmas and also for booking the work orders from the international retailers and brands for the next summer and spring seasons.

The BGMEA has already said they have incurred losses of Tk 6,400 crore because of the shutdown and internet blackout, while the losses estimated by Bangladesh Textile Mills Association stand at $58.8 million.

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Five textile, garment and plastic mills set on fire

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

At least five garment, textile and plastic factories have been set on fire in the Ashulia and Sreepur areas during the violence.

Rozina Islam, duty officer at the Central Control Room of the Fire Service and Civil Defence in Dhaka, said Sinha Textile, Beximco Synthetics, a warehouse of scrapped clothing items (jhoot) of Ha-Meem Group, and Bengal Plastic at Zirani in Ashulia were set on fire between 6:30pm and 7:30pm yesterday.

Another spinning mill was set on fire in Sreepur, Islam told The Daily Star over phone.

No death or injury was reported due to the fires, she also said.

Almost all garment factories were open yesterday but shut down after lunch due to fears of vandalism and labour unrest, factory owners said.

Moreover, the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association announced the closure of all its members mills for three days in line with the government's decision for three days of general holidays

Zirani, Ashulia, Savar and Baipail areas are industrial dense areas for garment and textile industries.

Textile units to remain closed

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Textile millers will keep their production units closed due to the prevailing volatile situation in the country.

Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), which represents the $25 billion primary textile sector, announced the decision in a statement yesterday.

The decision came because of the deteriorating law and order situation in the country and the government's declaration of a three-day holiday from today, the BTMA said.

STOCKS

DSEX ▼	CASPI ▼
1.96% 5,229.27	1.28% 14.926.05

COMMODITIES AS OF FRIDAY

Gold ▼	Oil ▼
$2,441.95 (per ounce)	$74.13 (per barrel)

ASIAN MARKETS FRIDAY CLOSINGS

MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI
▲ 1.08% 80,981.95	▼ 5.81% 35,909.70	▼ 1.12% 3,381.45	▼ 0.92% 2,905.34

Transport operators dealt a fresh blow

JAGARAN CHAKMA *and* **MOHAMMAD SUMAN**

Transport of passengers and export-import goods began to suffer again yesterday as most vehicles avoided plying roads amid a new wave of violence surrounding the students' non-cooperation movement.

The students took the measure against the government to protest the deaths of over 204 people and nationwide arrests by the police.

The latest disruption comes just over a week after vehicular movement on the highways was severely restricted due to violence centring the quota reform movement.

"No trucks, covered vans, or prime movers are operating on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway as the owners are afraid of violence," said Chowdhury Zafar Ahmed, general secretary of the Bangladesh Covered Van-Truck-Prime Mover Goods Transport Owners Association.

Compared to normal times, only one-fourth of the covered vans and prime movers operated on the road on Saturday night, he added.

Data from the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) shows that around 35,000 to 40,000 vehicles use the four-lane highway daily, with 35 to 40 percent being goods-laden ones.

The highway is the main route for around 90 percent of Bangladesh's international trade. Any disruption means that export-import activities, as well as production in factories, will suffer.

An official of the RHD said the movement of vehicles on the key highway connecting the capital to the port city slumped yesterday.

Apart from goods-laden vehicles, the unrest has also affected the movement of inter-district passenger buses.

Transport operators were dealt a fresh blow as they are again being unable to ply the roads due to safety concerns. Although some are keen to make up losses of previous weeks and risk the journey, there are virtually no customers. PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

Md Abdus Sattar, general manager of Green Line, said they are not operating buses due to a lack of passengers.

"No passenger has bought any tickets today (Sunday), though we were ready to run our buses," he said, adding that Green Line operated buses on almost all routes on Saturday night despite having very few passengers.

"Not only us, but all bus operators are facing the same situation," he added.

Mosharref Hossain, general manager of Hanif Enterprise, said they stopped operating all their long-distance buses since yesterday morning.

On July 23, Khandker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of the Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association, had told The Daily Star that around 30,000 buses ply inter-district routes daily under around 200 companies. Each bus is losing at least Tk 6,000 in revenue daily.

The loss is even greater if fixed expenditures are factored in, he said.

Bangladesh has over 83,000 registered buses, with private investment in the business growing in line with the expansion of national and regional highways.

Buses carry roughly 70 percent of passengers, followed by inland waterways, rail and air.

Export and import activities at Chattogram port were disrupted yesterday. Though assessment activities of import-export goods were normal, clearance of imported goods was slow.

Officials from customs and the port authority reported that, until 3pm yesterday, approximately 200 trucks were cleared from the port though, on average, the port sees the departure of around 7,000-8,000 trucks daily during usual times.

However, the shipment of cargo containers bound for the Kamalapur inland container depot (ICD) was halted due to the closure of railway wagons, as per port officials.

Mohammad Fyzur Rahman, commissioner of Chattogram customs house, said customs activities related to import and export consignments continued as usual, but there was a noticeable decrease in the release of goods due to a shortage of long-route vehicles.

"Transportation of containers carrying imported goods from Chattogram to Dhaka, and vice versa, was disrupted due to the closure of railway wagons," said Akbar Hossain, commissioner of Kamalapur ICD.

Nonetheless, the clearance and customs procedures for goods previously located in Dhaka were proceeding as usual, he said.

Stock indices nosedive amid unrest

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Major indices of the stock market in Bangladesh took a steep dive yesterday, hitting a three-year low as investors started offloading shares in fear that the country's economy may deteriorate further amid the ongoing unrest.

The DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), plunged by about 1.96 percent from the previous session to close at 5,229 points.

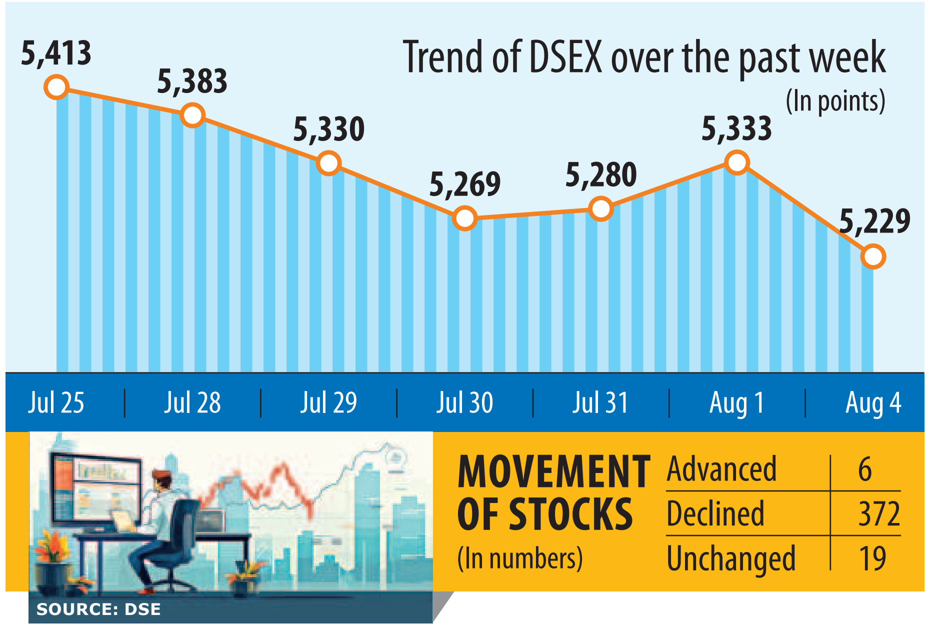
This was its steepest fall since May 2022, when the main index of the country's premier bourse dropped 135 points, or over 2 percent of its total at the time.

After speaking with the officials of at least five brokerage houses, The Daily Star found that their offices were open albeit with limited staff while the doors were practically shuttered.

Still, almost no investors came while the few that did were mostly there to sell.

"As political instability is growing, investors are worried that the market could close again due to another internet blackout. So, they are selling their shares," said a senior official of a leading brokerage house.

Following weeks of unrest, the protestors called for a countrywide non-cooperation movement starting yesterday.



SOURCE: DSE

The DS30, an index comprising blue-chip stocks, fell by 2.2 percent to 1,859 points while the DSES, which measures the performance of shariah-compliant companies, dipped by 1.84 percent to 1,143 points.

A merchant banker informed that while he did not receive any buying orders, at least 25 selling orders were placed yesterday.

"It is understandable that people are panicked about the political situation as there is no indication that the situation will improve anytime soon," he said.

This is because investments may lose value or even become a loss if the performance of listed companies is badly hit for having to halt production amid the political instability.

"So, they are selling their shares," the merchant banker added.

He also informed that people are preferring to keep cash in hand rather than invest as they fear another internet outage could disrupt trading activities.

Turnover, which measures the total value of shares traded during the session, fell by 63 points to Tk 207 crore. Of the stocks to witness trade, only six advanced, 372 declined and 19 remained the same.

Unilever Consumer Care saw the most trade, with Tk 48 crore worth of its shares transacted, followed by Heidelberg Materials, Square Pharmaceuticals, Express Insurance, and British American Tobacco (BAT) Bangladesh.

However, the performance of BAT Bangladesh dragged down the DSEX the most, claiming around 7 points, while Renata took away 6 points, Brac Bank 5 points, Grameenphone 5 points and Beximco Pharmaceuticals 4 points, according to LankaBangla Securities.

Shyampur Sugar Mills, a junk stock, was the day's top gainer with a rise of about 5 percent while Unilever Consumer Care advanced 2 percent.

However, Zeal Bangla Sugar Mills dropped the most, with its share value eroding by 3 percent, followed by Monno Agro and General Machinery and Eastern Lubricants with 2.9 percent each.

The trend was similar at the Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) as the Caspi, the broad index of the port city bourse, shed 1.27 percent to close at 14,926 points.

Rows of shops on Elephant Road that remained closed yesterday amidst a non-cooperation movement called by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.
PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Retailers fear immense losses for political crisis

SUKANTA HALDER

The owners of retail outlets in Bangladesh fear they could incur massive losses due to the ongoing unrest stemming from a student movement seeking the resignation of the government.

Shops and malls all over the country were closed yesterday, the first day of a non-cooperation movement announced by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement aimed at driving home their one-point demand.

However, businesspeople said the subsequent declaration of an indefinite curfew that started yesterday and yet another three-day general holiday from today will cause unimaginable losses.

Consumers are panicking about the economic uncertainties considering the country's current state. So, people are being more careful with their spending, they added.

At least 73 people were killed and dozens injured as fierce clashes took places across the country yesterday. The government imposed a curfew for an indefinite period from 6:00pm.

Besides, the government also announced a three-day general holiday starting today for ensuring public safety amid the ongoing protests across the country.

Dewan Aminul Islam Shaheen, president of the Dhaka New Market Business Owners' Association, said that four to five traders from their New Market area opened their shops yesterday morning.

"But due to the serious deterioration of the situation, they later closed up and went home," he said, adding that all shops in the Science Laboratory and Elephant Road area did the same.

Shaheen also said the business situation has been very bad for the last two weeks while sales practically hit zero yesterday.

"In the current situation, traders will have to face bigger losses," he added.

While visiting shopping centres in the Dhanmondi, Jigatola and other commercial areas of Dhaka, it was found that all of them were closed.

Mozammel Haque, general secretary of the Sanmar Ocean City Shop Owners' Association in Chattogram, told The Daily Star that all the shops in their market were closed yesterday.

"We are facing a lot of losses due to the unstable situation for more than two weeks. We will have to suffer more losses in the coming days because of closure and indefinite curfew," he added.

Customers began to shy away from shopping as the overall environment worsened since violence flared in the middle of last month. The situation had led the authorities to impose a curfew and a three-day general holiday beginning on July 20.

Retailers were dealt the blow in less than a year after they contended with losses for more than a month in the face of hartal and a countrywide blockade enforced by the BNP and its allies in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in January this year.

Helal Uddin, president of Bangladesh Shop Owners Association, said all shops and malls across the country were closed yesterday. However, some opened in the morning but later closed.

"There is loss of business now and what will happen in the coming days is unimaginable," he added.

Students launched the quota reform movement on July 1 citing that it discriminated against general students seeking to secure public jobs.

The demonstrators started to stage sit-ins on the roads in different areas, blocking traffic since July 15, and law enforcers later tried to disperse them by force, causing the movement to turn violent.

The government then slapped the curfew for an indefinite period from midnight of July 19 and deployed the armed forces to contain the unrest.

Banks to remain closed for three days from today

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Banks and financial institutions will remain closed for three days beginning from today during the general holidays, said a top official of the Bangladesh Bank yesterday.

The announcement comes after the government declared an indefinite curfew from 6 pm yesterday in the face of a new wave of violence and deaths of people across the country.

At least **73** people were killed and dozens injured because of fierce clashes in different areas in Dhaka and other parts of Bangladesh on the first day of the non-cooperation movement announced by the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement on Saturday.

Banks and financial institutions will remain closed on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday during the general holidays, said BB Spokesperson Md Mezbaul Haque.

Earlier, banks were shut for three days from July 21 in line with a three-day general holiday following the imposition of a curfew from July 20. On July 24 and 25, the banking hour was 11am to 3pm and it was 10am to 3pm on July 28 and 29 respectively.

Since July 31, banks had been open from 10am to 6pm and the banking transaction hour was between 10am and 4pm.

Clashes disrupt services in banks, other sectors

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Banking activities were heavily disrupted yesterday, particularly in Dhaka, amidst violence flaring up on the first day of a non-cooperation movement declared by protesters.

Private offices and businesses also faced difficulties in carrying out their activities commuting inside the city because of clashes between ruling party activists, law enforcement agencies, and demonstrating students that led to the killing of at least 50 people and injuries for scores of others.

The presence of customers at banks was significantly low. Clients, except for emergencies such as for cash withdrawals, avoided visiting branches. Several banks kept shutters of their branches down amid security concerns, according to bankers.

"We have never seen such a low presence of clients," said a senior official of a private bank in Motijheel, the city's commercial district, adding that about a dozen customers took service from the branch until noon yesterday.

"Most of the customers came at the beginning of office hours. Literary, there was no customer after midday," said an official of another bank.

Ahmed Ali, a resident in the Indira Road area in Dhaka, said he tried to go to a branch of Standard Chartered Bank at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka at about 1:30pm but was compelled to return home as Karwan Bazar turned into a battleground between protesters and ruling party activists.

As the situation became tense in the second half of the day, many officials of the central bank and commercial banks were seen leaving office.

An official of Dutch-Bangla Bank, seeking anonymity, said there was no formal instruction to leave their workstations before office hours, but most officials have left for homes as customer presence was significantly low.

There were little to no banking activities yesterday amidst a non-cooperation movement called by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement. The photo was taken at a bank in the capital's Motijheel.
PHOTO: **MD MEHEDI HASAN**

Many bankers were also seen absent from their duties as they could not commute from their residences because of a lack of transports in the city.

Md Shafiqul Islam, manager of a branch of Sonali Bank in Motijheel, said officials, who completed their work early, left office early.

He said, as the government announced a fresh curfew from 6:00pm, the officials who live quite a distance away have left early.

Like the bankers, very little activities were carried out at private offices in the capital yesterday.

Sabbir Ahmed, an official of a travel agency in Dhaka, said they did not get a single client yesterday. So only two officials were on duty out of 20.

Hasibur Rahman, a resident in Raja Bazar area in Dhaka, said a water tap in the house was broken but he could not find any plumber.

"As this type of shop remained closed, I have collected mobile numbers and called two of the plumbers but none wanted to come for security reasons," he added.

Foisal Hossain, an official of Delta Life Insurance in Gulshan, said he went to the office on time but left for home along with his colleagues early on safety concerns.

China issues plan to boost household consumption

AFP, *Beijing, China*

China has issued a set of directives aimed at boosting household consumption, a weakness weighing on growth in the world's second-largest economy, with the plan targeting sectors including child and elder care, and food and beverage.

Leaders including President Xi Jinping pledged last month to help boost domestic consumption and ease pressure on China's ailing property sector, following a gathering of the ruling Communist Party's top brass.

The State Council, China's cabinet, published a list of 20 general directives on its website on Saturday evening, constituting a general roadmap for ministries and local authorities as the economy recovers after the lifting of strict pandemic measures at the end of 2022 that had hindered growth.

The plan, which does not include proposed budgets, urges authorities to "increase the supply of care services for the elderly", a sector with growth potential in a country with an ageing population.

It also calls for the development of childcare services, as fewer young people opt to have babies due to the high cost of education and lack of social benefits.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

We must turn back from further violence

Country heading towards a dangerous path

The continuation and, indeed, re-escalation of violence, which led to around 70 people getting killed yesterday, is pushing the country towards greater danger. Violence first broke out in mid-July when the student wing of the ruling party attacked student protesters of the quota reform movement. Then we saw law enforcers being used to suppress the protests. Even though such incidents declined after a few days, and the government indicated its willingness to pursue a path of dialogue, yesterday's events suggest that it has decided to return to the path of force. In addition to the killing of ordinary people, the killing of police personnel and attacks on ruling party members' houses indicate that the violence is taking on a different colour. This may escalate into a civic conflict with very ominous consequences.

We believe the prime minister's invitation for dialogue, even though it was initially declined, was the wiser path to try and resolve the crisis. But yesterday's events indicate a complete U-turn from that and towards the use of force on both sides. We strongly believe this is the wrong approach. This violent reaction will only lead to more resentment, destruction, injuries and deaths. Therefore, the ruling party's decision to resort back to the use of brute force, particularly using its student wings, is not only illegal, but also a mistake.

On August 3, we saw the most massive number of people protesting. In the biggest rallies that took place in Dhaka, protesters were fully peaceful. The very next day, we saw ruling party affiliated men taking to the streets with sticks, rods, machetes and, in some cases, firearms. And it seemed they were intentionally placed to face off against the protesters.

The ruling party has full right to peacefully demonstrate its strength. But under no circumstances should that show of strength be done with the use of violence. If it truly wants to reduce tensions, why create a situation where there is a face-off between its supporters armed with deadly weapons and the protesters? And why would they fire live ammunition? Its supporters could have easily gathered somewhere else, instead of taking position where the protesters were and attacking them. Such tactics raise questions regarding the government's declaration that it does not want conflict but would rather have a peaceful resolution. From what we witnessed yesterday, it is the presence of ruling party members that created this confrontation, leading to conflicts.

The events of yesterday show that the country is becoming a battleground between ruling party men and the protesters. This will create much deeper divisions that could prove impossible to mend. Right now, the entire country is heading towards an extremely dangerous path. At this point, the use of force would be most detrimental for the whole nation. We strongly call on the ruling party to withdraw its members, and for both sides to avoid a head-on collision that serves no one and, instead, come to the negotiating table for a peaceful settlement. That is the only way to prevent further deaths and injuries.

How long must we wait for justice?

As bodies pile up, govt yet to show sincerity about fair investigations

The bloodstains from July's unprecedented violence haven't faded yet, with the wounds of survivors far from healed. But already new blood is being spilled. Sunday marked the start of the second wave of violence in under two weeks, claiming about 60 lives across the country. As we brace for more uncertainties and possibly further bloodshed in the coming days, harrowing details are still emerging about the first wave, which serve as a grim reminder of the severe repercussions when state power is wielded without accountability.

After analysing the injuries sustained by the deceased during the first wave of violence, *The Daily Star* has found that 195 victims—or 95 percent—were killed by bullets, including live rounds, rubber bullets, and shotgun pellets. Of them, 113 were shot by live rounds that mostly hit in the head, chest, abdomen, etc. Even a single gunshot to these vital body parts can kill in minutes. As a security expert told this daily, under the rules of engagement for civilian protests, security forces are supposed to crouch in a lying position and shoot below the hip to incapacitate the opponent. If they are standing or aiming upwards—as they did during the first wave—then it indicates an intent to kill rather than disperse. Moreover, fatal shots were also fired from close range in many cases. For example, more than two dozen people died from rubber bullets, meaning that they were likely shot at point-blank range. These targeted and lethal shootings show how far the government was—and still is—willing to go to suppress the demands for justice.

But such heavy-handed tactics do not work, as it should have been abundantly clear by now. If the Awami League government is unsure about how to handle the present crisis, it is partly because it has never faced anything like it in its 15-plus years of uninterrupted rule, and partly because of its unwillingness to adapt and learn and engage with citizens in a democratic way. But this is not a war that the deaths of civilians caught in the middle of clashes can be accepted as collateral damage. There are no winners in this. We have all lost as a nation when at least 204 people—including 43 students and 32 children—died during the first wave. If the protesters now feel that fair justice is not possible under the present government, it is precisely because the latter has given no hint yet of its sincerity in that regard.

We, therefore, urge the government to change its uncompromising stance, stop continued crackdown on protesters, and immediately make way for a fully-fledged investigation by the UN. The government must be able to convince the protesters that it will not try to protect members of security forces and its own party cadres responsible for the killings. This may be the only way left for it to come out of this unprecedented crisis.

We must step back from the precipice

Dr Manzoor Ahmed
is professor emeritus at BRAC University, chair of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN), and adviser to Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

MANZOOR AHMED

Awami League leaders including Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina plaintively ask, "All job quota demands have been met; why, then, are the students protesting?" If the ruling party leaders don't understand or pretend not to understand why students are not staying back at home (their campuses and dormitories remain shuttered), we are in much deeper trouble than one could imagine. We are already at the precipice.

July 2024 will surely be marked as the blood-drenched July and will find its place in history with other milestones of student movement, such as 1952 (Language Movement), 1969 (Mass Uprising), and 1990 (anti-Ershad movement), which turned the tide of history.

The question frequently raised is how a demand for quota reform in government job recruitment by university students in Dhaka has been allowed to spread nationwide and to turn into a bloodbath. The common answer is that the regime has totally failed to sense the public pulse. Incompetence, arrogance, and mockery of protesters by supposedly responsible people were combined with a belief that it would be controlled by applying force and by unleashing the student arm of the ruling party. They failed to realise the depth of grief and pain of the people when Abu Sayed of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur was gunned down by police on July 16, at close range and in public view, as he stood alone with a stick in hand. The government failed to realise that it was fast going out of hand. It failed to sit back, take stock and change its game plan.

> **There is no reason why the prime minister cannot offer an unconditional apology for the mayhem caused, lives lost and how the situation has been handled by her government, despite whatever blame can be apportioned to opportunist mischief-makers.**

The regime failed to see that the movement wasn't just about quotas, and the longer it continued, it conflated and merged into all the grievances and pains of the people.

Corruption and cronyism affected every citizen who came in contact with any government agency; obscene amassing of wealth by those favoured by the regime reached a new height; and the daily struggle of families to make ends meet in the face of inflation and price hikes of daily necessities was aggravated by syndicates of hoarders and extortionists nurtured and tolerated by the authorities.

They did not feel the people's pain and grief caused by more than 200 deaths of students and citizens of all ages, including children, some of whom were killed and injured in the safety of their homes by firing from helicopters roaming over residential neighbourhoods, according to the victim families' accounts.

It is very difficult to understand why student coordinators of the protest were not reached out early, in order to come to an understanding about the outcome and about a process to be followed, including handling the judicial process. The public does not understand why and how the police, Rab and border forces called in to the cities became so reckless and vengeful as to aim at the protesters' eyes and heads using not just rubber bullets, but also shotgun ammunitions and lethal bullets. In the fray, they themselves suffered attacks and loss of life. Have the rules of engagement, operational procedures and command and control broken down completely, or has this been part of the plan to subdue protest by terrorising the protesters and citizens?

The usual playbook of large-scale arrests casting a wide net and alleging vague criminal acts, picking up the people at the dead of night, not informing families of the whereabouts of those picked up, not allowing families to visit those in custody—all illegal under our constitution and laws—have continued. The regime's game plan does not require that the charges are properly framed and allegations are proven in the court. The hapless people taken into custody under any excuse would suffer harassment, physical abuse, long incarceration, material loss and mental agony, no matter what verdict the slow process of justice eventually hands down. And none are held answerable for this cruel travesty.

#Save Bangladesh
মেধা কারাগারে,
খুনিরা বাইরে।

A protester holding a placard that states, 'Merit behind bars while the killers roam free.'
PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

Considering past experiences, it is difficult to have any faith in government enquiries and the possibility of real perpetrators being punished. As the sister of 19- year-old Mahmudur Rahman Shoikot of Nurjahan Road in Mohammadpur, shot in the head as he was looking for his injured friend, asked, "Police killed my brother; should we go to them for justice?"

Students have now called for a non-cooperation movement. It is a deep expression of their frustrations. As of this writing, the prime minister has said the doors of Gono Bhaban are open to students. She has been holding meetings with university heads. These are moves that should have come much earlier.

There is no reason why the prime minister should not declare the acceptance of the nine-point demand of the students for accountability and justice regarding the government's handling of the quota reform movement and the deaths and injuries, restoring academic peace on campuses, and allowing legitimate channels of expressing students' views and complaints through elected student unions.

There is no reason why the prime minister cannot offer an unconditional apology for the mayhem caused, lives lost and how the situation has been handled by her government, despite whatever blame can be apportioned to opportunist mischief-makers.

The prime minister should demonstrate her bona fides by offering full cooperation to the Eminent Citizens' Enquiry Commission headed by Justice MA Matin and Sultana Kamal, and vow to give due consideration to its findings and recommendations.

The prime minister should ask the ministers involved in aspects of the quota reform movement to accept their share of the responsibility. Officials of law enforcement agencies need to be placed on suspension pending appropriate investigation. A process should begin to bring those respected for academic feat and personal integrity into university management.

As a gesture of good faith, the prime minister should pledge to negotiate with the UAE authorities about deporting back to Bangladesh the 57 Bangladeshis who have been sentenced to prison for holding a rally in the UAE supporting the students' movement.

The words, actions and gestures must reflect a good faith effort, signal a change of plans and strategies, and a change of heart and mind. And a willingness and openness should be demonstrated to consult and dialogue with all about overcoming the hurdles to build a just and democratic society.

No sane person can believe or declare that it is too late.

Will India learn anything from the Wayanad Tragedy?

Pallab Bhattacharya
is a special correspondent for The Daily Star. He writes from New Delhi, India.

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

The deadly waves of landslides, triggered by incessant heavy rains in the hills of southern Indian state of Kerala's Wayanad district, has once again brought to sharp focus the debate over development and ecology.

Following the first day of the landslides on July 23, the Indian Environment Ministry issued a fresh draft notification declaring over 56,800 square km of the Western Ghats as an Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) spanning six states, including the devastated Wayanad villages. This was the sixth such notification by the Environment Ministry in a decade since 2014, but the final notification has never seen the light of the day after running into objections from political parties and governments.

The Western Ghats, among the world's eight most important biodiversity hot spots, runs between India's south to west through Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Gujarat, and Maharashtra. What is at stake is the life of more than 50 million people living in the region, most of them dependent on agriculture and plantations.

According to official documents, the significance of the Western Ghats as a global biodiversity area and a treasure trove of biological diversity has been repeatedly emphasised. It is also the origin of Godavari, Krishna, Cauvery, and a number of other rivers of peninsular India, on which depends much of the economy of the region.

Environmental scientists have attributed the landslides to a combination of loss of forest cover due to unregulated infrastructure development, quarrying, mining in the fragile terrain, and climate change. The increase in the rainfall on Kerala in recent years is seen by environmentalists as the result of warming of the south eastern part of the Arabian Sea, causing heightened precipitation.

In 2011, an expert panel set up by the Indian government, led by ecologist-academic Madhav Gadgil, had submitted a report, recommending a ban on these activities and designating 75 percent of the entire Western Ghats region as an ecologically sensitive zone (ESZ), a graded zonation approach to regulating industrial and agricultural activities and creation of an overarching ecological authority for the region. The expert report is gathering dust following resistance by political parties, which opposed cutting down the ESZ areas for industries and other development activities. The opposition has largely stemmed from fears that any move to ban certain activities and the demarcation of whole villages as ESAs will deprive the local people of economic growth opportunities.

Another government-appointed committee, headed by leading scientist K Kasturirangan, had suggested in 2013 that the Meppadi Panchayat in Wayanad, one of the most severely affected places by the July 23 landslide, be included in the larger eco-sensitive zone being demarcated in the state. The Kasturirangan panel proposed 37 percent of the Western Ghats be demarcated as ESA because the previously proposed 75 percent figure was considered too high. However, the Kasturirangan committee recommendations also remain unimplemented.

Maharashtra's Congress-NCP coalition government submitted to the federal Environment Ministry in 2012 that the creation of an overarching Western Ghats Ecological Authority would run parallel to existing government agencies and opposed the idea. Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu opposed a proposed ban on new hydropower projects in the region.

In 2022, the BJP government had issued a notification of ESAs in the Western Ghats but the party's government in Karnataka opposed the move. The then Karnataka Home Minister, Aranga Jnanendra, had said, if the draft notification was accepted as it was, "it will affect the lives of people in rural areas."

The Indian Express quoted Pandurang Hegde, an environmental activist associated with the Save Western Ghats Movement in Karnataka, as saying that irrespective of which political party is in power, they have always projected protection of Western Ghats as an "anti-people issue."

Hedge added, "Those with vested interests desiring to exploit natural resources do not want the demarcation of ESAs and politicians have used local people as a shield to justify the delays."

In an article in The Indian Express, Amitbah Kant, India's G20 Sherpa, says a 2022 study on depleting forest cover in Wayanad showed 62 percent of the district's green cover disappeared between 1950 and 2018, while rubber plantation cover rose by around 1,800 percent.

The intensity of the landslide increased because rubber trees are less effective in holding soil compared to the dense forest cover of pre-plantation times. Besides, the sharp rise in eco-tourism in Wayanad, one of the most scenic spots in India, has gone on unchecked in the last so many years with the construction of hotels, resorts, and roads through the hills.

The main challenge is aligning the biodiversity of the Western Ghats region with adequate opportunities for the local people in the broad framework of ESA. It is not merely an issue of development regulation, but is intimately linked to positive promotion of environment-friendly and socially inclusive growth.

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That thing on your neck

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ABAK HUSSAIN

Burdened by the standard pessimism that comes with dreary middle age, you know that tyrants never go gentle into that good night.

PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

Every time you try to write, you feel those jeers ring in your ears, from your, shall we say, *self*—no no, not this self, but that other one; you know which one—the troll, the dark comedian, the eternal cynic who says: give it up, your words never have and never will change a damn thing. You counter by saying that's perfectly fine, that it's not the role of the writer to turn the wheels of history like an action hero, but to simply put pen to paper and describe what they see. But even as you say this, your protestations appear feeble and vacuous. Because sure, you can write about how we are living in an undemocratic situation where human rights and rule of law have been tossed out the window, where the authoritarian playbook is being deployed in clear daylight, where curfews and internet blackouts and extrajudicial disappearances are being normalised as tools to keep citizens under control, but... *everybody knows that already*!

Still, the facts pile up with nowhere to go. Over 200 killed, 11,000 arrested, many of them minors. A lady who works near your house says her son got picked up by the police on his way to work, simply for identifying himself as a student. Your university student friends say they live in fear but refuse to back down from the struggle. Undeniable video evidence of police violence filters through to your computer screen, and these videos have been examined and authenticated by foreign agencies with the expertise to do so.

That ill sensation you already feel is compounded by the reactions of the government—lies heaped upon lies, a pretty picture utterly disconnected from reality. An official throws out a barrage of contradictions: protesters destroyed the internet lines, no no we shut it off to enforce law and order, no no we are working to restore internet, it's back but no no, not social media just yet. This is reminiscent of what Jacques Derrida called "kettle logic," based on a reading of Sigmund Freud's exchange with a man who tosses out all kinds of arguments in his own defence. The man has returned a damaged kettle to his neighbour, and when accused, he says 1) it was damaged when I got it, 2) there is no damage, 3) I never borrowed your kettle. Derrida uses a keen and close reading to tease out, among other things, such kettle logic in a given discourse, where a writer's or philosopher's own inconsistencies cause the argument to self-deconstruct. But here in Bangladesh, no Derrida is needed, because the contradictions are deafening, and the regime-sanctioned-gaslighting loud enough to drive one up the walls.

This dark feeling threatens to become all-engulfing, but now news trickles in, story after story from here and there of bravery, resistance, humanity. Students who flung themselves in front of their peers to protect them, friends and allies who offered shelter, lawyers who stood in front of police cars daring the jackboots to make a rash move. And you realise, in that a-ha moment that no, it's not you, nothing is broken within you, it is simply that boot, that weight of the regime, that thing on your neck that has caused this feeling.

And so you fall into a sort of malaise. Your lived self feels misaligned from your true self and despair becomes you—this, you recognise, is what Soren Kierkegaard would have called "the sickness unto death." Your therapist can do little other than offer platitudes of well-being—stay positive, try gratitude journaling... that sort of hokum. Sometimes you wonder if something is wrong with you, and in the midst of the blackout and curfew, with no human contact, sometimes you wonder if you are the only one feeling this way, everyone else being happy and well-adjusted. You split off from yourself and hover near the ceiling, and start thinking of yourself in the second-person singular. Rhetorical flourishes can be a way of coping.

This dark feeling threatens to become all-engulfing, but now news trickles in, story after story from here and there of bravery, resistance, humanity. Students who flung themselves in front of their peers to protect them, friends and allies who offered shelter, lawyers who stood in front of police cars daring the jackboots to make a rash move. And you realise, in that a-ha moment that no, it's not you, nothing is broken within you, it is simply that boot, that weight of the regime, that *thing* on your neck that has caused this feeling. Anxiety, depression, and helplessness are a natural, logical reaction to it, and in fact, happily prancing around as if everything is fine—now *that* would be the mental illness.

When the internet is back, you see the social media profiles all bleeding red in unshakeable solidarity for those who demand nothing but justice and refuse to be cowed. A new generation, one with a conscience and a fresh pair of eyes is saying to the regime: *I'm hip to all your tricks, your algebra, your politics.*

That thing—that jackboot—on your neck is still there, and you know it probably will remain there for a good while to come. You have, after all, danced this dance many times before and your capacity for youthful idealism—that spontaneous, romantic, revolutionary energy that says change is at hand!—is diminished. You have seen, read, and heard too much. Internet memes likening protesters to Marvel superheroes leave you cold, because you are all too aware that life is not a comic book or a meme, and real-world violence is not fun or exciting.

For a long time, it was enough to call someone a razakar to send a nervous chill down their spine and make them back down. For a long time, the older generation patronisingly lectured the youth with the good old "but you kids haven't seen the war like we have have!" as if our lives in Bangladesh post-1971 have been nothing but gravy. Many kept quiet and endured such evasion of responsibility from our elders. But no more! The unity and heart online are visible for all to see—no wonder the powers-that-be are scared of the internet.

And just like that, life flows back into your veins, a thirst you didn't know you had feels quenched bit by bit, and a gust of hope lifts you up and places you on your writing desk, telling you to get to work.

You are now in debt to the fighters out there—so many of them unjustly killed, maimed, imprisoned. They and their families have been failed completely by a government that was duty-bound to serve and protect. Any government official responsible with a shred of a conscience upon learning of the events that have transpired over the last few days would turn red with shame, resign their post, and beg the nation for forgiveness. But not here in Bangladesh, because apology is not the way of the *jackboot*.

This is why it is all the more important that we acknowledge each other, that we reach out to and hold on to each other, that we lift each other up, and spread kindness, fairness, and the values of democracy and social justice as far and as wide as we can. Is that futile? Very well then, it's futile! But you cannot always take on the sins of the world onto your own shoulders—all you can do is act in line with your ethics and stay straight with your maker, align yourself with your true self, and continue to speak truth to power even if your voice shakes.

That thing—that jackboot—on your neck is still there, and you know it probably will remain there for a good while to come. You have, after all, danced this dance many times before and your capacity for youthful idealism—that spontaneous, romantic, revolutionary energy that says *change is at hand*!—is diminished. You have seen, read, and heard too much. Internet memes likening protesters to Marvel superheroes leave you cold, because you are all too aware that life is not a comic book or a meme, and real-world violence is not fun or exciting.

Nor is the fight of good versus evil as simple as you would like it to be. Burdened by the standard pessimism that comes with dreary middle age, you know that tyrants never go gentle into that good night, and when they do, it is often tyrants who replace other has-been tyrants—think the departure of Ershad or the Shah of Iran or the last Tsar of Russia or Hosni Mubarak—and escape from the cycle seems impossible. And yet, and yet, and *yet*. The contagion of courage changes something in you—because that icy shudder of loneliness is now gone, that nonsensical jumble of thoughts has transformed into a more articulate stream, and now, wind in your sails from a rush of solidarity, you do that one thing that you are still able to do—write about it all. You know very well your words can't change a thing, but if there's even a sliver of a possibility that these words might travel out into the ether and let another oppressed, depressed, repressed soul know that they are not alone, then this debt of yours—of *mine*—is paid forward.

Why cancel prisoners' right to visitation?

Tabarak Hussain
is an advocate at the Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

TABARAK HUSSAIN

Suspects arrested during the block raids by law enforcement agencies are taken to a Dhaka court on July 23, 2024.

FILE PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

It is unacceptable that prisoners are being denied visitations from their families for over two weeks. On August 3, when we went to see our clients at the Dhaka Central Jail, we were stopped at the jail gate by a security guard named Halim and some other female guards. They tried to turn us away along with other visitors who had gathered at the gate. After learning that we were lawyers from the Supreme Court, they calmed down a bit. We told them that we wanted to see our clients, who were in the prison, but they said they could not allow the visitation. When we asked for the reason, they responded that it was an order from above. We asked if they had received the order in writing. They said they did not receive anything in writing, but were verbally instructed.

We then gave the security guard our card and asked him to take it to the jailer and requested a meeting with him instead. We learnt from the other guards that visits had been stopped since July 20. No one has been able to see the students who have been sent to jail over the last few weeks due to mass arrests. Even other prisoners, in unrelated cases, are unable to meet anyone anymore.

At one point, a prison official came to the gate to meet us. He reiterated that no prisoners would be allowed to meet anyone. When we asked for the reason, he said they did not have any answers. He advised us to meet someone of a higher rank to get more details or to learn the reason behind this restriction. He gave us the phone number of the deputy superintendent of jail. Barrister Sara Hossain called the person and asked why visitors were barred from visiting detainees. He informed us that the direction had come from the home ministry. He said a circular had been issued in this regard on the website of the Department of Prisons. We saw that the circular on the website had been issued on July 21, even though we had learnt from people at the jail gate that visits had been stopped since July 20. It is possible that the instructions were given on July 20 and the circular was issued a day later.

The problem with this order is that two kinds of people are sent to jail: those who are convicted and sentenced with imprisonment, and those who are sent to jail while their cases are still on trial. The jail code clearly states that all of them have the right to visitation by their families once a week for one hour. They are now being deprived of this legal right.

The problem with this order is that two kinds of people are sent to jail: those who are convicted and sentenced with imprisonment, and those who are sent to jail while their cases are still on trial. The jail code clearly states that all of them have the right to visitation by their families once a week for one hour. They are now being deprived of this legal right.

Another concerning fact is that ordinary people do not know about the suspension of visits. Some people are looking for their sons or brothers. They are coming to the central jail from Brahmanbaria, Bogura, or other places, quite far from Keraniganj. They don't know how their family members are faring in jail. A lot of them don't even know if their family members are in this jail. I even found people who heard that a relative had been arrested. When they went to the police station, the officers informed them that the person had already been sent to jail. When they tried to visit them in jail, they couldn't. They still haven't been able to establish any form of contact with them. These people come to the jail every single day hoping to establish contact.

It was very painful for us to witness this suffering of the common people. The circular has been published on the prison website only, and many families are not tech-savvy. If the circular had been published and publicly distributed, these people wouldn't have to travel from one district to another, making futile attempts to see their loved ones. Given the country's current situation, travelling is also difficult. The way the government ignores people's suffering disheartens us.

We believe that this circular denies people their rights. The constitution is the supreme law and clearly grants prisoners the right to visitation by their families for one hour a week. Visitors can also send them essentials such as food, clothes, and medicine. Many are now deprived of medical treatment. They can't receive or even buy their medicines due to lack of money.

The formal methods of sending food and money are also unavailable right now. We did observe some informal methods of sending money or clothes into the prison. But relatives sending anything into the prison right now have no way to confirm whether the prisoners they are sending the items to are actually receiving it.

Protesters call for 'March to Dhaka' today

FROM PAGE 1

Three coordinators of the movement – Asif Mahmud, Sarjis Alam and Abu Baker Majumder – confirmed the developments to The Daily Star.

Addressing the protesters in the capital's Shahbagh at 3:00pm, Nahid Islam, a key organiser, said the Awami League activists were deployed on the roads to drive the country into a state of civil war.

"Our objectives, goals and destination are clear. Victory alone is our goal. We are still giving time. If the government continues to resort to violence, we want to let them know that we are looking at the Gono Bhaban.

"If my brothers are shot in the chest, if any of my sisters are injured, we will not sit idle. Form up a 'Protirodh Sangram Committee' [resistance struggle committee] in every neighbourhood, village, mohalla, and alley. Form up resistance wherever [we are] attacked."

He urged students to continue their sit-in at Shahbagh until the fall of the government.

Meanwhile, demonstrators marching with the bodies of victims were dispersed in Shahbagh last evening.

They visited Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 6:00pm yesterday. From there, they marched towards the Shaheed Minar with the bodies of four people killed in yesterday's violence.

After a brief protest there, they headed towards Shahbagh through Dhaka University's Teacher-Student Centre.

They chanted slogans: "Amar Bhai Morlo Keno, Sheikh Hasina Jobab Chai [Why did my brother die? Sheikh Hasina I want an answer]", "Lorai, Lorai, Lorai Chai, Lorai Kore Bachte Chai [Fight, fight, fight; we want to fight; we want to fight and live]", and "Dofa Ek Dabi Ek, Sheikh Hasinar Padatyag [One point, one demand, Sheikh Hasina's resignation]".

While crossing the Shahbagh Police Station, some protesters started throwing brickbats at it.

In retaliation, police lobbed stun grenades and teargas shells, dispersing the demonstrators. Three of the bodies were left on the street.

Among the four bodies, two have been identified -- Abdullah Siddique, 23, a student of Habibullah Bahar Degree College and Touhidul.

The Daily Star could not independently verify where the bodies were later taken.

Four police officials, including an assistant sub-inspector, were injured in the incident, our staff correspondent reported from the spot.

A few minutes later, police took control of Shabagh and the DU campus.

No protesters were found in Shahbagh, and police were seen positioned at every intersection on the campus when this report was filed at 8:00pm.

People take part in a march, as Lebanon marks the fourth anniversary of the explosion in the port of Beirut, Lebanon yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Mobile internet

FROM PAGE 12

minister for ICT and telecom, could not be reached for comment.

The government shut down mobile internet service on July 17 to 'control the situation and counter fake news'.

A day later, broadband internet was blocked, severely affecting public life and a wide range of economic activities, including utility bill payment, online banking, international communications, digital commerce and clearance of goods from ports.

The government restored broadband internet on a limited scale on July 23. However, social media platforms like Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp and YouTube, remained blocked.

Mobile internet was resumed on July 28, while social media restrictions were lifted on July 31.

However, mobile internet users could not access their Facebook and Messenger accounts for approximately seven hours on August 2.

Curfew extended indefinitely

FROM PAGE 12

place in different areas in Dhaka and other parts of Bangladesh on the first day of the non-cooperation movement announced by the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement.

On Saturday, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan relaxed the ongoing curfew, which was imposed on July 20, from 6:00am to 9:00pm.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, senior secretary at the public administration ministry, cited public safety as the reason behind the holiday decision.

Banks and financial institutions will remain closed during the holiday period, said a top official of the Bangladesh Bank yesterday.

Meanwhile, operations of the courts across the country, including the Supreme Court's Appellate Division and High Court Division, and their offices will remain closed until further notice.

However, one or more magistrates will work round the clock at every court under the chief judicial magistrates and the chief metropolitan magistrates for hearing and disposing of urgent cases.

Besides, Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan will take necessary measures for urgent matters during the closure.

The SC administration issued three separate notifications yesterday to this effect.

Will not allow

FROM PAGE 12

restrictions and assist the police.

He added that their actions were not directed against students but against miscreants, saboteurs, arsonists, and those responsible for killing police officers.

The DMP chief said the quota protests that initially started under the banner of "Students Against Discrimination", had later been hijacked by criminals who caused unprecedented chaos across the country.

"BNP-Jamaat-Shibir has resumed vandalism and arson attacks over the last two days nationwide. In the capital, they attacked police and civilians with local weapons, crude bombs, and firearms. They even attacked BSMMU and CMM court, and vandalised police boxes and vehicles.

"At least 11 policemen, including three with bullet wounds, were injured in these attacks today [yesterday]. Their actions prove that they are not students but saboteurs and terrorists," he said.

The DMP has shown considerable restraint since the beginning of the movement. The commissioner asserted that the aim of these miscreants was to demoralise the police. "We want to clearly state that no miscreant can stand in the capital."

Asked about people with sharp weapons and firearms seen with police in the Karwan Bazar area, the DMP chief claimed that they had not yet seen this.

Djokovic beats Alcaraz

FROM PAGE 12

Open and Wimbledon titles he has already pocketed this summer.

An emotional Djokovic celebrated by holding aloft the Serbian flag on court before clambering into the players' box to embrace his wife and children.

"We almost played three hours, the final shot was the only moment when I was sure I could win the match," said Djokovic, who had lost heavily to Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final last month.

"I put my body, my family on the line to win gold and finally I did it."

Alcaraz was distraught and wept as he attempted to conduct a TV interview.

"Three hours, a big battle with tough moments," said the 21-year-old after a final in which neither player dropped serve. "It's very painful to lose."

Djokovic carved out a break point in the second game of the opener and three more in the fourth, all saved by the Spaniard.

Then it was the Serb's turn to demonstrate his famed powers of resilience, fighting off three break points in the fifth game and another five in a marathon ninth game.

In a rollercoaster duel, Alcaraz saved a set point in the 12th game but his veteran opponent dominated the tiebreak to claim the opener after a breathless 93 minutes on Court Philippe Chatrier.

There was no let-up in the second set, scintillating shot-making alongside rousing defence with Alcaraz fighting off the final's 14th break point in the third game.

Again the set was decided by a tie-break and it was Djokovic with history on the line again sweeping through to take victory after two hours and 50 minutes.

Lorenzo Musetti defeated Felix Auger-Aliassime in three sets on Saturday to claim the bronze medal, giving Italy its first men's tennis medal in 100 years.

Journo killed

FROM PAGE 12

Amran Hossain was assaulted near Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University around 11:30am.

Around 4:00pm, a group of unidentified people threw brick chunks and stones at The Daily Star Centre on the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, breaking the glass doors and windowpanes on the ground floor.

The incident took place during a clash between protesters and law enforcers aided by ruling party men.

This newspaper's country desk in-charge Mahmud Hassan Shanto, was assaulted at Karwan Bazar while he was on his way to work on a motorcycle.

FM Mizanur Rahman, staff reporter of this newspaper, was beaten up by protesters in the New Market area of Chattogram city.

In Thakurgaon, Prothom Alo correspondent Mozibur Rahman was attacked near the Judge Court.

Ekattor TV Senior Reporter Habib Rahman was assaulted in Hatirjheel, and its correspondents in Chandpur, Sylhet, and Munshiganj were also attacked.

Two reporters of The Business Standard -- Jahidul Islam and Naimul Islam Miraz -- were injured in an attack by what they said were AL men.

Dhaka Tribune reporter Nawaz Farhin Antara was assaulted around 11:30am.

Channel24's reporter Shamima Sultana was attacked in Shahbagh area. Two reporters of bdnews24.com -- Mahmud Hasan and Masum Billah -- were also assaulted when they tried to protect Shamima.

Two journalists of Jai Jai Din -- Nahid Hasan and Amirul Islam -- were attacked in Zigatola area.

SomoyTV reporter Morsalin Jonaed and cameraperson Md Murad were injured in Uttara. In Manikganj, reporters of Independent TV's Manjur Rahman, ATN Bangla's Shahidul Islam, Amar News' staff correspondent Dewan Sadman were injured in clashes.

Since July 16, a total of five journalists have been killed in violence centring the quota reform movement.

Teachers lay out 5-point outline

FROM PAGE 3

environment for a democratic election is ensured in the country," he said, adding that such a shadow government can continue even in an elected democratic system.

"The important responsibilities that the interim government will perform after assuming office are: establishing an inquiry committee and a special tribunal with the support of the United Nations to try those responsible for the July killings and oppression of the people, withdrawing the recent false cases, and releasing all those detained in these cases," according to Prof Anu.

The proposal includes that the interim government will also hold elections to constitute a Constituent Assembly within six months of its formation. The elected Constituent Assembly will propose a democratic constitution free of autocracy, communal, anti-people, and discriminatory clauses.

Based on that constitution, the interim government will immediately organise the next general election. A declaration should be finalised based on dialogue between the students and citizens, guiding the progress of Bangladesh through a combination of diversity." The Bangladesh University Teachers' Network is ready to play any role in the formation of the proposed interim government and the list of key stakeholders and shadow government," he added.

He also said this outline is only a preliminary proposal, and they are willing to work in the future to expand it if necessary.

Earlier, Dhaka University teacher Prof Samina Lutfa delivered a welcome speech, where DU teachers Prof Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, Prof Gitiara Nasreen, Prof Moshahida Sultana Ritu, and BUET teacher Prof Abdul Hasib Chowdhury read out the written statement in the press conference.

Take back armed forces

FROM PAGE 3

associated with these untimely demises of hundreds of children, teens, and young brave souls."

He noted, "The Bangladeshi armed forces have never faced off with the masses or trained their guns at the chests of their fellow citizens."

Bangladesh's armed forces have worked tirelessly and made many sacrifices towards establishing global peace over the last three decades. "But that respect, status, and pride are being questioned today," he said.

Addressing the army, he said, "You must stand beside the people of the country ensuring full adherence to universal human rights. We cannot let our motherland be destroyed in front of our eyes."

"Our border is unprotected at the moment. BGB members have been withdrawn in significant numbers from the border belt to quell the student movement. Not surprisingly the border is now open to parties who wish to exploit the internal turmoil the country is going through."

"Time is ripe to immediately take the soldiers to barracks to prepare themselves for any eventuality as the time taken to transition from internal security mode to operational mode takes quite some time. On the same note, we also urge the government to undertake political initiatives aiming at resolving the ongoing crisis. Do not destroy the good standing of our armed forces by keeping them engaged in a disgraceful campaign," he said.

He further urged for an investigation of all the killings, injuries, shootings, attacks, vandalisms, abductions, arrests, and acts of violence that have to be carried out by the United Nations under its full authority.

Iqbal Karim, who served as the chief of army staff from 2012 to 2015, said those who are responsible for pushing the people to a state of such extreme misery will have to be brought to justice.

The briefing was attended by the former Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen M Nuruddin Khan, former Maj Gen M Azizur Rahman, Maj Gen Abu Kaiser Fazlul Kabir, Maj Gen Jamil D Ahsan, Bir Protik, Maj Gen Rezzaqul Haider, Maj Gen Muhammad Abdul Matin, Maj Gen Mujahid Uddin, Maj Gen Abul Kalam Humayun Kabir, Maj Gen Mahbubul Alam, Maj Gen Ruhul Amin, Maj Gen ATM Shahidul Islam, Brig Gen M Sakhawat Hossain and Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan among 48 retired officers.

It's a clear violation

FROM PAGE 3

centring the protests.

A large number of students and citizens were killed during the nonpolitical movement while thousands of others were injured or detained, he said, expressing deep concern over a "mass detention" campaign by the law enforcement agencies.

He also expressed solidarity with the peaceful movement of students.

However, he said, state properties were damaged in violent activities centring the movement, which is not supportable.

He called for punishment for culprits of subversive activities.

He also called upon the government to end harassment of students and mass detention, release all the detainees including students, and resume educational activities across the country to bring back respite in people's mind.

Violence rocks Dhaka

FROM PAGE 3

police, ruling party men, and protesters in Shahbagh. At one point, AL men chased protesters, and both groups entered Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, where they hurled brickbats at each other. Several hospital vehicles and private cars of doctors were set ablaze.

Around 2:00pm, five injured protesters received treatment at BIRDEM hospital, two of them with bullet wounds. At 4:15pm, an armored police vehicle emerged from Shahbagh Police Station but had to return inside as protesters blocked the area. Around 6:40pm, hundreds of protesters carried the four bodies of the deceased to Shahbagh intersection from Central Shaheed Minar. They later threw brickbats at Shahbagh Police Station, and policemen opened fire to retaliate and disperse the protesters.

SCIENCE LAB

At least 41 people were shot in the Science Lab area during a clash between AL men and protesters that ensued around 12:30pm and continued till 4:30pm. Of them, three were bullet-hit while the others were injured by pellets, according to sources at LabAid Hospital. Sounds of gunshots and stun grenades were reported from the scene.

Meanwhile, a showroom of the clothing brand "Yellow" in Dhanmondi was set ablaze at around 3:30pm. According to eyewitnesses, firefighters tried to reach the spot to extinguish the blaze but failed in the face of protesters. However, they later went again and were trying to douse the fire till last reported at 8:30pm.

AZAMPUR

In Azampur, AL leaders and activists gathered in Azampur area around 11:00am, and opened fire at protesters in presence of police when the students went there around 11:30am.

The two groups engaged in chases and counter-chases till 5:30pm.

PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

Anwarul Islam, president of Uttara Ward-1 unit of AL, was killed during the violence, said his cousin and former AL lawmaker Habib Hasan.

RAMPURA

Several thousand students of different private universities, colleges and schools blocked the road in Merul, Badda, Rampura bridge and Banasree area at around 10:15am, chanting slogans demanding Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to step down, and justice for the deaths of their fellow students.

Some parents were also seen accompanying their children.

Around 3:30pm, the students left the spot and marched towards Shahbagh.

MIRPUR-10

Clashes, chases and counter-chases took place at Mirpur-10 between protesters and activists of ruling AL and its affiliates.

The AL men started gathering at Mirpur-10 crossing at 10:30am, armed with canes and firearms, and chased away protesters when they started gathering at Kazipara bus stand later.

The AL men left the scene as Army personnel took position there with several vehicles at around 3:00pm.

DHAKA-CTG HIGHWAY

The Dhaka-Chattogram Highway was left largely deserted as almost no vehicles carrying passengers or export-import goods used the road yesterday.

"No trucks, covered vans, or prime movers are operating on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway as the vehicle owners are afraid of violence," said Chowdhury Zafar Ahmed, general secretary of Bangladesh Covered Van-Truck-Prime Mover Goods Transport Owners Association.

Only one-fourth of the goods-laden vehicles dedicated to the route operated in the previous night, he added.

Around 90 percent of Bangladesh's over US $100 billion worth international trade uses the highway as main route.

No inter-district passenger-buses operated yesterday either.

Md Abdus Sattar, general manager of Green Line Paribahan, said, "No passenger bought tickets today [yesterday], even though we were ready to run our buses."

Star
SPORT
DHAKA MONDAY AUGUST 5, 2024, SRABAN 21, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

SPORTS 18-1
Paris Olympics
Live from 11:30 am
SONY SPORTS 2
The Hundred
Welsh Fire vs Southern Brave
Live from 11:30 pm
T SPORTS
GT20
Brampton vs Surrey
Live from 9:00 pm
Montreal vs Toronto
Live from 2:00 am (Tuesday)

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

TRIATHLON
Mixed Relay
12:00 pm
SHOOTING
25m Rapid Fire Pistol (Men's)
1:30 pm
ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS
Men's Parallel Bars
3:45 pm
Women's Balance Beam
4:38 pm
Men's Horizontal Bar
5:33 pm
Women's Floor Excercise
6:23 pm
Men's Kayak Cross
9:00 pm
ATHLETICS
Men's Pole Vault
11:00 pm
Women's 5000m
1:15 am (Tuesday)
Women's 800m
1:47 am (Tuesday)
CYCLING TRACK
11:46 pm
3V3 BASKETBALL
Women: 2:00 am (Tuesday)
3V3 BASKETBALL
Men: 2:30 am (Tuesday)

Yesterday was a great day for Caribbean people as they saw two of their athletes bring in glory for their nations in the Paris Olympics. Just 10 minutes after Julien Alfred stunned American world champion Sha'Carri Richardson to win the women's 100 metres final and claim Saint Lucia's first-ever Olympic medal, [bottom middle] Thea LaFond made history for Dominica by winning gold in the triple jump to earn the country's first-ever Olympic medal. Jamaica's Shanieka Ricketts took silver and American Jasmine Moore claimed bronze in the triple jump event. PHOTO: REUTERS

Alfred leads double Caribbean delight

AFP, *Paris*

Julien Alfred and Thea LaFond led their two tiny Caribbean island nations to first-ever Olympic medals when they won golds in the women's 100m and triple jump at the Paris Games on Saturday.

In the 100m, St. Lucia's Alfred upstaged the much-hyped American world champion Sha'Carri Richardson, storming to a gun-to-tape victory in 10.72sec.

"It means a lot to my country. I'm sure they're celebrating right now," said Alfred.

It was a stunning success in pouring rain at the Stade de France, aided by world champion Richardson's terrible start and the withdrawal before the final of the injured Jamaican veteran Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce.

Richardson did fight back to claim silver in 10.87sec, but Fraser-Pryce missed out completely on her bid to become the first Olympian to medal in the same athletics event in five consecutive Games dating back to her gold in Beijing in 2008.

In any case, the evening belonged to 23-year-old Alfred, overcome with joy after realising she had bagged St. Lucia their first-ever medal of any colour at an Olympics.

"Growing up I used to be on the field struggling with no shoes running barefoot, running in my school uniform, running all over the place," said Alfred.

"I'm really hoping this gold medal will also help the youth and help St Lucia build a new stadium and really help the sport grow." In a remarkable turn of events, there was -- just 10 minutes later -- another gold for a second island nation in the West Indies which also began competing at the Games in 1996.

LaFond sailed out to a national record of 15.02 metres on her second effort in the triple jump. The world indoor champion held her nerve as Jamaica's Shanieka Ricketts went out to 14.87m to claim silver.

"It is absolutely beyond my wildest dreams," said LaFond. "The rain was kind of in my favour, it came down as soon as I was done with that second jump – thank you God for working with me!"

Lafond added: "Here we are, Olympic champ. Dominica's first medal, it's gold. Indoor was the first medal, it was gold. What a year, what a life, oh my God, wow!

"Every time I step on the track is an honour, bearing the flag is an honour, being Dominican is an honour. Representing a country with only 70,000 people and being out here and getting their first medal, a gold, is an honour."

McIntosh makes Canadian history

REUTERS, *Paris*

Summer McIntosh became the first Canadian athlete to take three golds from a single Olympics when she won the 200 metres individual medley at the Paris Games on Saturday.

The 17-year-old swimmer did it in an Olympic record time of two minutes 06.56 seconds, taking down the 2016 record of 2:06.58 set by Hungary's Katinka Hosszu, to complete a medley double after winning the 400 last Monday.

Kate Douglass of the United States won the silver and Australian Kaylee McKeown was awarded the bronze after U.S. swimmer Alex Walsh, the 2021 silver medallist, was disqualified for an illegal turn at the end of the backstroke leg.

McIntosh now has four medals from Paris after also winning the 200 butterfly on Thursday and taking silver in the 400 freestyle on the opening Saturday.

"It's pretty surreal," she said. "I'm just so proud of myself for how I've been able to recover and manage these events, because it is a lot."

France eye Olympic men's football final

Morocco fancy chances against Spain

AFP, LYON

Thierry Henry's France have their sights set on a place in the gold medal match in the Olympic men's football as they face Egypt in the semifinals on Monday, while Spain take on an impressive Morocco in the other last four game.

France are dreaming of a second men's football gold -- 40 years after their first -- on home soil and will be overwhelming favourites against the Egyptians in Lyon.

Henry's team have not conceded a goal on their way to the semis, having eased through the group stage with three wins from three before edging out two-time Olympic champions Argentina 1-0 on Friday.

"I call my players the crazy guys, in a good way," said Henry, an all-time France great who won the World Cup and a European Championship as a player.

"I have had the opportunity to play in a lot of competitions. I am not saying I haven't enjoyed what I have done, but the Olympics are different."

Meanwhile, the winner of men's football gold will come from outside Latin America for the first time since 2000, and there is the possibility of an all North African final.

Morocco have been outstanding in reaching the semis, topping their group ahead of Argentina and hammering the United States 4-0.

They may fancy their chances in Marseille against Spain, who are hoping to follow their senior national team's triumph at Euro 2024 by winning football gold for the second time, 32 years on from victory at the Barcelona Games.

IBA gender tests flawed and illegitimate: IOC

REUTERS, PARIS

The gender tests conducted by the International Boxing Association (IBA) on two female fighters at last year's world championships that led to their disqualification were illegitimate and lacked credibility, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said on Sunday.

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif and Taiwan's double world champion Lin Yu-ting were cleared to compete at the Paris Olympics despite having been disqualified during the 2023 World Championships after the IBA said they had failed a gender eligibility test.

The IOC said the testing process at that event, which only came towards the end of the competition after the boxers had already fought several bouts, was completely arbitrary. "Those tests are not legitimate tests," IOC spokesperson Mark Adams told a press conference. "The testing, the method of the testing, the idea of the testing which happened kind of overnight. None of it is legitimate and this does not deserve any response."

The IOC last year stripped the IBA of its status as boxing's governing body over governance and finance issues, taking charge of the Paris Games boxing competition.

Tigers' preparation plans for Pak Tests remain uncertain

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's preparations for the upcoming two-match Test series in Pakistan has taken a hit with practice schedules having to be postponed due to the ongoing unrest in the country.

The team for the Pakistan series is yet to be announced but a probable contingent of players were set to begin skill training under head coach Chandika Hathurusingha and other coaching staff on Sunday. But practice had to be cancelled due to the ongoing unrest.

The government yesterday imposed a curfew for an indefinite period, leading to uncertainty over practice schedules. "Everything depends on the situation in terms of practice sessions taking place. If the situation does not permit, practice won't take place," a BCB source told The Daily Star. Bangladesh are scheduled to depart for Pakistan on August 17 with the first Test in Rawalpindi slated to begin on August 21 and the second Test in Karachi scheduled to start on August 30.

On Saturday, a scheduled physical assessment test of the players at the Bangabandhu National Stadium had to be cancelled due to poor weather. However, the Tigers did take part in strength and conditioning tests at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium the same day.

Bangladesh 'A' team are also slated to leave for Pakistan on August 6 to play two four-day games and three one-day matches. Many national team stars have been named in the 15-member squad for the first four-day match, slated to begin on August 10.

BCB sources have informed that the board is still sticking to their initial schedule regarding A team's departure but everything will depend on the circumstances at the time.

Biles looks to join 'great' Ledecky

REUTERS, PARIS

Simone Biles could join an elite club of greatest female Olympians as she goes for titles eight and nine in the balance beam and floor exercise finals on the last day of artistic gymnastics competition at the Paris Games on Monday.

The American phenom, who won team, all-around and vault golds in Paris, is the favourite on floor but not a shoe-in on beam, the apparatus where a mere centimetre of misjudgment can separate a medallist from last place.

If Biles wins both beam and floor, her nine Olympic golds will tie her with U.S. swimmer Katie Ledecky and Soviet gymnast Larisa Latynina for the most ever won by a female athlete.

Her beam challengers, teammate Sunisa Lee and Zhou Yaqin of China, are two of only three women who so far this year have performed a more difficult routine than Biles. Biles won beam bronze in the last two Olympics, including in Tokyo. She enjoys a difficulty advantage on the floor exercise with her signature tumbling, including a stratospheric double backflip with three twists, meaning the true race on the apparatus will most likely be for silver and bronze.

LEDECKY CONFIRMS GREATNESS

Already rated one of swimming's all-time greats coming into the Paris Olympics, Katie Ledecky made it official yesterday by storming to victory in her signature event, the 800 metres freestyle to end her work in the French capital in grand style with record-equalling ninth gold.

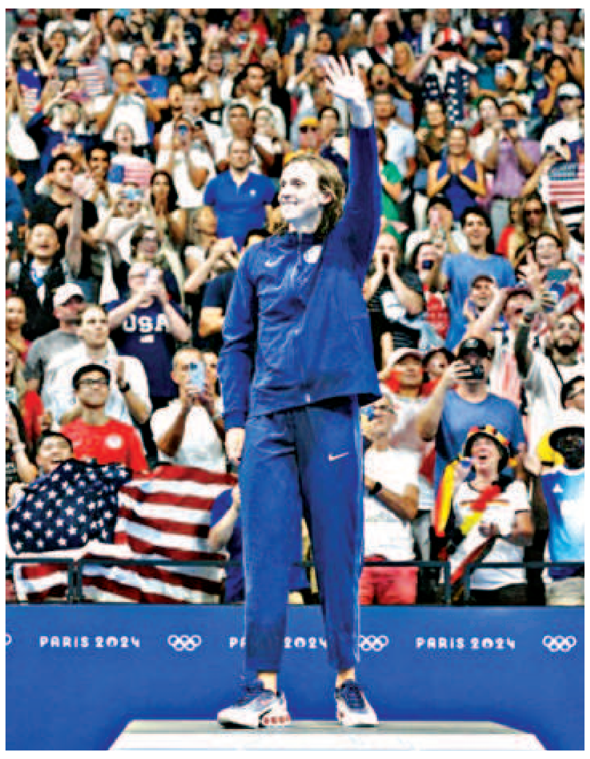
"I knew I just had to focus on the races, don't focus on times, just focus on getting the job done," said Ledecky, whose Paris haul also included gold in the 1,500, silver in the 4x200 freestyle relay and bronze in the 400m free.

In sharp contrast to Ledecky's runaway win in the 1,500m, the 800m freestyle was a thriller from start to finish, with Ariarne Titmus matching her stroke-for-stroke for almost the entire distance.

But with the American setting a relentless, grinding pace her great Australian rival would never get her nose in front, settling for silver, with Ledecky getting to the wall first in a time of 8 minutes, 11.04 seconds.

It marked the fourth consecutive Games Ledecky has won the 800m free, and she joins compatriot Michael Phelps as the only swimmers to win gold in four different Olympics. "Given that Michael's the only one that's ever done that, I think that just shows how difficult that is," said Ledecky. "Especially in the 800. It's just a lot of miles."

The 800m was the final event on Ledecky's Paris card and she returns home having added two golds, a silver and a bronze, bringing her Olympic stockpile to 14 medals in all - with more possible.



American swimmer Katie Ledecky celebrates on the podium after winning her ninth career Olympic gold, finishing first in the 800m freestyle in Paris on Saturday. PHOTO: REUTERS

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Curfew extended indefinitely

Govt announces general holiday for 3 days from today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of a sharp escalation of violence across the country, the government yesterday decided to extend the ongoing curfew for an indefinite period in the capital and all other divisional cities, city corporations, district and upazila headquarters.

The government also announced a three-day general holiday starting today.

The home ministry, in a statement released in the afternoon, said the curfew would be effective from 6:00pm yesterday.

At least 90 people, including 14 policemen, were killed and several hundreds injured yesterday as fierce clashes took

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Protesters by the hundreds swarm the Shahbagh intersection in the capital yesterday, where later a fierce clash broke out between them and ruling party supporters on the first day of the nationwide non-cooperation movement announced by the Anti-Discrimination Students' Movement. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Mobile internet, social media blocked again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mobile internet, along with popular social media and messaging platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp, are once again blocked in Bangladesh amid escalating violence that has cost dozens of lives.

A government agency under the home ministry instructed mobile operators to shut down 4G services, which facilitate mobile internet, around 12:40 pm yesterday, according to officials of the telecom operators.

"The authorities have shut down the mobile internet. We are in continuous communication with the relevant authorities regarding this issue," said Grameenphone regarding the government's instruction. Banglalink gave out a similar statement.

The telecom regulator ordered the international internet gateway (IIG) companies to block Meta Platforms --Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram -- from broadband internet, around 1:45 pm, according to officials of IIG operators.

IIG operators supply wholesale internet to broadband internet providers.

Zunaid Ahmed Palak, the state

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Six AL activists beaten to death in Narsingdi

STAR REPORT

Six Awami League leaders and activists were beaten to death yesterday after they opened fire at protesters in Madhabdi upazila of Narsingdi, locals said.

The incident took place at a mosque near Madhabdi Municipal Building around 1:00pm, reports our correspondent, quoting Additional Superintendent of Police KM Shahidul Islam Shohag.

Police said the deceased are Delwar Hossain Shaheen, 37, chairman of Chardighaldi Union Parishad and former general secretary of Madhabdi Chhatra League; Babul Hossain, 47, councillor of Ward-12; Moniruzzaman Bhuiyan, 48, organising secretary of Madhabdi Swechchhasebok League and member of Zilla Parishad; Delwar Hossain Delu, 48, former Chhatra League activist; Kamal Mia, 45, who had no post in the ruling AL, but was known in the area as a supporter; and Anisur Rahman Sohel, 43, leader of Madhabdi Swechchhasebok League.

Witnesses said hundreds of protesters blocked the Dhaka-Sylhet highway around 12:00pm.

Around an hour later, hundreds of AL leaders and activists first asked the protesters to leave and then opened fire at them, injuring several protesters, locals said.

As the protesters chased the AL men away with sticks, some of them went inside Boro Masjid.

The protesters then caught and beat up at least 10 people inside the mosque, leaving six of them dead, locals said.

The bodies were lying there for hours.

Around 8:00pm, the dead bodies were sent to Narsinghdi Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Upazila Parishad Chairman Anwar Hossain's younger brother Jakaria Hossain said the AL men were attacked by BNP leaders and protesters without any provocation.

Of those who got shot, Alamin, 25, and Suman, 30, were admitted to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital, and two others were taken to a private facility.

Israel presses on with deadly raids in Gaza

33 Palestinians killed; Hezbollah, Israel trade projectiles along Lebanon border

AGENCIES

An Israeli airstrike hit a tent inside a hospital compound in central Gaza, killing at least five people, bringing the total number of Palestinians killed yesterday to 33, Gaza health officials said, after another round of talks ended without result.

The airstrike hit a tent area inside the Al-Aqsa Hospital compound, starting a fire, wounding at least 18 people in addition to the five killed, medical authorities said.

The attack came hours after a strike on two Gaza City schools-turned-shelters. At least 25 Palestinians were killed and several others were injured in the strike.

The Israeli military said it struck a Hamas member who "conducted terror activities" and that secondary explosions were identified, indicating the presence of weaponry in the hospital compound.

Its statement added it struck 50 military targets across the enclave in the last 24 hours, including Hamas cells.

The hospital compound is in the Deir Al-Balah area, which is crowded with thousands of people displaced by fighting in other parts of the enclave have sought shelter, reports Reuters.

Sirens went off in the area of Ashdod, further north than seen in recent weeks, and the Israeli military said five rockets were launched from southern Gaza. No injuries were reported.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday at least 39,583 Palestinians have been killed in the Israeli offensive. The toll includes 33 deaths in 24 hours, according to ministry figures.

Israeli forces have continued strikes and shelling in the Gaza Strip after diplomatic efforts in Cairo on Saturday ended without progress, and as Israel braces for a serious escalation in the north.

Chances of a breakthrough appear low as regional tension has soared following the assassination of Hamas' leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on Wednesday, a day after an Israeli strike in Beirut killed Fuad Shukr, a top military commander from Lebanese armed group Hezbollah.

Meanwhile, urgent calls for foreign nationals to leave Lebanon grew yesterday with France warning of "a highly volatile" situation, reports AFP.

France, Canada and Jordan were among the latest governments to call for their citizens to leave Lebanon. The United States and Britain have issued similar warnings.

- Foreign nationals told to leave Lebanon
- Gaza talks in Cairo failed to deliver progress
- Death toll in enclave rises to 39,583

Comply with curfew rules: army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Army has urged all to comply with the rules of the curfew that was extended for an indefinite period yesterday. It also sought everyone's cooperation in this regard.

The government took the decision which will apply to the capital and all other divisional cities, city corporations, district and upazila headquarters.

The curfew came into effect at 6:00pm yesterday.

According to a statement signed by Inter-Services Public Relation Director Lt Col Sami Ud Dowla Chowdhury, the army will play its role as mandated by the constitution and laws in ensuring the security of the people and protection of the important state infrastructures

"The curfew has been imposed for an indefinite period considering the deterioration of the country's overall law and order," said the ISPR statement yesterday.

Journo killed in Sirajganj

Daylong attacks leave 25 media personnel, including 3 Star journalists, injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A journalist was killed during clashes between protesters and local Awami League activists in Sirajganj yesterday.

At least 25 other journalists were also injured across the nation.

Three of the injured are journalists of The Daily Star.

In Sirajganj, Pradip Kumar Bhowmik, Rayganj correspondent of Daily Khoborpatra, died after he was assaulted during agitators' attack on Rayganj Press Club around noon.

His colleagues later took him to a hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

He was also a member of the Communist Party of Bangladesh.

Earlier, the protesters vandalised the local Awami League office.

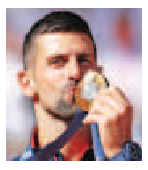
In the capital, The Daily Star photographer

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Djokovic beats Alcaraz to win Olympic gold

AFP, *Paris*

Novak Djokovic defeated Carlos Alcaraz on Sunday to claim a maiden Olympic title and become just the fifth player to complete a career Golden Slam.



The 37-year-old Serb, competing in his fifth Games, came through 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/2) in an enthralling final at Roland Garros to add Olympic gold to his 24 Grand Slam triumphs.

Victory allowed him to join Andre Agassi, Rafael Nadal, Steffi Graf and the watching Serena Williams as the only players to win all four Grand Slam tournaments and Olympic singles gold.

He also became the oldest singles champion since tennis returned to the Olympics in 1988 and shattered Alcaraz's bid to add gold to the French

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Police lob teargas canisters and fire rubber bullets to disperse protesters after they torched around 25 motorcycles in front of the residence of State Minister For Water Resources Zaheed Farooque on Nabagram Road in Barishal city yesterday afternoon. PHOTO: TITU DAS

Will not allow 'March to Dhaka'

Says DMP chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Habibur Rahman said yesterday that they would not allow today's "March to Dhaka" programme called by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement to happen as it violates the curfew restrictions that have been put in place in light of the ongoing unrest in the country.

"Our instruction is clear. Since the curfew is in effect until further notice, no one is allowed to leave their homes during this period. If anyone violates the curfew, legal actions will be taken against them. We will show zero tolerance in this regard and will take lawful actions," he said.

Speaking at a press briefing last night, the DMP chief requested everyone adhere to the curfew

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

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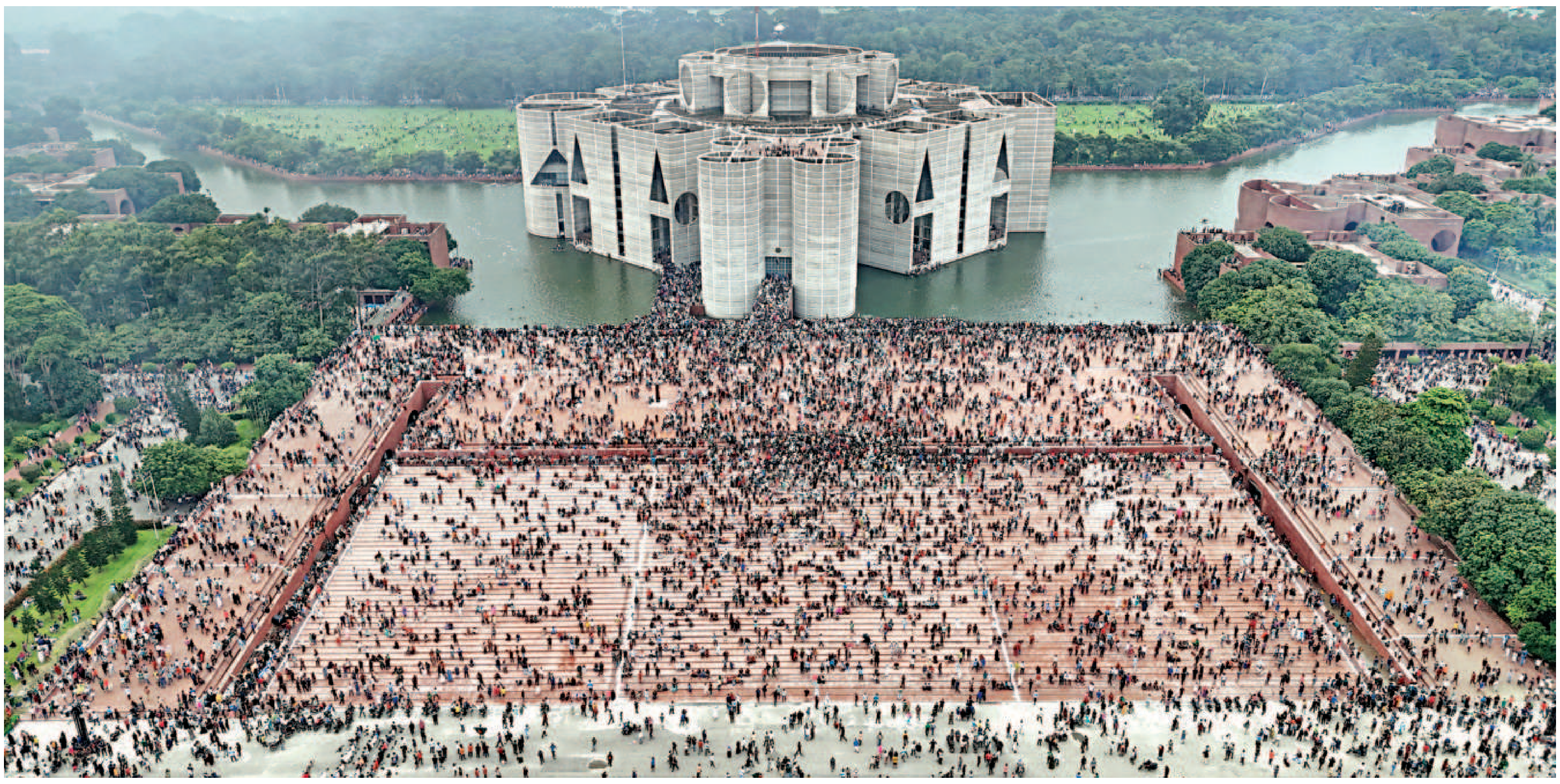
Hasina falls, flees

Army chief meets politicians, civil society members to discuss formation of interim govt



Hundreds of jubilant people at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex soon after Sheikh Hasina resigned and left the country yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: NAIMUR RAHMAN

TANIM AHMED *and*
PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Bangladesh's iron lady of 15 years bowed out to a people's uprising yesterday. Serving as the prime minister since 2009, Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign and flee the country as hundreds of thousands marched towards Dhaka defying a curfew amid a continual morning drizzle.

The streets of the capital that had convulsed with violence and death over the last three weeks, reverberated with wild celebrations as soon as the Bangladesh army chief, General Waker-Uz-Zaman, confirmed the rumours of Hasina's resignation. He went on to say that a new interim government will be formed soon.

Millions took to the streets gridlocking the entire capital well into the evening while many found it hard to believe that Hasina's absolute hold on authority and Awami League's fabled political fortress could crumble, faced with a three-week campaign initiated by students.

Revellers stormed the prime minister's residence, office and the parliament. They also ransacked Awami League offices and residences of high-ranking ministers across the country.

Even while thousands converged on Shahbagh from early afternoon, there were reports of violence between demonstrators and police officials on the fringes of Dhaka and from around Bangladesh amid the vacuum that was left in the wake of Hasina's hasty departure without so much as a statement or press release.

A fledgling student protest against reserved quotas for government jobs that began on July 1 started to gain momentum as the government dealt with them harshly. Despite reassurances of no harassment, the AL government employed excessive force to subdue a campaign leading to over 300 deaths. That protest transformed into a strong anti-government campaign over the last week and culminated in a people's uprising yesterday as the student campaigners called for their compatriots to "march to Dhaka". This was particularly in reply to AL's show of political force on Sunday, which left at least 93 dead in a single day's violence. Another 66 were killed yesterday in Dhaka alone.

Droves of people began gathering in neighbourhoods of Dhaka and its outskirts ready to converge in the capital's Shahbagh from early morning. There were also thousands gathering outside the capital and marching towards it, braving all obstacles. The strong tide turned on the back of university students.

About 43 years after Hasina had flown into Dhaka as the newly elected AL president for the first time, she took off on a military helicopter with her younger sister Sheikh Rehana to India.

The five-time prime minister landed in Agartala, the capital of India's northeastern state of Tripura. Thereafter, the 77-year-old premier was flown to Hindon Air Force Base in Ghaziabad, about 30km from the Indian capital of New Delhi, according to Indian news outlets India Today and NDTV.

Hasina was reported to have met with the Indian national security adviser, Ajit Doval, in the evening at Hindon. It is widely reported that Hasina will seek asylum in London. Later in the evening Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a high-level meeting with key ministers and intelligence chiefs who briefed him about the unfolding situation in Bangladesh, according to reports in Indian media.

Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, the former PM's ICT affairs adviser, told BBC that his mother would not "come back" to politics.

Back in Dhaka, before he took the podium at the army headquarters to address the nation, flanked by the air chief and naval chief, General Waker-Uz-Zaman met with several politicians and members of the civil society including representatives of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, other politicians and teachers. The AL was not represented. The student campaigners were not present there either. Leaders of the student protest campaign have announced that they will present an outline for the interim government soon.

In the context of hundreds of violent deaths, the army chief reassured everyone that justice would be ensured for each. He said it was now everyone's responsibility to remain calm.

"Together, we hope to go towards a better situation," he said addressing the media. "I am taking full responsibility."

"The country has suffered a lot, the economy has been hit, many people have been killed. It is time to stop the violence."

On his way to the presidential palace, Bangabhaban, the army chief was greeted by jubilant crowd. Hundreds thronged around

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

- Parliament to be dissolved soon, an interim govt to be formed
- President asked armed forces to be strict in protecting lives, properties
- Outline of interim govt within 24 hours: protest organiser Nahid Islam
- President orders release of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia
- Offices, factories to open today, educational institution soon

Justice will be served

Says president about recent killings

BSS, *Dhaka*

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday urged political parties to restore law and order and stop looting and destructive activities.

"I ask the armed forces to take strict action to protect the lives and properties of the people," the president, also the supreme commander of the Armed Forces Division, told a televised address to the nation.

The Head of State urged

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Help restore peace and discipline

Army chief urges the nation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman yesterday urged all, including the students, to cooperate with the armed forces and refrain from vandalism, killings and clashes.

Seeking cooperation from all quarters, including the political parties, the media and civil society

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Jubilation as freedom in the air

STAR REPORT

Hundreds of thousands of jubilant people poured out into the streets of the capital, celebrating Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure.

The crowds chanted slogans and waved the national flag as complete strangers shook hands and hugged each other.

Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Mirpur Road and Rokeya Sarani were filled with people of all ages. Large groups of people walked through Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue from 2:30pm to 7:00pm. Many said they would go to the Gono Bhaban.

Coordinators of the quota-reform movement, which spearheaded the movement that led to the fall of the government, Nahid Islam and Asif Mahmud said in a joint statement, "Power must be transferred to the proposed interim national government of the students. No other government will be accepted. A new Bangladesh and political settlement will be established. No one will leave the streets until the ultimate victory is achieved.

Dhaka University student Rafat Alam said, "I have goosebumps. We waited for this day for a long time. I was not able to talk freely, I was not allowed to cast the vote."

Hasina had been the prime minister for 14 and a half years. In the 2008 national election, her party, the Awami League, won two-thirds of the seats in parliament.

She took power again in 2014, when 153 MPs, out of 300, were "elected" without any competition. The election was boycotted by the main opposition.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

The organisers of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement pose for a photo during a live television programme yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Hindu houses, businesses attacked in 27 districts

STAR REPORT

Hindu houses and business establishments were attacked by mobs while their valuables were also looted in at least 27 districts yesterday.

In Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, they vandalised and plundered the house of Pradip Chandra Roy, secretary of Lalmonirhat Puja Udjapan Parishad, in Telipara village last evening, reports our district correspondent.

They also ransacked and looted a computer shop owned by Muhin Roy, a municipality member of the district's Puja Udjapan Parishad, on Thana road.

Besides, homes of four Hindu families were vandalised and looted in Chandrapur village in the district's Kaliganj upazila.

In Hatibandha upazila's Purbo Sardubi village, 12 Hindu houses were torched last night, reports our district correspondent.

In Panchagarh, several Hindu houses were vandalised and looted in Sadar upazila.

Contacted, Monindra Kumar Nath,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

A man flying the national flag as he travels on a rickshaw in the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque area after Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country yesterday. *Top right*, people rejoice on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. *Bottom right*, an endless stream of people march towards Bijoy Sarani to celebrate Hasina's departure.

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED, ANISUR RAHMAN**

Hasina moved to a safe house in India

Reports PTI

AGENCY

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has been moved to a safe but undisclosed location in India, PTI reported quoting unnamed sources.

It was unlikely that she would leave India last night, it added.

The sources said Hasina's plan was to leave for London. However, certain issues have made that plan uncertain.

India decided to provide a safe passage through the Indian airspace to Hasina's aircraft following a request from Bangladesh, the sources said.

Bangladesh's military aircraft carrying Hasina landed at Hindon Air Base near Delhi last evening.

Indian government sources said New Delhi is closely following the fast-paced developments in Dhaka.

There is no official word in India on Hasina's arrival in Delhi.

Hours after Hasina landed at the airbase near Delhi in a C-130J military transport aircraft of the Bangladesh Air Force, Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval met her, the sources said.

Separately, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the rapidly unfolding situation in Bangladesh.

Jaishankar also separately apprised the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi of the developments.

Modi later chaired a meeting of his cabinet committee and discussed the developments in Bangladesh.

Hasina falls, flees

FROM PAGE 1

the general's convoy and some even rode on his car as the convoy slowly glided through the teeming millions who hailed the army chief like a triumphant hero.

Aside from his announcement of an interim government, there were no statements about the nature of the government or the transition process till later in the evening when the president met with the military chiefs, political parties and civil society representatives.

A Bangabhaban press release said that the meeting had unanimously decided to immediately free BNP chief and former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

The meeting also decided to form an interim government immediately and urged everyone to show patience and tolerance. The military will strictly maintain law and order and prevent lawlessness. Parliament will be dissolved and all those arrested during the anti-quota protests will be released.

The delegation included BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir; BNP leaders Mirza Abbas and Major General (Retired) Fazle Elahi Akbar; Jatiya Party (JP) chairman GM Quader; JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnu; JP Senior Co-chairman Anisul Islam Mahmud; Nagorik Oikkya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna; Hefajat-e Islam leaders Mamunul Haque, Monir Kasemi and Mahabubur Rahman; Jamaat chief Shafiqur Rahman; Jamaat leader Sheikh Md Masood; Jaker Party Secretary General Shamim Haider; Bangladesh Khilafat Majlis leader Maulana Jalal Uddin Ahmad; Zonayed Saki of Gonosonghoti Andolon; Gono Odhikar Parishad leader Golam Sarwar Jewel; Dhaka University teacher Asif Nazrul and Firoz Ahmad; and student protest leaders Abdullah Al Hossain, Arif Talukder, Omar Faruq and Mobashwera Karim Mimi and Engineer Md Anisur Rahman.

Jubilation as freedom

FROM PAGE 1

She won the 2018 election amid widespread allegations of voter fraud. There were reports of Awami League men stuffing ballot boxes the night before the voting day.

The latest election held in January, in which she won a landslide victory, was boycotted by the major opposition parties.

Hasina's government was facing a financial crisis as high inflation eroded the value of taka and foreign currency reserves fell. People were angered by corruption and rising costs of living.

The student protest started on July 1 with a demand for reformation of quotas in public service. It turned into an anti-government movement on Saturday.

From July 16 to August 3, at least 208 people were killed amid widespread violence. Most of the deaths were caused by indiscriminate firing by law enforcers, members of Border Guard Bangladesh and ruling party activists.

At least 93 people were killed on Sunday in a fresh wave of violence as ruling party activists and police clashed with anti-government protesters on the first day of the student-led non-cooperation movement.

The day started yesterday amid tension as the protesting students were set to defy the curfew and enforce the Dhaka March programme, demanding the government's resignation and justice for the killings.

Students started to gather in Uttara, Jatrabari, Mirpur, Shahbagh and other places. Before noon, thousands of them were marching towards Central Shaheed Minar.

Protesters and law forcers chased each other on Badda-Rampura road. As the news of Hasina's resignation spread, the protesters rejoiced. A big portion started to march towards the Shaheed Minar while some went towards the Gono Bhaban, the official residence of the country's PM.

People started to gather at Shahbagh at noon. The intersection was filled with people by 2:00pm. The crowd cheered at the news of Hasina's resignation, chanting slogans that literally translates as "People are free as the dictator has fallen".

Many of the protestors then left for the Gono Bhaban.

Thousands of people took to the streets at Motijheel, Paltan, Press Club, Malibgah, Mogbazar, Mirpur and other places.

Help restore peace and discipline

FROM PAGE 1

members, he said, "Please cooperate with me. We will not be able to achieve anything through confrontation. So, please refrain from all kinds of destruction, anarchy and conflict. If Allah wills, together we will move towards a beautiful future."

The army chief was addressing the nation following a meeting with the leaders of some key political parties at the Army Headquarters in the afternoon.

"You should not take the path of confrontation anymore. Return to the path of peace and discipline."

He said the country has suffered a lot, the economy has been hit, and many people have been killed.

"We will ensure justice for all killings and injustice. Please keep faith in the army and the armed forces. I am taking all the responsibilities and vowing to protect the people's lives and properties. I am giving you a word, you will not be disappointed."

Waker-Uz-Zaman said all the demands will be met and peace and discipline will be restored. "Have patience. Give us some time. Together, we will be able to solve all the problems."

He said much damage has been done, properties have been damaged and people are dying. "Refrain from such activities and help me."

Regarding his discussion with the leaders of different political parties, the army chief said, "We had a nice discussion. We have decided that we will run the country after forming an interim government."

He said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has resigned.

The army chief said Prof Asif Nazrul of Dhaka University has conveyed a message to the students. He hoped that the students will bring the situation under control after hearing his message.

Waker-Uz-Zaman said the army will continue working to maintain peace and discipline in the country.

Replying to a question, the army chief said if the situation improves, there would be no need for imposing curfew and an emergency rule.

"I have ordered the army and police not to open fire. I hope the situation will improve after my speech. We are moving towards a beautiful environment."

Top leaders from the BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Hefajat-e Islam, Gonosonghoti Andolon, Islami Andolon Bangladesh, and civil society leaders, including Prof Asif Nazrul, were present.

However, no Awami League leader attended the meeting.

Hindu houses, businesses attacked in 27 districts

FROM PAGE 1

senior joint general secretary of the Oikya Parishad, said they never thought they would see such attacks on their community.

"There are no areas or districts left where communal attacks have not taken place. We're continuously getting reports from different parts of the country about attacks on houses and business establishments ...

"They're crying, saying they are being beaten up, and their houses and businesses are being looted. What is our fault? Is it our fault that we are citizens of the country?"

Mentioning that the Hindus in the country are fearing more attacks, Monindra asked, "Where would we go if such attacks continue here? How can we console the members of the Hindu community?"

In Dinajpur town and other upazilas, at least 10 Hindu houses came under attack.

The attackers also tried to vandalise a temple at Railbazarhat in the town, but locals obstructed it.

Sources said the houses of late Koilash Chandra Roy of Barabandar area; Nitya Gopal of Barabandar; Bunu Biswas of Gunjabari area; and Roma Kanta Roy of Biral upazila, in Dinajpur came under attack.

In Khansama upazila, three Hindu homes were attacked, said Uttam Kumar Roy, general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha Christian Oikya Parishad.

Goutam Mazumder, assistant organising secretary of the Oikya Parishad in Laxmipur, said over 200-300 attackers torched his two-storey building around 7:30pm.

In Khulna, the houses of the Oikya Parishad President, Biman Bihari Amit, and Jubo Oikya Parishad President Animesh Sarker Rintu were ransacked around 5:00pm, our district correspondent reports.

The homes of Shyamal Kumar Das and Swajan Kumar Das of Haisgati village under Rupsha Police Station were also attacked and looted.

Biman added that they were getting reports of attacks and looting of Hindu houses and business establishments in Rupsha, Paikgachha, and other upazilas.

In Barishal's Gouranadi, mobs attacked, vandalised, and looted the house of Aditri Adhikary at Mahilara Union around 6:00pm, said Anwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Gouranadi Police Station, our district correspondent reports.

He added they were also getting reports of attacks on other Hindu homes and establishments across the district.

Oikya Parishad General Secretary Tapan Kumar Chakrabarty of Bogura said a warehouse and a shop of his were looted at Sathmatha and Sonatola.

Another warehouse owned by a Hindu family was also looted at Sathmatha, he said.

In Patuakhali, a Hindu house and a temple were attacked, vandalised, and set on fire, our district correspondent reports.

Ananta Mukherjee said a group of 20 to 25 attackers suddenly carried out the attack.

Oikya Parishad claimed that there were attacks in 21 more districts and gave details on a few of them.

In Sherpur, the house of Sreebordi upazila Jubo Oikya Parishad President was vandalised and looted.

In Narsingdi, Puja Udjapan Parishad member Dipak Saha's house and office suffered the same fate.

In Kishoreganj, two Hindu houses were set ablaze in Kuliarchar.

In Chattogram's Raozan upazila, two other Hindu homes were attacked and ransacked.

In Jashore, the warehouse of Babul Saha, chairman of Bhagarpara's Narikelbaria, was attacked and looted, while 22 shops of Hindu community there were looted, and several houses vandalised and plundered.

In Satkhira, several shops belonging to the Hindu community were ransacked and looted in Kolaroa area.

The house of Biswajit Sadhu, the Oikya Parishad president, was looted and torched.

In Habiganj, the shop of Asit Baran Das, Shayestaganj upazila Oikya Parishad president, was attacked.

In Narail, Hindu homes were attacked and plundered in Lohagara upazila.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust in a statement demanded that the Bangladesh Army and administration identify the perpetrators of the arson, vandalism, and lootings, and take appropriate steps for the security of the minorities.

"An anarchic situation is prevailing across the country, which is illegal and against the constitution. Article 32 of the constitution states that no person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty save in accordance with law. Article 28(1) of the constitution states that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth."

It also urged everyone to ensure public safety and maintain peace.

Justice will be served

FROM PAGE 1

everyone to come forward to ensure communal harmony and security for minorities and protect government properties.

He requested everyone to play an effective role in keeping the country's economy, administration, and industries running.

President Shahabuddin assured that educational institutions would soon be opened, subject to discussions with agitating student representatives and teachers.

Besides, he said, those who are involved in the recent killings and violence, will be brought to justice through impartial investigations.

According to the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the current parliament will be dissolved immediately, said the president.

"All offices and courts in the country will start functioning as usual from tomorrow [today]," he added.

President Shahabuddin informed the countrymen that "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has submitted her resignation letter to me today [yesterday] and I have accepted it."

The prime minister's resignation and the situation arising from the quota protests discussed at the Bangabhaban yesterday with the chiefs of the armed forces, leaders of various political parties, civil society representatives, and some coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

At the outset, the president was apprised by the army chief of the overall situation.

At the meeting, a motion was adopted in memory of the victims of the student movement.

Besides, it was decided to form an interim government on an urgent basis.

The president stated that an interim government would be formed in consultation with all parties and stakeholders to hold general elections as soon as possible.

He said all the prisoners, including those detained in the student movement and various false cases, will be released.

He also said compensation would be paid to the families of the victims, and all necessary assistance would be provided for the proper treatment of the injured ones.

The president mentioned that it was unanimously decided to release BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

N Korea deploys 250 missile launchers to southern border

AFP, *Seoul*

North Korea has deployed 250 ballistic missile launchers to its southern border, with leader Kim Jong Un describing the weapons as a "powerful treasured sword" to defend its sovereignty, state media said yesterday.

The olive green mobile launchers were displayed during a special "transferring" ceremony in the capital Pyongyang on Sunday, the official Korean Central News Agency reported.

The missile launchers were an "up-to-date tactical attack weapon", Kim was quoted as saying in a speech.

It was the first time North Korea had publicised the scale of an arms transfer to its border units, Han Kwon-hee of the Korea Association of Defence Industry Studies told AFP.

Each launcher was designed to hold four missiles, Han said, adding that Pyongyang's supply of arms to Moscow might have "interfered with the North's capacity to actually produce 1,000 missiles".

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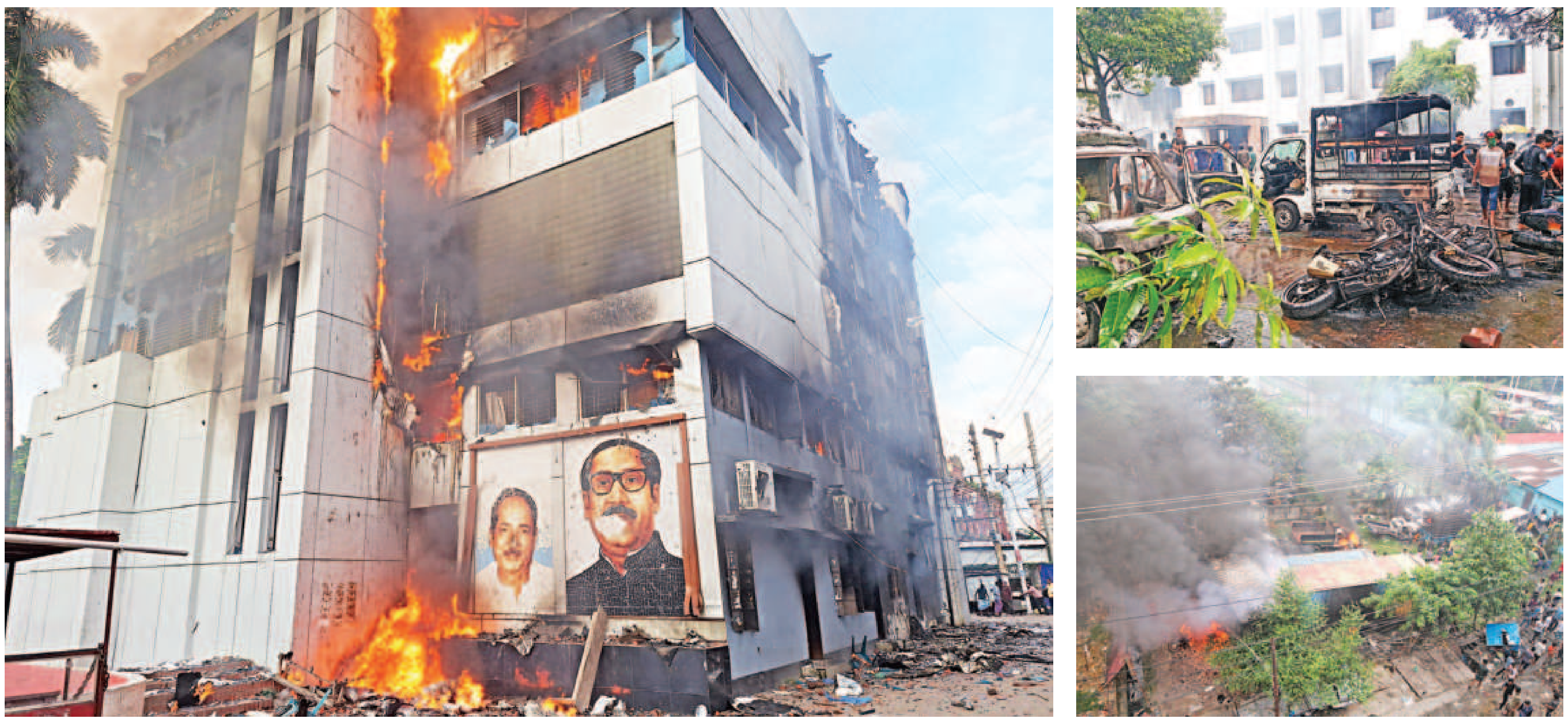


Clockwise from left, a torched AL office in Barishal city. Vandalised SP office in Sylhet. Karnaphuli Police Outpost set on fire in Chattogram. *Inset*, residence of Ahmadiyya families burnt in Panchagarh. A pharmacy being vandalised in Sylhet.
PHOTO: STAR

Violence sweeps the country

STAR REPORT

Widespread violence rocked the nation yesterday after the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government was ousted following a mass uprising.

Residences and offices of ministers, lawmakers and AL leaders, government establishments, police stations and business institutions were attacked and vandalised in at least 17 districts.

In Chattogram, miscreants attacked different government establishments including the Chattogram Metropolitan Police Headquarters, Dampara Police Lines, and Chattogram Circuit House. They tried to attack Chattogram Central Jail where prison guards opened fire to disperse the marauders.

A mob attacked Chattogram Circuit House in Kazir Dewri at around 4:40pm, threw brickbats at it, and vandalised at least 10 vehicles on the premises.

Some 100-150 people attacked CMP Headquarters and Dampara Police Lines around 5:00pm.

Different police stations -- including ones in Patenga, EPZ, Kotwali and Sadarghat -- came under attacks. The marauders set the police stations on fire, alongside vandalism and looting.

At least 200 people were admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital till 8:00pm, and one man was brought dead around 6:00pm, said Rajib Kumar Dey, ward master of CMCH.

Tension was prevailing in the port city till the filing of this report at 11:00pm.

In Sylhet, miscreants vandalised, looted and arsoned several government establishments, and many houses, offices and businesses of AL leaders.

The office of Sylhet District Police, residence of superintendent of police in Sylhet, and police outposts in Bandarbazar and Sobhanighat were set on fire in the afternoon.

The residences of former state minister for expatriates welfare and overseas employment Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury and parliamentarian Ranjit Chandra Sarker; Sylhet city AL president Mashuk Uddin, and AL leaders Azadur

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Tarique urges calm, calls for election at the soonest

STAR REPORT

BNP acting chairperson Tarique Rahman yesterday issued a statement from London, England, where he is currently residing.

He commended those involved in the quota reform protests and the general public for toppling the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government that was in power till yesterday afternoon.

"Bangladesh has been freed from the grasp of evil forces. In the past 15 years of this fascist regime, many children lost their beloved fathers, many wives lost their husbands. Numerous mothers lost their children to killings and forced abductions. After many years, Bangladesh saw victory on August 5."

"Numerous people were arrested and thrown into jail on false and politically motivated charges brought by the Hasina administration. I demand their immediate release and cancellation of the cases against them. Along with this, I expect quick steps to ensure that students be allowed to return to classes and take exams normally," the statement added.

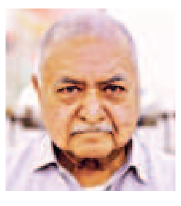
"After this, 125 million voters will be able to cast their votes in a free and fair election and establish a government with accountability."

"So, to take the revolution to the final point of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Dr Kamal Hossain commends students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Gonoforum founder and its emeritus President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday congratulated protesting students and people for making the historic mass upsurge successful.

He made the statement while holding an emergency meeting at his residence on the capital's Bailey Road. Dr Kamal also congratulated the proposal of army chief on formation of an interim government.

He demanded unconditional release of all detainees during the mass arrests and punishment of those involved in the recent killings.

MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

A 16-year-old shot dead in Dhaka. An HSC examinee died from bullet would at DMCH. A driver fatally shot in Dhanmondi. Another student died at a Dhaka hospital. A construction worker shot dead in Narayanganj. At least 204 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are sons, husbands, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of five such names among these tragic numbers. In this report, we try to know the stories of five such names among these tragic numbers.

I rushed to aid bullet-hit teen, only to find it's my son

Says father of 16-year-old Md Amin

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Obaidul Haque Khan, an auto-rickshaw driver in Dhaka, was driving in Dania area of the capital on July 21 evening when some locals called him to take a bullet-hit teen to the hospital.

"I went near the body to pick him up and take him to hospital. Then my heart skipped it bit... it was Amin, my son!" Obaidul told this correspondent over the phone.

Police had fired at quota reform protesters in the area when Md Amin, 16,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

When will bhaiya come home?

Asks 8-year-old sister of Shahriar, who died in Mirpur-10 firing

NILIMA JAHAN

Sheikh Mumtahina Binte Matin, 8, is yet to realise that her older brother, Sheikh Shahriar Bin Matin, 18, is no more.

Shahriar was shot dead during a protest where students were demanding for quota reform in Dhaka's Mirpur-10 area on July 18.

"Every day, my daughter wears a jersey that belonged to Shahriar and keeps asking when will bhaiya come home?" said their father Sheikh Abdul Matin.

"On that day, around 5:00pm, Shahriar

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Who will look after us now?

Asks wife of Titu, who was shot dead in Dhanmondi

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Titu Howladar, 35, who worked as a driver for a doctor, was shot dead in the Dhanmondi area on July 19 amid the violence centring quota reform protests.

He hailed from Dakshin Hosnabad village of Barguna's Betagi upazila.

On July 21 night, his cousin Md Rakib took Titu's body from Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue to his village home. Titu was later buried at the family's graveyard the same night.

Now an uncertainty looms over Titu's family. He left behind three children -- Tanjila, 10; Saimun, 7; and four-month-old Tamanna.

"My husband used to work hard to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Shafe wanted to go abroad for higher studies

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, *Pabna*

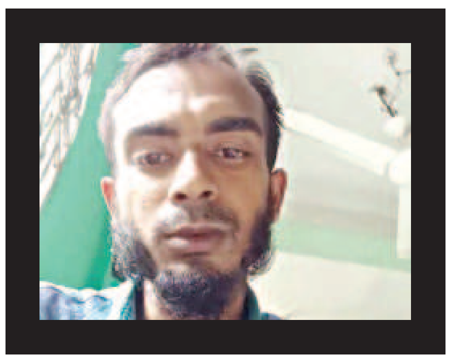
Sarkar Md Shafeur Rahman, 19, a student of the Institute of Marine Technology in Chandpur, aspired to go abroad for higher studies after graduating.

However, his sudden, untimely demise put an end to his aspirations.

On July 25, he died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He was later buried at his ancestral home in Shalikha village under Pabna's Chatmohar upazila. His family members are still at a loss over his death.

"Shafe was an activist of the quota reform protests in Chandpur since the beginning. He was supposed to return home as the institution was declared closed. However, we got informed that Shafe was admitted to DMCH with fever,"

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



We didn't have much, but we were happy

Says wife of Foyez who was shot dead in Laxmipur

ANWARUL HAIDER, *Noakhali*

The world around Noor Nahar Begum, 28, has turned bleak after her husband, Md Foyez, 32, was killed in a shooting on July 21 in the Signboard area of Narayanganj on Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

A construction worker by profession, Foyez used to work with a mason named Abu Taher at a construction site in the Signboard area,

He lived with his wife Nahar and 22-month-old son Rafi in the same area.

He was shot near Chandni Hotel when law enforcers opened fire on protesters who were demanding for quota reform.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Schools to open soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The educational institutions will open soon, said President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday.

He assured to open the institutions subject to discussions with student representatives and teachers, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement said all government, semi-government, autonomous, semi-autonomous, private organisations and factories in the country will remain open from this morning.

Also, a Supreme Court press release yesterday said the functions of the lower courts will run as usual from today.

However, the judicial activities of both the Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court will not resume today.

All educational institutions remained closed since July 16 in the wake of violence centring quota reform protests.

Who will look

FROM PAGE 3

support the family. He did not join any protest, yet he had to give his life. Our three children are very young. How am I going to provide for them?" asked his wife Ayesha Begum.

Titu's father Abdur Rahim Howladar, 60, is a rickshaw puller, who cannot work due to old age.

"The family didn't even have the money to bring Titu's body from Dhaka. It took Tk 47,000, of which I paid Tk 27,000, and Titu's brother-in-law Hasan gave Tk 20,000," said Titu's cousin Rakib.

Titu's father, Abdur Rahim said, "When my son left for Dhaka for work, he told me that he would send us money regularly, and asked me to take care of the family. How am I going to take care of them now?"

PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 6

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Celebrating Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure, hundreds of thousands of people poured out into the streets across the country yesterday. The crowds shouted slogans and waved the national flag as complete strangers shook hands and hugged each other. The photos were taken in Khulna, Chattogram, Barishal and Sylhet. PHOTO: **STAR**

Violence sweeps

FROM PAGE 3

Rahman Azad and Rezwan Ahmed also came under similar attacks.

News on more attacks on AL leaders' houses in different areas were surfacing till the filing of this report.

Several business outlets -- including those of Aarong, Yellow, Maha, Rajbari Restaurant, Uthan Restaurant, Unique Pharmacy -- were also vandalised and looted.

In Natore, a mob set fire to Natore-2 lawmaker Shafiqul Islam Shimul's house in the district headquarters.

The residence of Zunaid Ahmed Palak, former minister of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, was also vandalised in Singra upazila.

Besides, residences and offices of at least three other AL leaders were also vandalised.

Besides, in Narayanganj, agitated people vandalised houses and business establishments of Shamim Osman and his family members.

In Thakurgaon, residence and business establishments of lawmaker Ramesh Chandra Sen came under attack in the Sadar upazila.

Meanwhile, Chhatra League central unit president Saddam Hossain's village home was torched in Egaromile area under Atwary upazila in Panchagarh.

Panchagarh-1 lawmaker Naimuzzaman Mukta's residence was also attacked, while over a hundred houses and shops were looted and set ablaze.

In Feni, residences of lawmaker Nizam Hazari and other AL leaders, and municipal offices were attacked and vandalised.

Residence and business establishments of lawmaker Iqbalur Rahim were vandalised. Besides, Nawabganj upazila unit AL office was vandalised, and Bochaganj Police Station was torched in Dinajpur.

In Jashore, businesses and residences of AL leader Shahin Chakladar and lawmaker Nabil Ahmed were vandalised.

In Satkhira, a mob attacked and broke into the district jail, allowing many inmates to flee, while also looting different materials from the jail, said witnesses and local journalists.

In Cumilla, the residence of lawmaker AKM Bahauddin was attacked in the district headquarters.

In Noakhali, a section of angry students and people looted furniture from the district AL office before setting it on fire yesterday afternoon. They also attacked Noakhali Press Club twice in a row.

Besides, the residence of Shihab Uddin, vice-president of district AL unit, was attacked and vandalised.

In Sherpur, a mob vandalised the main gate of deputy commissioner's residence in the Gopalbari area around 12:00pm. They also vandalised and set fire to the officers' quarters adjacent to DC's residence, while Sherpur Sadar Police Station also came under similar attacks.

In Bogura, protesters attacked Sadar Police Station and set it afire.

Numerous shops in Police Plaza were looted. District AL offices and houses of local AL leaders were vandalised.

In Savar, at least eight bullet-hit persons, and over a hundred others with pellet wounds, were brought to Enam Medical College and Hospital.

The agitators also set fire to Savar Model and Ashulia police stations, Savar Press Club, and many houses and establishments in Savar, Ashulia and Dhamrai areas, according to the fire service.

In Cox's Bazar, the local AL unit office was vandalised and set ablaze in Teknaf yesterday afternoon.

In Chandpur, Selim Khan, chairman of Laxmipur model union parishad, and his son Shanto Khan were killed in a stampede while fleeing from the locality in Bagara Bazar area yesterday afternoon, said Sheikh Mohsin Alam, officer-in-charge of Chandpur Sadar Model Police Station.

[Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report.]

I rushed to aid

FROM PAGE 3

was shot on the road.

Obaidul quickly rushed to the hospital to save his son, but it was too late. The on-duty doctor declared Amin dead on the spot.

"When the doctor said that my son had died, it seemed like the sky fell on my head. He was my only child. For whom shall I live now?" he said.

According to the family, Amin, who worked at an electrical switch manufacturing factory, stepped outside to have breakfast when he got shot.

The family later took Amin's body to their home in Bharipasha village of Keshabpur union under Patuakhali's Bauphal upazila, where he was buried the next morning.

Obaidul and his wife returned to the capital for their livelihoods two days later, with their hearts broken, bleeding.

At the family's village home, Amin's 73-year-old grandmother Lovely Begum was found sitting with a picture of her beloved grandson while tear rolled down her cheeks.

"My grandson was not part of any movement. He did not even study much and had to work at a factory to support his family. Why was he shot dead? I demand justice for my grandson," she said.

"The police shot and killed my only son. I am leaving the justice up to the Almighty," said Obaidul.

We didn't have much

FROM PAGE 3

Foyez hailed from Char Ababil union under Raipur upazila of Laxmipur. He left his family after his parents, Ala Uddin Bepari and Safura Begum, did not approve of his marriage to Nahar.

"Foyez was a very hard-working, honest and cheerful person. On the afternoon of July 21, Foyez and his two coworkers were returning home after work through a lane adjacent to Chandni Hotel, when law enforcers were firing at agitating protesters. Two bullets hit Foyez in his head and neck, leaving him critically injured," said his employer Md Abul Kashem, a contractor.

"His coworkers and some locals rushed him to a nearby hospital. He was later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to the injuries around 9:30pm," he also said.

"Foyez's body was taken to his village home of Laxmipur by his uncle and relatives, where he was buried at the family graveyard on July 22," Kashem added.

His wife Noor Nahar Begum said, "My in-laws did not accept our marriage, so initially I remained at my father's house in Tongi. We started living in Narayanganj for the last seven months after Foyez found a job in the Signboard area. Foyez used to earn a daily wage of Tk 700. We were not financially solvent, but we were living happily."

"I informed Foyez around 4:00pm on the day that there was unrest in the neighbourhood, and asked him to return home by 5:00pm. Around three hours later, I came to learn that he got shot. I rushed to the hospital and found him breathing heavily with an oxygen mask on his face. He died soon after. I could not even get a chance to have a last word with him," Nahar said.

"My husband was innocent, and yet he was killed. How am I going to raise our son now? The authorities must try his killers," she added.

Foyez's father Ala Uddin Bepari said his wife Safura Begum has taken to bed after being informed of their eldest son's demise.

Shafe wanted to go

FROM PAGE 3

said his father Rezaul Karim Pasha.

"I rushed to DMCH on July 24 and found my son severely ill. He passed away the next day."

"The hospital authority told me that Shafe was suffering from a respiratory tract infection. However, he had no respiratory complication earlier. It was surprising to learn how he got infected all of a sudden. I want to know the truth behind my son's death," he also said.

Asked if Shafe had any injury in his body, Rezaul claimed there was an injury in Shafe's chest.

"My son had a long-cherished dream to fly to England after completing a degree in marine technology, but that dream got buried with him," he added.

Md Sirajul Abedin, instructor of IMT, Chandpur, said they came to know about Shafe's demise, but did not know any details since the institution has been closed.

"Students from the institutions had joined the anti-quota protests, but no one was injured in any incident," he added.

Tarique urges

FROM PAGE 3

success, a free and fair election must be held at the soonest; the power must be handed over to the representatives of the people. All the democratic parties of Bangladesh, including the BNP, will help establish a democratic Bangladesh free from inequality through a free and fair election.

"Dear countrymen, I want to make a sincere appeal to all. Please celebrate the victory peacefully. Please don't become vengeful. Please don't take the law into your own hands," it concluded.

When will bhaiya

FROM PAGE 3

and his cousin were with other protesters during a demonstration near Mirpur-10 intersection when police and Chhatra League activists fired at them. A bullet pierced through Shahriar's right eye," said Matin.

"He was rushed to a nearby hospital and later referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he remained on life support until doctors declared him dead on July 20," he added.

Shahriar, who lived with his parents and sister in Dhaka's Kuril area, was appearing for HSC exams from Ishwarganj Ideal College in Mymensingh, his hometown.

His father informed The Daily Star that Shahriar had returned to Dhaka after attending five exams, as the educational institutions were closed and HSC exams were postponed amid the students' protests.

"On July 18, he went to his cousin's home in Mirpur. I was at our village home in Kumra Shashon, Iswarganj. On the day, I received a call in the evening and came to learn that he had been shot. I somehow managed to return to Dhaka facing numerous obstacles on the way, only to find my son in a coma, before he eventually left us," Matin said.

Shahriar's mother, Momtaz Begum, has been overwhelmed by grief since his death, while his 70-year-old grandmother has fallen ill. The family is currently living in their village home and it is uncertain when they would return to Dhaka.

Matin also said it was traumatic to recount the demise of his son every time a journalist would call him over the phone.

"They did not let my son grow up. His photos and videos are our only keepsakes now. I want justice, but I don't know who we will ask to deliver it," Matin added.

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BABE (F) - 632/2024-2025/ DATE: 01 August 2024

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NOTICE

01	Procuring Entity Name	Khulna Shipyard Limited, Bangladesh Navy, Khulna
02	Invitation For	a) Marine Refrigerant plant. b) Main Switch boards and Emergency Switchboards.
03	Invitation Reference No.	(a) BABE (F) - 632/ MRP/ 2024-2025 DATE: 01 August 2024 (b) BABE (F) - 632/ MESBd/ 2024-2025 DATE: 01 August 2024
04	Procuring Method	**Open Tender (Two Envelop System)**
05	Budget & Source of Funds	Own Finance
06	Tender Last Selling Date	27 August 2024
07	Tender Closing Date & Time	Date: 28 August 2024 Time:1115am
08	Tender Opening Date & Time	Date: 28 August 2024 Time:1130am
09	**Name & Address of the Office for Selling of Tender Documents:-**	
	(1) Cash Section, Khulna Shipyard Ltd. Bangladesh Navy, Khulna. (2) Naval Store Sub Depot, Khilkhet Nama Para, Khilkhet, Dhaka.	
	Receiving & Opening Tender	**Khulna Shipyard Ltd, Bangladesh Navy, Khulna**
	(Tenderer's and their Authorized Representatives are allowed to attend)	
10	Price of Tender Document	Each Tender (SL. a, b) Per set 3,000.00 (Tk. Three Thousand) Non-refundable.
11	Contact Details of Official	Mob: +8801674950715 Email: oiccomf.ksy@gmail.com
12	Special Instructions	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all or any Tenders prior to acceptance without showing any reason.

Manager Admin

GD-119

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Corrigendum Notice

Tender Name : Procurement of a Foam Tender Fire Fighting Vehicle for Eastern Refinery Limited.
Tender Package No : ER/F&S/T-01/2023-2024, Reference No : 28.25.0000.021.20.035.24.1

Date : 05/08/2024

Serial	Topic	Original date	Corrigendum
01	Tender last selling date	05/08/2024	03/09/2024
02	Tender Closing date & Time	06/08/2024 BST 1500 hrs	04/09/2024 BST 1500 hrs
03	Tender Opening date &Time	06/08/2024 BST 1515hrs	04/09/2024 BST 1515 hrs

Note : All other clauses will remain same .

(Md.Rafikul Islam)
Assistant General Manager (Training/ F&S)
Eastern Refinery Limited,North Patenga,Chattogram-4204

GD-118

UK PM vows punishment to quell protests

REUTERS, *London*

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said violent protesters who had targeted Muslim communities would swiftly face the "full force of the law" as he sought to quell days of anti-immigration rioting.

The stabbing to death of three young girls in the northwest English town of Southport last week has been seized on by anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim groups, with disinformation spread online and amplified by high-profile far-right figures to spark disorder in towns and cities.

"Whatever the apparent motivation, this is not protest, it is pure violence and we will not tolerate attacks on mosques or our Muslim communities," Starmer said yesterday after an emergency meeting with police and prison chiefs.

Israel returns more than 80 Palestinian bodies to Gaza

Keeps up military pressure in the enclave

REUTERS, *Cairo*

Israel returned the bodies of more than 80 Palestinians killed in its military offensive in the Gaza Strip, as Israeli airstrikes killed at least 18 more people yesterday, the Palestinian Ministry of Health said.

Yamen Abu Suleiman, the director of the Palestinian Civil Emergency Service in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, said it was unclear whether the bodies had been dug up from cemeteries by the army during the ground offensive, or whether they were "detainees who had been tortured and killed."

"The occupation provided us with no information about the names, or ages, or anything. This is a war crime, a crime against humanity," Abu Suleiman said.

The bodies will be screened and examined in an attempt to determine the causes of death and in an attempt to identify them. They will later be buried in a mass grave at a cemetery near Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis.

The 84 bodies arrived in more than 15 bags, each containing several bodies, Abu Suleiman added. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on the return of the bodies. In the past, Israel has said it returned bodies after checks they were not Israeli hostages.

In Jerusalem, the Israeli Hostages Families Forum asked why Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would allow the handover of Palestinian bodies without a ceasefire deal with Hamas.

"Why are bodies being returned outside the framework of a comprehensive deal? Such an agreement could bring back living hostages for rehabilitation and the deceased for proper burial," they said in a statement.

In southeast Khan Younis, residents said Israeli aerial and tank shelling continued overnight, including in areas for which Israel had issued evacuation orders, saying Hamas members had been waging attacks from there.

An Israeli air strike killed eight Palestinians in a vehicle on the road near Khan Younis yesterday. The Israeli military said it had killed Abdel-Fattah Al-Zriei, whom it said was involved in the weapons manufacturing department in Hamas.

UN, EU, US

FROM PAGE 12

made her continued rule untenable. I applaud the brave protestors and demand justice for those killed," Schumer, a Democrat, posted on social media platform X.

In India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) that briefed him on the situation unfolding in Bangladesh, reports the Hindustan Times.

Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, Principal Secretary to PM PK Mishra, Research and Analysis Wing chief Ravi Sinha and Intelligence Bureau Director Tapan Deka were present.

Jaishankar briefed Modi, and Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, on the emerging situation in Bangladesh.

Quoting diplomatic sources, a PTI report said Hasina landed at the Hindon airbase near Delhi in a C-130J military transport aircraft of the Bangladesh Air Force and met National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

Hasina, who plans to head to London to seek asylum, has been moved to a safe location but she was unlikely to leave India last night, the report said.

She is likely to meet her daughter Saima Wazed, who is based in Delhi. Saima is working as the World Health Organisation's regional director for South-East Asia.

REACTIONS FROM RUSSIA, UN, EU

The Russian foreign ministry yesterday said Moscow operates on the premise that changes in the Bangladesh government constitute an "internal affair" of that country.

"However, we look forward to the internal political processes in that friendly country returning to the constitutional norms as soon as possible," said the Russian embassy in Dhaka quoting its foreign ministry, reports UNB.

United Nations spokesman Farhan Haq yesterday said, "We continue to call for calm and restraint and to urge all parties to respect the right to peaceful assembly and expression."

The UN official urged the security forces to protect those out on the streets.

The European Union has called for an orderly and peaceful transition towards a democratically elected government in Bangladesh, in full respect of human rights and democratic principles.

In a statement after the resignation of Hasina, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Joseph Borrell yesterday called for calm and restraint.

He said the EU is closely monitoring the events unfolding in Bangladesh that witnessed over 300 deaths amid the anti-quota protests since early July.

"The EU is saddened by the tragic loss of life during the protests in recent days."

Borrell said the EU takes note of the assurances given by General Waker-Uz-Zaman that the situation will be handled in a peaceful manner, and that all unlawful killings will be impartially investigated.

"Accountability for human rights violations is crucial. Those who have been arbitrarily detained should be released immediately," he said.

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer's spokesperson said they are deeply concerned by the recent violence in Bangladesh, which escalated in recent days, reports Reuters.

The very significant loss of life, including of students, children and law enforcement officers, is completely unacceptable, he said, adding that the right to peaceful protest must be protected and never subject to violence.

"We call on the authorities to release all peaceful protesters and ensure due process is followed for those charged and prosecuted."

76 killed in attacks

FROM PAGE 12

fire to Jabir Hotel which is owned by Shahin Chakladar, general secretary of Jashore Awami League, Civil Surgeon Mahmudul Hasan said.

He said the bodies were identified and families had taken some of the bodies.

Harun-or-Rashid, an employee of Jashore General Hospital, said most of the victims were students.

Thousands of people were celebrating Hasina's departure across the town. At one point, some people set the hotel at Chittarmore on fire.

In Kushtia, at least eight people, including a child, were killed and over a hundred others were injured in clashes with police, reports UNB.

The incident occurred following an attack on the Kushtia Model Police Station and the Police Superintendent's Office. The police opened fire after being attacked, resulting in the casualties.

In Gazipur, six people were killed and 40 others injured as Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and protesters clashed in the Mulaid area of Sreepur.

Four of the deceased were identified as Sifatullah, 22, Sikhur Ahmed, 20, Kawsar, 28, and Jewel Mridha, 30, said Obaidul Islam. Obaidul was the manager of Al Hera Hospital in Mauna Chowrasta.

In Habiganj, six people were killed in police firing in Baniachang upazila and 55 others were injured, said Shamima Akhter, upazila health and welfare officer.

Locals said students marched from LR High School to Habiganj Police Station. As police stopped the procession, a clash broke out and police opened fire, leaving three dead on the spot.

The angry mob then set fire to the police station.

In Chandpur, Selim Khan, chairman of Lakshmipur Union Parishad, and his son Shanto Khan, an actor, were beaten to death.

As the news of Hasina's resignation spread, Selim and his son fled his village and went to Farakkabad Bazar of Balia Union. When people tried to stop them, they managed to flee by opening fire.

When they reached the nearby Bagarabazar area, an angry mob caught and killed them.

Chandpur Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Sheikh Mohsin Alam confirmed the matter.

Locals said Selim and his men used to run an illegal sand business in Char Hogla village under Shambhupura union of Narayanganj by encroaching upon a portion of the Meghna.

Two other victims in the district are Shahadat, 20, a student who was shot, and Harun-ar Rashid, a sub inspector of Kachua Police Station.

In Satkhira, at least four, including two AL leaders, were killed in clashes between demonstrators and AL men in Ashashuni.

The AL leaders are Zakir Hossain, former chairman of Pratapnagar Union Parishad and the president of Pratapnagar Union AL, and Jahangir Hossain, a local AL leader.

The two others, Adami Ali and Anas Billah, were shot dead as Zakir Hossain opened fire when a mob attacked his house.

In Jhenaidah, Porahati Union Parishad Chairman Hiron and his driver Asad were beaten to death. The bodies were hung from a sculpture at Paira Chattar, said Mir Abidur Rahman, an assistant superintendent of police of Jhenidah.

Besides, two others, Manzur Hossain and Rabbi Hossain, were burned to death as miscreants set fire to a house of local AL leader Jewel Hossain, said Abu Azif, officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station.

At least three persons were killed in separate clashes in Chattogram.

A physician of the Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) emergency department said they died of gunshot wounds. The two deceased were identified as Jamal Uddin, 50, Nizam Uddin, 18.

"They were brought dead to hospital between 6:00pm and 11:00pm," confirmed Kamruzzaman, additional ward master of the CMCH. He could not immediately say the identities of other deceased and the location of the clash.

In Khulna, Koyra upazila chairman and upazila AL president GM Mohsin Reza, his driver Alamgir, and bodyguard Yakub were beaten to death around 4:00pm.

OC Mizanur Rahman of Koyra Police Station said the protesters set fire to Mohsin's house and they were beaten to death.

In Barishal, fire fighters recovered three burnt bodies from former mayor Serniabat Sadik Abdullah's residence on Kalibari road in the city yesterday evening.

Sadik Abdullah was not present at his home at that time.

The bodies were sent to a hospital, said Belal Uddin, assistant director of fire service.

Identities could not be known immediately.

In Patuakhali, a Jubo League activist named Monirul Islam Shaheen was beaten to death in the Baufal area.

One person was killed in a clash in Titas area of Brahmanbaria, civil surgeon office sources said.

Will come up

FROM PAGE 12

Nahid urged all to ensure that no one gets the opportunity to provoke religious tensions in the country after the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

"We, the protesters, have united against the fascist government. There is no grouping or division among us. We are against any kind of religious incitement, sabotage or division. We will prevent any such attempts."

Earlier, seven coordinators of the movement, including Nahid and Asif, through a private television channel, said nothing will be accepted beyond the proposed interim national government, adding that fascists and murderers will be tried and will not be given a chance to escape.

"No collaborators or supporters of fascists will be allowed in the national interim government," said Nahid.

He said they (the student leaders) want to bring change in the overall system of Bangladesh, in which fascism, authoritarianism or "another leader like Sheikh Hasina" can never emerge again.

Responding to a question, Asif Mahmud said they believed they had achieved victory the day the one-point demand was announced, adding that they will remain on the streets until all their demands are met.

About the demands, he said that on the first day the interim government takes office, all political leaders and activists imprisoned over the past 16 years must be released, and all political murders must get justice.

The coordinators said they want to ensure fair and impartial elections for a democratic government.

Another coordinator Sarjis Alam credited the success of the movement to the ordinary people of Bangladesh.

Nahid urged the students and people to ensure that no one takes advantage of the current situation to vandalise or loot state establishments.

Addressing the public, he said they must remain peacefully on the streets until the final announcement is made. "State assets belong to the people, and they must be protected. No one should be able to loot."

Fakhrul

FROM PAGE 12

Tarique Rahman, I urge the country's people to remain calm," BNP media cell member Sayrul Kabir Khan told UNB quoting Fakhrul.

Fakhrul also urged the BNP leaders and activists to stay alert so that no one can cause any harm to people and their property.

66 dead as city convulsed with violence

FROM PAGE 12

wounds. There were two exceptions; one person appeared to have been hacked, and another person presumably died from shotgun pellet injuries.

At least two of those killed were minors. One of them was identified as Shaon. The other could not be identified immediately.

In most cases, people who brought the bodies in told our correspondent that police shot them. Some said they brought in the bodies of onlookers who were shot.

Azmot Miah, a fish trader, had locked his store in Jatrabari and was inside during the clashes. A bullet hit him in the neck, said the people who brought him in.

Journalist Abdur Noor, 27, who worked for Ajker Goyenda Sangbad, was among those brought in dead from Jatrabari, his older brother Ziaul Haque said.

Bodies of people killed in Bangshal, North Badda, and Narayanganj's Kajla were also taken to DMCH.

The bodies were checked, booked, and carted away to the morgue and before the blood on the floor could be cleaned, another body would be brought in and placed on the same spot on the floor.

By the end of the day, the entire floor of the emergency ward was covered with red footprints.

Many relatives of those who lost their loved ones raged against the now-fallen government.

The DMCH was allowing families to take away the bodies without conducting an autopsy.

At the hospital, over 350 people received treatment.

Earlier in the day, a group of policemen went to the DMCH and fired at the emergency department at 12:47pm. Immediately afterwards, two bodies were taken to the emergency department.

Meanwhile, 21 people including a policeman were killed and over 100 injured in the capital's Uttara in the afternoon when men in plain clothes opened fire on protesters from Uttara East Police Station.

Thirteen bodies were taken to Uttara Crescent Hospital while eight others to Kuwait Bangladesh Friendship Govt Hospital, sources said.

The Daily Star correspondent on the spot saw partially charred body of policeman AH Rony being taken out of the station by a mob.

Our correspondent from the spot said hundreds of people surrounded the police station around 4:50pm, stormed it around 8:00pm, and then set it on fire.

Witnesses said a clash ensued after a mob threw brick chunks at an armoured personnel carrier (APC) near the police station around 4:45pm. Two men in plain clothes then opened fire on the mob.

They fired bullets, rubber bullets, and teargas indiscriminately, they said.

The group then set fire to the APC, our correspondent observed.

At one stage, several people broke the wall of the armoury at the police station and took away firearms and ammunition. Some were seen firing the looted firearms at the police station.

The policemen were firing from the roof of the three-storey building until 9:30pm.

A group of people also attacked the Badda Police Station around 3:00pm. Police responded with gunfire, teargas and stun grenades. An officer at the police station, requesting anonymity, said that the station was burnt to the ground.

Mobs also attacked and torched the Jatrabari, Mohammadpur, and Adabar police stations.

Around 4:00pm, mobs torched the Awami League headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue, the district AL office in Tejgaon, and the political office of the Awami League president in Dhanmondi.

The Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi-32 was vandalised and set on fire around 4:00pm. Many were seen taking away valuables from the building.

Around 2:15pm, thousands of protesters were marching towards Shahbagh. As they passed TSC, some of them threw brick chunks at the police, leading to clashes. During that time, police fired rubber bullets and teargas at the protesters.

Mobs also vandalised and torched Ekattor TV, Channel 24, and ATN Bangla in the afternoon, around the same time Somoy TV was ransacked.

The attackers also took away equipment. Channel 24, ATN Bangla, ATN News went off the air.

Bangla daily Amader Natun Shomay office was attacked by a mob late last night. Saleh Biplob, executive editor of the paper, said their office was vandalised.

Thousands of people stormed the Dhanmondi home of former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan around 3:30pm yesterday and vandalised it.

In the afternoon, a mob also vandalised the residence of the Dhaka University vice chancellor.

The residence of the superintendent of police of Dhaka was also attacked. The attackers were seen looting valuables.

Fire service late last night said there were reports of at least 200 fire incidents in the capital yesterday.

Harris set to name VP pick ahead of swing state tour

AFP, *Washington*

Kamala Harris will name her running mate as she prepares for a tour of US battleground states aimed at turning excitement over her presidential bid into durable support that can power her to victory.

All paths to the White House run through a handful of swing states, and Harris will kick off her five-day run today in the largest -- Pennsylvania -- as she builds momentum for her showdown with Republican Donald Trump on November 5.

"At this moment, we face a choice between two visions for our nation: one focused on the future and the other on the past... This campaign is about people coming together, fueled by love of country, to fight for the best of who we are," she posted on X.

Fresh from winning enough delegate votes to secure the Democratic nomination, the country's first female, Black and South Asian vice president heads into the national convention in Chicago in two weeks in total control of her party.

Protesters storm

FROM PAGE 12

over the last two weeks .... Over the years, Hasina turned herself into an autocrat. What we are witnessing here today is the ultimate consequence of that," said Sohel Jahangir Alam, a development worker, who went there from Nakhalpara with his daughter, a class VI student.

As tens of thousands of people occupied the neatly manicured lawns, some got down into the pools and to take a bath, while others were catching fish. They collected woods and other things and set those on fire, as the crowd grew thicker by the minute.

Many were seen taking anything and everything they could get hold of – chicken, duck, pigeon, cow, goat, live fish from the pond, jackfruit, coconut, TV, printer, monitor, air conditioner, fridge, chair, table, sofa, steel and wooden cabinets, fitness equipment, flower vase, doll, pillow, mattress, spoon, fork, plastic bucket, wall clock, fan, garments and even flower plants, with or without tubs.

One mother who came with her daughter simply uprooted some decorative plants as memorabilia.

"I want this plant to remind me and my children that I was a witness to Sheikh Hasina's fall," the mother said.

Tazrimin Mily, a software engineer, plucked some white flowers from the garden and adorned her bun (khopa) with them.

"This is a big victory. The government we had was not the government of the people. It was an unelected government; it had no accountability.... That government has fallen today. Maybe I will never be able to come here again. So I plucked the flowers and adorned my bun with them in joy," said Mily, who was accompanied by her husband.

Mahmudul Hasan is among those first to storm Gono Bhaban.

"When we entered through the main gate, some army personnel were standing there. They said 'you could enter the residence but do not vandalise anything,'" he told The Daily Star.

PROTESTERS STORM PMO, JS

Thousands of protesters carrying national flag also descended on the Prime Minister's Office around 3:00pm.

No personnel of the Armed Police Battalion, who are tasked with providing security of the office, were seen there. No police members were in sight either.

They were cheering, chanting slogans, and shouting as they described the PM's resignation as a victory.

The slogans include: "Ke Palaise? Sheikh Hasina" (who fled? Sheikh Hasina); Hoi Hoi Roi Roi, Sheikh Hasina geli koi, (Tell me, tell me, Sheikh Hasina, where have you gone?).

Many went inside the office and took away many valuables.

Around the same time, another group of agitators, hundreds of thousands of them, ran into the Jatiya Sangsad.

They broke through the barricade put on different roads leading to the parliament building and marched towards it. No police officials were seen at the time. Some army officials were there, but they did not prevent anyone from entering.

Within minutes, the staircase in front of parliament was filled with thousands of protesters.

Some entered through the main entrance while others climbed through the boundary fence. Many went inside the chamber hall of the House where lawmakers deliberate, and they sat on the seats and took photos.

They stood on the podium of the House and cheered.

In Kakrail, a group of people vandalised the official residence of Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan. They stormed the CJ's house around 4:45pm and took away many valuables, including cars and furniture, a source close to the chief justice told The Daily Star.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

she took over power it was considered a failing state. It was a poor country. Until today it was considered one of the rising tigers of Asia. She's very disappointed."

On accusations that the government had dealt with protesters in a heavy-handed manner, he denied it, saying: "You've had policemen beaten to death -- 13 just yesterday. So, what do you expect the police to do when mobs are beating people to death?"

Hundreds of people have died in the protests so far, with the vast majority protesters.

DHAKA TUESDAY AUGUST 6, 2024, SRABAN 22, 1431 BS ● starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Star BUSINESS

Trade thru Ctg port disrupted for second day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Export and import activities through the Chattogram port were significantly disrupted for a second straight day yesterday due to the students' countrywide non-cooperation movement, which led to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation.

Assessment activities of imported and exported goods continued as normal, but clearance of imported goods was slow, a customs and port official said.

In the last 24 hours to 9am yesterday, approximately 1,175 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of containers were cleared from the port, down from the daily average of around 7,000-8,000 TEUs.

The transport of cargo containers bound for the Kamalapur inland container depot was also halted due to the closure of railway wagons for a second straight day, according to the port officials.

All officials are working as usual, but only a few importers and agents came to release their goods, said Mohammad Fyzur Rahman, commissioner of Chattogram Custom House.

Garment factories not reopening today

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) yesterday decided not to reopen factories from today as their management wants to observe the situation further for the change in the political situation.

The BGMEA took the decision at an emergency meeting held at its office in Dhaka.

In a statement, the BGMEA said considering the current situation, the trade body instructed factory owners not to reopen their units until further notice.

Earlier on Sunday, the BGMEA in a statement instructed factory owners to announce the closure of their factories for an indefinite period because of the political crisis.

They announced the factory closure as the immediate past government announced general public holidays for three days following the student movement across the country.

In the first round of the crisis, the garment factory and textile millers announced closure of their units for four days. The exporters could not ship goods from the ports and could not continue production at the factories because of the violence.

A solitary truck exits the Chattogram port around 1:00pm yesterday. Although the gates are usually jam-packed around noon, very few vehicles dared to venture out given the tense atmosphere yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

No time to spare in stabilising economy: experts

AHSAN HABIB

Bangladesh has no time to spare when it comes to ensuring the stability of the economy, which has fallen into a crisis mainly due to the absence of democracy for over a decade.

Following Sheikh Hasina's resignation as prime minister and the announcement that an interim government would be formed, economists yesterday said reforms should be taken immediately to address economic challenges.

The challenges include high inflation, falling foreign exchange reserves, the high burden of default loans, poor governance in the banking sector and, above all, corruption.

The government must also stem further destruction before taking steps to revive the economy.

It is unclear what type of government is going to be formed now, but there is no time to spare when it comes to reviving the economy, said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

The economy was already in crisis and the recent political turmoil, which included internet blackouts and supply chain disruptions, only rubbed salt in its wounds.

So, the priority now should be the economy, he said.

To bring back normality, social equity and justice need to be ensured, which also aligns with the students' demands.

Internet connection and other communications should not be disrupted further while education should be resumed with full priority, Hussain said, adding that such measures would provide confidence to people and normalise economic activity.

Due to the turmoil over the recent weeks, which included the deaths of over 300 people including students, there was supply chain disruption.

Now, everything should be operational. The metro rail and elevated expressway in Dhaka as well as railways and all other connections should be operational as soon as possible, he said.

In order to rein in inflation, the supply chain disruption should be addressed and money should not be printed, the economist added.

Budgetary reforms are also necessary, according to Hussain. The interim government must examine areas where it can save as well as where it needs to increase expenditure.

As poor people are suffering, the government should take measures to increase support for them.

He also said all barriers in making the foreign exchange market transparent and market-based will have to be removed.

Eradication of corruption should be prioritised and all the regulatory bodies should be reformed, he added.

According to Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, if the political system is inadequate, the economy cannot perform well. So, he said, a participatory and democratic political system is necessary.

Democracy and accountability should be ensured as well.

He added that the country is facing several short-term challenges as well as structural problems.

Due to stubbornly high inflation, low-income individuals have been suffering.

Annual inflation rose to 9.73 percent in 2023-24, which was the highest rate in the past 12 years. The inflation rate has remained above 9 percent since March of 2023, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Alongside attempting to stabilise exchange rates, the interim government will also have to focus on reducing expenditure in order to tame inflation, Mansur said.

To solve structural problems in the financial sector, a committee of analysts must be tasked with unearthing problems in the banking sector and finding out exactly how big the hole is.

If a proper diagnosis is not conducted, the problem cannot be solved, he added.

Other areas like the stock market, bond market and insurance industry should also be analysed by a separate committee and restructured if necessary, he recommended.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank can provide support in these areas if necessary.

He also said the existing revenue management system has been a silent killer, adding: "It is destroying the whole economy."

An economy cannot develop with a low tax-GDP ratio and Bangladesh has one of the lowest in the world.

In FY23, Bangladesh's tax-to-GDP ratio stood at 7.3 percent despite rising per capita income, according to the Ministry of Finance.

So, the whole system should be reformed to raise tax revenues, he said.

Along with financial support, empowering local government agencies is also necessary as it will help decentralise the economy and development, Mansur added.

Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the economy needs huge reforms, adding that it had been weakened by a lack of political will.

Bangladesh has been following the wrong political system of non-democracy for more than a decade. When a political system is devoid of democracy, one group benefits and rent-seeking prevails.

So, the country's people suffer despite higher GDP growth because proper distribution is absent, she said.

RMG exporters expect new vigour in business

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Garment exporters are expecting a strong recovery in exports and business as normalcy is being gradually restored with the changing political scenario.

The business environment was facing an impasse because of the latest spells of violence and frequent shutdown of factories, for which they were unable to manufacture goods for export.

Exporters also said, though July, August and September comprise the peak season for shipping goods meant for Christmas and for booking work orders for the coming summer and spring seasons, they were facing challenges in sending goods to retailers through Chattogram port amid violence.

They were also unable to communicate with their business partners both at home and abroad because of the recent internet blackout across the country and for the violence.

The apparel manufacturers are now planning to reopen their production units and to restart with a new vigour as they have been facing shutdowns, difficulties in transportation and shipment of goods over more than one month because of the political crisis.

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) called a meeting yesterday at 7:30pm to discuss the next course of action as the prime minister resigned, said a director.

They decided that the garment factories and textile mills will stay shut for now considering the current situation. The owners may take a decision on factory reopening today.

They had earlier shut down their units two weeks ago for four days amidst violence and curfew. During the first round of shutdown, they could not even communicate with their international clothing retailers and brands because of an internet blackout across the country.

Because of the latest spell of student movement and political impasse, the BGMEA has already said they have lost Tk 6,400 crore while the textile millers said the amount of their loss is more than $58.8 million.

The garment and textile millers have shut down their production units across the country fearing labour unrest and vandalism, which will cause a massive loss for the sector.

Garment exporters have lost Tk 6,400 crore due to the recent unrest and shutdown of factories, said Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

PHOTO: STAR/FILE

During the first round of violence and curfew, the international clothing retailers and brands expressed concern over the situation as they were facing difficulties in placing work orders with factories and receiving shipments of goods from Chattogram port.

"We mainly discussed the issue of reopening the factories. However, we may take more time to reopen the factories considering the change in the political situation," said BGMEA Vice-President Arshad Jamal Dipu over the phone.

"We want to restart production in the factories very soon. But we need help from the administration for the smooth running of the units as their instructions are important for us," Dipu added.

Also, it recently became difficult to do business and international trade because this is the time to renew bond licences but many, especially the Chattogram-based exporters, are complaining that the customs department is not renewing the bond licences.

Many have been forced to adopt expensive air shipments because of delays in production and transportation of goods to the factories.

Also, many have been forced to provide discounts and accept cancellation of work orders from international retailers and brands because of the latest spells of violence and curfew.

Banks are charging a higher interest rate on loans, he said, adding that all these things are affecting business and all those issues need to be broadly discussed with the trade bodies and administration soon for resolving the issues.

"We have to work seriously now," Dipu also said.

"I hope everything will change now and business will soon be restored," said a garment exporter asking not to be named.

The work orders from international retailers and brands will also be restored soon as normalcy has also started to return, the exporter added.

"We are getting ready to reopen our factories as soon as possible," said a director of the BGMEA asking not to be named.

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Rows of roadside shops that were left closed in Purana Paltan in the capital around noon yesterday amidst the changing political scenario.

Supply chain disruption hits commodity traders and farmers

SUKANTA HALDER

The risk of violence amidst a political crisis that culminated in the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday disrupted supply chains of essential food commodities, hitting consumers, traders and farmers.

Traders said many vehicles with fresh vegetables such as spine gourds and pointed gourds could not reach Dhaka from different districts.

As a result, prices of essential food commodities have already increased at the wholesale and retail levels.

For example, the price of onion rose to Tk 120 per kilogramme (kg) yesterday from Tk 116 a week ago. The price of pointed gourd rose to Tk 80 per kg from Tk 60 earlier at different kitchen markets in Dhaka.

Mostafa Kamal, a wholesaler of Karwan Bazar, one of the largest kitchen markets in Dhaka, said three goods-laden trucks were supposed to come to Dhaka from Dinajpur and Ishwardi at midnight of Sunday.

The trucks, carrying goods worth Tk 6 lakh, got stuck in Bogura for violence on the roads. Of those goods, there were gourds, cauliflowers, pointed gourds and sponge gourds in the truck.

"If it does not enter Dhaka within a day, there is every possibility of the vegetable rotting. If that happens, it will be a big loss," he said early yesterday.

Tensions ran high amidst a curfew and a "March to Dhaka" programme called by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement over the recent killings of people.

Over 300 people were killed in just three weeks since July 16, making it the bloodiest period in the history of Bangladesh's civil movement.

The government on Sunday reimposed a curfew for an indefinite period from 6:00pm and announced a three-day general holiday starting yesterday, which brought transports to a standstill.

Mohammad Sohel, a wholesaler of Karwan Bazar, said two trucks with 30 tonnes of potatoes were supposed to come from Bogura and Rajshahi early yesterday. Only one could enter Dhaka while another was stuck in Sirajganj's Ullapara.

Salam Sheikh, an onion wholesaler of the same market, said a total of 20 sacks of onions were supposed to come from Pabna and Rajshahi. But they could not even decide on loading them onto a truck, he said.

Mohammad Jashim Uddin, a rice wholesaler of Mohammadpur Krishi Market in the capital, said amidst the current situation, no order for rice has not been placed over the last two days despite there being a lot of demand.

The price of rice per kg has increased by Tk 2 to Tk 3 on average since Sunday, he said.

Goods cannot be sent to other big cities of the country, including Dhaka, due to a lack of transport, said Rahidul Islam, a vegetable stockist and wholesaler in Bogura's Mahasthan Bazar, one of the main wholesale vegetable depots of the northern region.

However, the prices of almost all products there have come down. Farmers are facing huge losses, he said, adding that gourds are being sold at Tk 20 per kg, brinjal at Tk 5 to Tk 15 and green chilies at Tk 100.

High inflation, banking crisis are key hurdles for new govt: analysts

JAGARAN CHAKMA *and* **MEHDI HASSAN**

The interim government's immediate duty will be to address inflation and repair weak financial institutions as it seeks to rebuild the economy, according to experts.

They added that weak governance in financial institutions and the central bank's lack of autonomy have been seriously affecting the economy.

"The interim government's immediate task should be addressing inflation. The economy has been suffering from high inflationary pressure for years," said Fahmida Khatun, executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Annual inflation rose to 9.73 percent in 2023-24, the highest since 2011-12, when it was 10.62 percent, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

She also said financial institutions had weakened immensely due to corruption and a lack of good governance.

The CPD executive director said the nation has witnessed a change and the need now is to rebuild the economy.

According to her, overcoming the destruction of public and private property is not the major challenge. Rather, repairing the country's image is the major challenge.

Sumon Chowdhury, secretary general of the Bangladesh Steel Manufacturing Association (BSMA), said the interim government needs time to ensure discipline in business.

Although it is unclear what steps the interim government will take, any decision should be made after consulting with all stakeholders, he added.

Chowdhury said businessmen faced huge financial and non-financial losses during the movement, adding that they had already been suffering for a long time due to a gas crisis.

In such circumstances, the interim government should provide incentives or other benefits, he said.

He also condemned attacks by miscreants on businesses, which particularly targeted establishments owned by pro-Awami League (AL) businessmen.

"It is true that pro-AL businessmen got plenty of benefits. But practically all businessmen became pro-AL as the party has ruled the country for the past 15 years."

Zaved Akthar, president of the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), refused to comment in advance.

But he said that the nation sustained a lot of damage, both literally and metaphorically.

"We have to rebuild our nation," he said.

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, a former chairman of the Association of Bankers Bangladesh, said: "Whoever comes to power, we are looking for good governance in the banking sector."

Rahman, also managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, told The Daily Star that companies and banks owned by people close to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will have to tread carefully.

He also fears bad loans will rise further as companies owned by political leaders may face trouble.

PHOTO: STAR/FILE

The economy of Bangladesh has been suffering from high inflationary pressure for years, as annual inflation rose to 9.73 percent in 2023-24, the highest since 2011-12.

Banks see lower offshore lending amid forex crisis

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Lending from offshore units of banks in Bangladesh has declined amid the ongoing foreign exchange crisis, leaving the segment in a fragile situation.

By the end of March this year, the total disbursed loans of offshore banking units (OBU) stood at about Tk 72,437 crore, down 7.68 percent year-on-year, as per the latest central bank data.

OBUs were a lucrative business for banks when the forex flow was good. But now their operations have practically come to a standstill as foreign funds are unavailable, industry people said.

Bangladesh has been facing a foreign exchange crisis for more than two years now, which adversely impacted their OBUs, as per industry insiders.

The country's forex reserves have by fallen more than $24 billion since August 2021 following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The forex reserves stood at $21.78 billion (BPM6) on June 30 this year, as per the latest central bank data.

Besides, Bangladesh Bank found proof that some banks laundered money through their OBUs, prompting the banking regulator to strengthen monitoring of the segment.

An OBU is a specialised unit within a licensed bank that offers financial services, such as loans, in foreign currencies to non-resident customers.

Generally, the unit borrows from foreign banks as well as the central bank to lend funds to various organisations for import payments, export bill discounting, refinance, and mid and long-term loans.

Loans from OBUs started to fall after the central bank instructed banks not to take funds from their domestic unit to finance OBUs, said Mati Ul Hasan, additional managing director of Mercantile Bank.

In January, the Bangladesh Bank barred banks from transferring foreign currency to their OBUs to tackle local forex shortages and reduce the dependency of units abroad on those back home.

Mati Ul Hasan said most banks used to take funds from domestic units to OBUs but they have had to adjust as per the central bank's instruction.

"That is why lending from OBUs has declined," he added.

From 2020, banks were allowed to transfer up to a maximum of 30 percent of their regulatory capital in foreign currency from domestic units to OBUs.

There was no prior limit on transferring or mobilising funds for OBUs.

OFFSHORE BANKING: KEY POINTS
(As of March 2024)

- Loans stood at Tk 72,437.17cr
- Loans at state banks were Tk 676.64cr
- Private commercial banks' loans were Tk 57,983.72cr
- Defaulted loans stood at Tk 1,876.91cr
- Offshore banking was allowed in the country in 1985
- Govt introduced Offshore Banking Act 2024 in May

A senior Bangladesh Bank official said they observed that many banks were excessively transferring foreign currency to OBUs, creating an imbalance in the demand and supply of foreign currency in the local market.

Till March this year, loan disbursement from offshore units of state-run banks fell by Tk 802 crore to Tk 677 crore. Meanwhile, loan disbursement from OBUs of private commercial banks fell by Tk 2,482 crore to Tk 57,984 crore.

Likewise, loans from the OBUs of foreign banks fell by Tk 2743 crore to Tk 13,776 crore.

Amid the forex shortage, foreign lenders are very cautious about providing funds to local banks, which is another reason lending through OBUs declined, said Shaheen Iqbal, deputy managing director and head of treasury at BRAC Bank.

However, Iqbal said lending through BRAC Bank's OBUs has increased.

DEFAULTED LOANS OF OBUs

Defaulted loans at OBUs stood at about Tk 1,877 crore at the end of March this year, up from Tk roughly 1,402 crore in the same period of 2023, central bank data showed.

Bad loans at the OBUs of private commercial banks stood at Tk 1,198 crore while bad loans at foreign banks stood at around Tk 679 crore till March this year.

Life cannot go on like this

A street vendor shares his hardships during the widespread unrest

AM JAHID

"Brother, please take at least four bananas. If not, my family will have to go without food. They are already starving," said Shukkur Ali while pleading with this reporter to make a purchase.

Ali, a roaming vendor who sells fruits in Dhaka's Farmgate, said that he has had next to no sales for the past several weeks due to the unrest and curfew.

"Risking my life, the amount I could sell and profit I made would not cover my own expenses. So, how can I bear the expenses of my six-member family in such a situation?" he asked.

Ali, who hails from Rajbari, said he has been selling bananas in the Farmgate area for the past 10 years.

By selling bananas, he has been bearing the expenses of his son, who is studying at Government Rajendra College in Faridpur, and daughter, who studies at a school near his village in Bahadurpur of Pangsha upazila.

"I have no savings. The money I had has already been spent on family expenses. At present, I am unable to afford the living expenses of my family. Life cannot go on like this," Ali said.

While pointing out that his son passed SSC with a golden GPA-5 while his daughter is also an outstanding student, Ali said people think the two could enjoy great success in the future.

"I don't want my son's future to be like mine. That's why I am doing my best to pay for their education," he added.

Ali, the lone breadwinner for this family, said he spends at least Tk 10,000 every month on his son's education apart from the regular expenditures of his family who live in his village home.

"But right now, I am very helpless. Owing to the adverse situation, the condition of my business is horrible. In the last few weeks, I made sales of a maximum of Tk 400 per day," he added.

On a normal day, Ali can sell bananas worth about Tk 8,000.

When this reporter was talking to Ali, a vegetable vendor named Badal Mia also approached, requesting to write about his hard times during the widespread violence.

Mia shared a similar story about his hardships as the sales of his business significantly reduced owing to recent unrest centring the students' movement.

This reporter also spoke with other hawkers and street vendors, who all claimed that they are suffering huge losses due to clashes between law enforcement agencies and demonstrating students.

This is hampering economic activities and affecting peoples' daily lives, they said.

The clashes have left several hundred dead and thousands injured since it began on July 15-16 for the quota reform movement declared by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

A vegetable vendor named Badal Mia was waiting for customers on a deserted sidewalk between Khamarbari intersection and Farmgate yesterday noon. Hardships of street vendors like him deepened in recent days as sales dropped significantly amid the unrest and curfew.

PHOTO: AM JAHID

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

A new dawn rises on Bangladesh

After Hasina's fall, we must strive to build a pro-people, inclusive society

This is a day that will be remembered for generations to come. A day when a 15-year-long authoritarian rule has finally come to an end. A day when people truly rose to power, putting aside their differences and uniting in their desire for freedom and a better tomorrow. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the extraordinary showing of the student-mass movement that has led to the downfall of Sheikh Hasina—who came to power for a fourth consecutive term only this January—will henceforth be the new reference point in our history of mass uprisings.

The anticipation was building up even before the day began, with the planned "March to Dhaka" preponed by a day because of the urgency created by the events of the previous day. In what many called the second wave of violence, about a hundred people perished that day as ruling party activists and police clashed with anti-government protesters. During the first wave on July 18-21, over 200 people had died. So desperate protesters, seeing their demand for justice frequently trivialised, wanted an end to all the farce and violence with a final push. And at 3PM on Monday, with crowds from across the country heading to Dhaka to siege Gono Bhaban, disregarding a curfew, the army chief announced the resignation of Sheikh Hasina. An interim government will likely be formed soon to run the country.

In the coming days, we will know more about the interim government which we hope will swiftly deliver on the promises of justice for each of the killings and a peaceful democratic transition. But right now, let's recognise this moment in our history. Perhaps nothing describes the events of the past few weeks better than what the Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Lenin once said: that there are decades where nothing happens, and then there are weeks where decades happen. We have seen such eventful weeks in 1952, in 1969, and in 1990. But none of those uprisings claimed so many lives. None of them were against a democratically elected government, however questionable those elections were. This makes it all the more crucial that we remember the background in which this latest uprising was set, and ensure that our future actions align with it, otherwise the huge sacrifices that went into making it successful will have been for nothing.

The first goal of this movement was establishing justice for those who perished during protests marked by brutal crackdowns by security forces, aided by ruling party cadres. But then, because of the constant refusal of the government to recognise the gravity of the tragedy and conduct fair investigations, it transformed into a bigger fight against the very seat of power that favours the interests of a few over that of the vast majority of the people. It is this fight that has galvanised the whole nation, bringing together foes and friends alike. On Monday, people claimed their first victory in this fight. But the destination is far ahead. So, the fight must be on.

The extraordinary scenes that unfolded after the fall of the Awami League government underscored both long-awaited joy and long-suppressed anger. Soon after the announcement, millions of people poured into the streets all over the country. Despite the lingering grief over the loss of over 300 lives during the brutal crackdowns, the atmosphere was electric and filled with hope and possibility. Families with children, elders, students—everyone was out on the streets. It was a kaleidoscope of colours and sounds. Marching down the streets, many were waving flags or chanting slogans, their voices rising in unison, a powerful testament to their shared struggle and newfound liberty.

These upbeat scenes on streets, however, starkly contrasted the scenes of devastation in other places. It was painful to see a repeat of the vandalism that once stained the movement so soon after its victory. Some observers called it a total anarchy, as mobs went about destroying and pillaging houses of ruling party leaders, ruling party offices, public buildings and properties, and key symbols of power including Gono Bhaban, Prime Minister's Office, police stations, etc. Even the parliament and the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32 came under attack. Equally alarmingly, many houses, businesses and places of worship of minority communities were destroyed. A number of lives were also lost. The breakdown of law in the aftermath of the government's fall is a reminder of how important it is to ensure calm and peace so that we don't end up ruining this special moment in our history.

As we enter a new era, we must do so with optimism but also caution. While it is vital to stay watchful so that no untoward incident like what happened yesterday happens again, we also must start thinking about the kind of future we want. To truly honour the sacrifices of our fallen heroes, we must strive to build a future where democratic and egalitarian values trump narrow political interests. The time to rebuild our nation is now.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima
On this day in 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan—the blast killed more than 70,000 people and destroyed most of the city—in an effort to hasten the end of World War II.

The cheapening of life, the cracks in the system, and the fall of Hasina

Seuty Sabur *and* **Shehzad M Arifeen**
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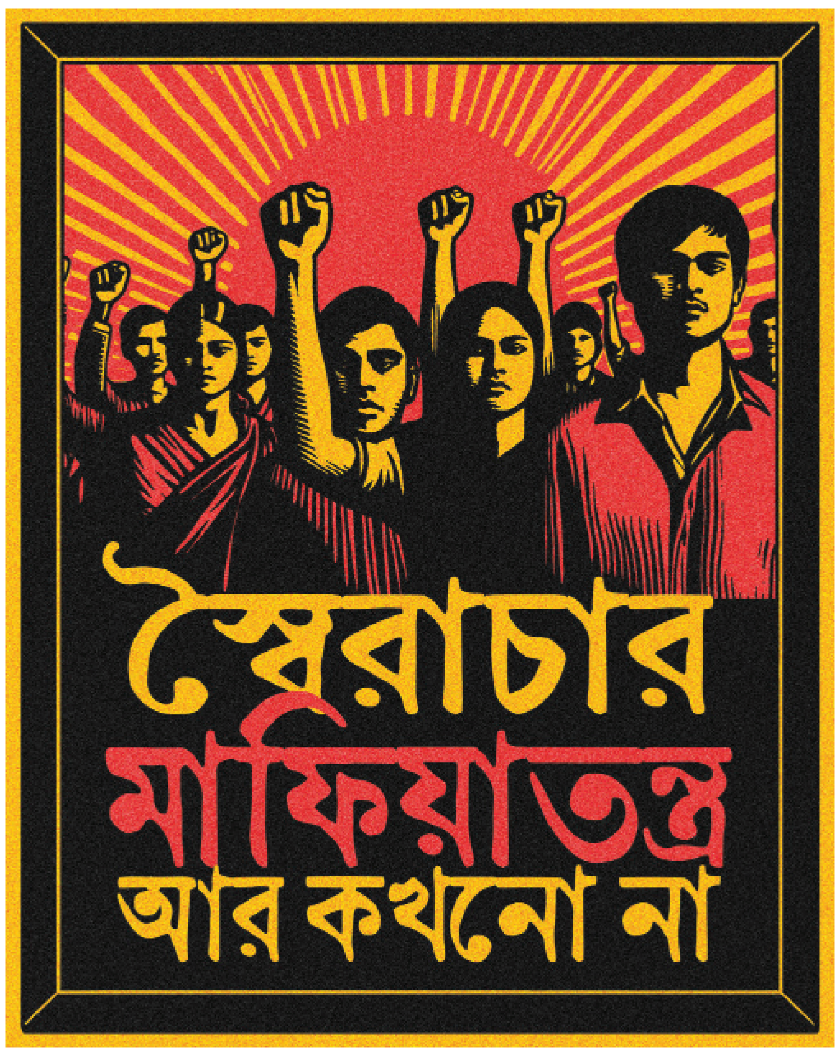
SHEHZAD M ARIFEEN *and* **SEUTY SABUR**

We have reached a point of no return. The era of Sheikh Hasina has come to an end, although we do not yet know exactly what comes after. While many are celebrating, now more than ever it is necessary to take stock. How did we get here, and what do we do so that we never get here again? The quota reform movement and its aftermath have served as a prism, casting light on the tremendous inequalities that have been produced in Bangladesh over the past decade. From the beginning, this regime staked its existence on the power of accumulation and patronage—opening Bangladesh up for business to all in exchange for loyalty. In the process, this once proud party became a violent, extractive club that anyone could join by saying the right words. State, government, and party have become one, through a process that Gramsci called "passive revolution": an elite, state-led effort to catalyse economic development while absorbing competition and neutralising enemies (that is why this is different from fascism).

That is what "being like Singapore" really means. This development has been real, despite what many like to claim. Bangladesh has transformed beyond recognition, a transformation concretised in the new national monuments (like the Padma Bridge). Enormous fortunes have been made, making this once "basket case" the home of countless millionaires. Certainly, some of that wealth has "trickled down." But our exports bring in billions because we can squeeze down wages by any means. We have rented out vast swathes of the land as EZs and EPZs, where the "normal" rules don't apply. Scandal after scandal have revealed the fortunes made using connections, or by directly using the state apparatus, funneling their wealth to tax havens, businesses in Dubai, or homes in Canada. We boast of remittance income, while the people who make and send that money—often in terrible conditions—receive nothing but neglect. These are not accidents; accumulation needs disposability. Wealth grows at the cost of someone else's life.

Those who could find patrons, who could "buy in" their fealty, could claim a share of the pie, which is precisely what the 30 percent freedom fighter quota came to represent: a loyalty card. The quota reform movement was reborn when the frustrations of primarily middle-class students—facing jobless growth and a lifetime of precarity—combined with increasing resentment at blatant corruption, state violence, and clear disdain for the public. The official reaction to the carnage on July 19—the obsession with vandalism and indifference to the human cost of repression—only reinforced the sense that this was a government for itself. After that point, nobody was really interested in talk about "third parties," real or otherwise. Why was it that the first to join the students on the streets were those who will neither pay tax nor ride on expressways? Why did Dhaka's rickshaw-pullers bring out solidarity processions? Just as these students recognised their dispensability—which is what turned government jobs into lifelines worth fighting for—they found natural allies in those the nation leaves behind, who have no other means of laying claims on the state. As the crackdown unfolded, however, many of us who do pay taxes and ride the metro remembered that we are punished with higher tax rates than money launderers, that our wallets are worth less and less while some build resorts, and that our students, our children, are being killed. Strange bedfellows have been brought together out of this sense of disposability. This regime has made some lives far too valuable, while making others so cheap that they have nothing more to lose.

This regime believed that as long as they could keep the money flowing and enroll enough investors into their gamble, they could ignore the land and river-grabbing, the broken roads, the waterlogging, the unemployment, the inflation, the energy crisis, the money-laundering and corruption, and the brewing resentment; the last could be dispelled by the might of the ever-ready foot soldiers and police, seemingly given a limitless "right to violence." Perhaps they truly believed that they had a permanent, historical mandate to rule. But the true fragility of this project has now been laid bare. This movement has many troubling dimensions, and we have written about some of them. But what it has done is provide a conduit, through which students and others have learned to transform their frustrations into structural questions to put to the state, questions that it has failed to answer with a consistency that almost begs belief. The scale of death and destruction—and the license to kill—defies anything that our predecessors faced in the 50s and 60s, or during the anti-Ershad movement. They have crossed the "red line," making any more talk of negotiations suspect.



VISUAL: **DEBASHISH CHAKRABARTY**

There is much to learn from these repeated comparisons to the past. In the 1960s, a group of Bengali economists put forth the famous "two economies" thesis, an articulation of internal colonialism based on extractive development: channeling the resources of the East to furnish the development of the West, leaving some scraps for the "peripheral" elite and keeping the rest in line by force. The struggle for Bangladesh was born when those scraps were no longer enough, when middle-class frustrations aligned with the dispossessed. But what happens when the "two economies" are not separated by geography and language? When we cannot distinguish "the enemy" from ourselves?

We have been trapped in this cycle of "peacetime war" ever since the end of the war itself, toppling regime after regime with little to show for it. Our state has remained a colonial apparatus, designed for extraction and middleman-rule. Since the transition to democracy, each regime has busied itself with enrichment, patronage, and (mutual) annihilation. The institutions we built have either fallen to partisanship or have had to insulate themselves for survival. The absence of any civil society interventions in the quota reform debate while there was still time is no less a failure than the state's. For years, we academics have made no real attempt to address the misalignment between graduation and employment rates. The media's role in engineering the "rajakar" fiasco should not be forgotten either, nor the unwillingness of so many university administrations to protect their students. We all have much to answer for.

It really did not have to come to this. Elite club politics, the counsel of sycophants, and the passion for vengeance have squandered all of the potential the last 15 years had held. The 2008 elections had carried many hopes: a thriving economy and a mature political system amongst them. If only we had learned to respect human life and make the state-civil society-people triad function. Instead of fulfilling her father's dreams, Sheikh Hasina has repeated his mistakes, and has walked straight into the same trap. And while this is a new horizon in many ways (especially for this generation), we have also been here too many times before. No hero, technocrat, or general will deliver us, nor will the death of party politics. Either we finally build a people's republic—which requires a lot more than elections—or we condemn ourselves to repeat this "legacy of blood" until there is nothing left to fight over.

A walk through free (?) Dhaka

Azmin Azran *and* **Syeda Maisha Ali**
are journalists at The Daily Star.

AZMIN AZRAN *and* **SYEDA MAISHA ALI**

People in Bangladesh went to sleep on Sunday night, August 4, shaken by the horror of the death of around 100 people throughout the day. The days leading up to it were no less horrific. What started as an anti-discrimination movement became a nine-point movement for government accountability and eventually morphed into a one-point demand for the government's resignation. The death of hundreds in the span of just under three weeks over these reasonable demands had kept the nation suspended in dread.

The morning of August 5 was no different. The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement had called for a "Long March to Dhaka" the day before. As people were expected to pour into Dhaka from across the country, first the prospect, and then the news of more needless deaths consolidated the dread we had carried over from the month of July into August.

But then the tide turned.

The first sign of the shifting winds came with the Chief of Army Staff's announcement to make a rare address to the nation at 2:00pm. In different parts of Dhaka, news of clashes between protesters and law enforcement turned into news of law enforcement standing aside as people flooded the streets.

We dared to join the tide as well. From inside Bashundhara R/A, where people famously keep to themselves, processions of 20, 40, or even more came out of each block. The chants of *Palaise re palaise, Hasina palaise* (Fled, fled! Hasina has fled!) rang out through the usually quaint streets, all the way to the raucous intersection in front of Jamuna Future Park at Nadda. Groups gathered in circles, dancing, clapping, and chanting. Their faces betrayed unbound happiness, relief, and the outpouring of anger and dissent that had been repressed for years. To us, it seemed that many were at a loss as to what they wanted to say. Most of them could only muster one immensely strong word: "Bhua."

The expressions of happiness, although simple, felt raw. People randomly handed out food and water for free, to our surprise—surprise because we don't remember in our collective memory what these little acts of kindness and camaraderie in this country looked like. Rickshaw-pullers and CNG auto-rickshaw drivers joined in the celebrations. The first rickshaw-puller we asked to take us towards Dhaka South apologetically refused, saying he wanted to go the opposite direction and celebrate with the crowd, understandably so. The rest of the way, no rickshaw-puller or CNG auto-rickshaw driver refused to go the mile towards any direction, nor did they try to negotiate the fare. One of them said, "*Joto khushi den bhara*" (Pay however much you want to).

In Gulshan, we saw people chant slogans from inside their Land Rovers. On foot, people were louder. On the streets, there were children dressed in red in the arms of their parents, there were elderly citizens with energy beyond their years, and there were groups of young people whose beaming faces reflected their sense of achievement. We could see it on their faces—the unfettered show of joy and the proud show of freedom in their gait. The collective sigh in the air was almost audible.

It was not all rosy. As expected, a deluge of people angry at law enforcement after weeks of face offs, when left to their devices on the streets, lashed out at any symbol of perceived government power. Police boxes, political offices of the Awami League, and a number of unidentifiable streetside structures were set on fire in Tejgaon Industrial Area. Smoke hung thick in the air and it was hard to breathe, and while people everywhere were armed with sticks and pieces of wood, in some areas, the weapons were of a more sinister nature. In Karwan Bazar, buses in front of government offices lay burnt and broken. On Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, which served as the main artery for people moving from Shahbagh towards Ganabhaban, the crowd hurled brickbats towards the building that houses the office of ATN News, disregarding the safety of parts of the same crowd who were walking on the road right under it.

By 4:30pm, some were using the same road to return after having played their part in the breach of the Ganabhaban and the Prime Minister's Office in Bijoy Sarani. People displayed their loot, which included everything from expensive looking china to useless looking sofa cushions. The expressions on their faces, that would have otherwise looked brave, seemed unnerving. In the same procession where a police car was being flattened by a score of angry citizens, a hundred yards behind, a boy plucked a yellow flower from a roadside garden inside a building for the girl who was with him, making vivid the fact that it is a day for the chaotic expression of emotions—both good and bad.

Bangladesh has gone through a day of historical proportions, and the people on the streets seem to know this. While the struggles, sacrifices, and sentiments that led to this moment make us hopeful that history will look favourably upon August 5, 2024, the people of Bangladesh need to learn how to pull together and build the country back up for that to happen.

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PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

The collective spirit must not be lost

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MOHAMMAD TANZIMUDDIN AHMED

Beginning with Abu Sayed, a great amount of sacrifice was made to reach this point. Our students and children were martyred, while many more were injured after being attacked by tear gas and rubber bullets. Many were arrested, some of whom were minors. Though this is a kind of victory, we are still mourning the lives lost. Even today, we lost people. We will always remember and respect the people in the protests of bloody July.

Occasions such as this has repeatedly arisen in Bangladesh's history, whether 1971 or 1990. In truth, we missed the opportunity each time. The expectations people had from different political parties in the past were dashed many times, and our politicians have only acted in their own interests without keeping in mind the best interests of the people.

The most significant factor of this protest has been that this has not been carried out under the banner of a specific political party; its success lies in the participation of all people. Those who failed to understand history, and weaponised the spirit of the Liberation War to create an environment of corruption and suffering—we have been able to bid them farewell. If we consider the atrocities over the past 15 years, we want justice for all of these actions. Those who used anything and everything, from shotguns to assault rifles and sniper rifles, to take lives during the movement in July, must be brought to book, as per national and international laws. In addition, people's sufferings must be addressed, particularly the increase of the prices of essentials and the burden of taxes being placed on the people.

In the past, we have faced disappointment; we don't want to return to a state where politicians work for their own benefit. We want to build a better nation in the memory of the martyrs of 1971, the martyrs of July and August 2024. We want an inclusive governance system where all people are recognised as equal citizens of Bangladesh, regardless of their gender, religion or any other factor. We want to see this initiative from the state and we want it to be institutionalised. Let Bangladesh begin anew, and let this new Bangladesh reflect the dreams of all those who lost their lives.

Much work remains to be done, however. We must determine a list of all those who passed away, provide treatment to the injured, and ensure safer means of livelihood for families that are in great distress due to this situation. These matters must be resolved at the earliest.

To reiterate, the success we have attained now cannot be attributed to any party, it belongs to the students, particularly the six coordinators along with various others who organised this at great risks to their lives.

We know that military rule never bodes well for any nation. Hence, the creation of an inclusive government is vital. This national solidarity that has arisen must be utilised to create a healthy and peaceful Bangladesh—different from what we have seen in the last 53 years. We must remain united and integrated, and we cannot let the collective spirit and unity that has emerged from this movement dissipate in any manner. We cannot fall into the trap of a cult of personality again. We are all the same, we are all equal and we are all Bangladeshi people, regardless of how we identify or what class or segment of the population we belong to. The nation must be able to retain this collective identity.

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

Step Down Hasina

PHOTO: **NAIMUR RAHMAN**

How will the interim government shape up?

Mujahidul Islam Selim
is former president of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB).

MUJAHIDUL ISLAM SELIM

It is too early to react to the speech by the army chief because he has said we will get more information on the interim government after he discusses it with the president. But one thing to note here is that he mentioned the name of a banned political party—Jamaat-e-Islami—when he said a discussion had been held with the main political parties of the country. Also, he said that he had discussed the current situation with all the big political parties of the country, which is not true.For instance, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) was not contacted.

Moreover, they did not contact the coordinators of the protesting students' platform (the Students' Movement against Discrimination). He said Prof Asif Nazrul had taken the responsibility of informing the students. These are vague comments. He said things would be clear tomorrow. As long as the demands of the quota reform movement are not fully implemented, the protesters should remain alert.

The enthusiasm seen during the current movement is unprecedented. Such enthusiasm was not even present during the 1969 Mass Uprising, which was led by an organised leadership. Although the quota reform movement does not have the same format, I have not seen any mistakes made by its leadership so far. Rather, the movement gained more public support and there does not seem to be any loss of momentum. We are witnessing the determination of very ordinary students ready to sacrifice their lives to establish their rights.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

The Awami League government lost public support. To stay in power, they applied brutal force. We heard the party's general secretary's comment about Chhatra League and saw how armed ruling party goons attacked the protesters. That made the protesters angrier. Then the (former) prime minister added salt to the injury with her comments. Then six to seven people died in state-sponsored violence. Even that did not frighten the protesters. Then the indiscriminate firing started. That too could not quell the protest, rather the number of students doubled. On August 4, around 100 people died. We have not seen so many deaths of unarmed people during any movement in post-liberation Bangladesh.

The government should have called a cabinet meeting and announced their resignation. Several weeks ago, the prime minister said she would hand the responsibility of trying the perpetrators of the violence to the citizens. If the citizens do take the responsibility for justice, it can only be delivered through the verdict of an election. It was not difficult for the government to do this. This happened before, after the fall of Ershad's regime. He said he would transfer power, but there was no clear-cut process to do that. We offered to create it, and I had drafted the design of that process. So, it could have been done again this time.

VOICES FROM SHAHBAGH

We can't celebrate yet. Not until there is justice for our brothers who have been killed. Sheikh Hasina's resignation was, of course, a must. But for all the deaths that happened, there must be thorough investigations into the role of the administration, party activists, Chhatra League and others. Once that has been achieved, then we can finally celebrate.

We do not know who will come to power next, but the army is likely to take over in the immediate future. We hope whoever it is, they will take prompt and proper actions to deliver justice for the killings. Those who have been unjustly detained must be unconditionally released.

I don't think there is any country in the world where the government has tried to stay in power by raising its hand on its own students so many times like this. Students are a nation's assets. Students have a special place in peoples' hearts. This regime didn't just kill one or two students. According to newspaper reports, it killed more than 300—even though we believe the number is higher. Many ordinary citizens have also been killed. It is because this regime killed so many students that people have come out flooding the streets to lend their support. If you look around, you will see thousands and thousands of ordinary people around you—there are no political parties here. Why is that? They are here to support those who have been killed, the students, who are our brothers and sisters.

No government in the world, I believe, can stay in power by killing its own students. And we have proved that here in Bangladesh.

A university student

The prime minister had no other alternative but to resign. After creating the situation that she and her party did, how could she speak of finding a compromise? Everything had gone out of control by the time she was willing to listen to the students. So, resigning was the best decision for her.

All these people have gathered together for independence. A government that shoots at its own people is not wanted by anyone.

A BRAC university student

We are very happy right now for achieving this independence. We achieved this victory in return for our blood. Now, we want to celebrate it fully and with everyone.

Now, we need to ensure that the perpetrators of the killings are held to account, alongside those who gave the orders. Even if they manage to flee the country, they should be brought back and tried properly, so that no one ever dares to commit such crimes again.

A university student

We want thorough investigations into all the killings. Even if any of them were committed by the army, it has to investigate them also. My point is, no one who fired at students and ordinary people should be spared. As a student of Dhaka University, what some law enforcers did in our university over the past weeks is unacceptable. What the vice-chancellor and other responsible persons did must be looked into as well.

Even today, when we went to the campus, people fired at us. Who were involved in these shootings? Do we not deserve to know as students of that university, who were shooting at us in our own campus? Whoever comes to power next, they should know by now the power of Bangladesh's students and its people. So, if they do not investigate these incidents, we will once again unite.

A Dhaka University student

The students' initial one-point demand of quota reform turned into a one-point demand for Sheikh Hasina's resignation. It turned into a movement to bring back democracy. How could she get away with carrying out mass murders so she could stay in Gono Bhaban? I held back my child from joining the protests before, but not today. We've been here since the morning and we won't leave till she resigns. We've seen a lot of bloodshed; we will not accept any more of it.

Nipa
Housewife from Lalbagh

I am here observing the mob. I am really happy. The students have achieved a lot, they have done the hard work of bringing us here. We love our country and we want to save it. The students should work towards establishing peace in the country where no one is suppressed.

Syed Afzalul Karim
Dermatologist

Whatever happens, it has to be done through a peaceful, amicable way and we do not want any military intervention in this whole process. The transition has to be done with the leadership of the students, and with constructive consultation with political parties, civil society, and other actors in the movement.

Dr Samina Luthfa
Associate professor, sociology
Dhaka University

IMAGE: **UNSPLASH**

Transitioning to remote work amidst an ongoing crisis

Transitioning to remote work during a crisis can be challenging, but with the right strategies and mindset, it can also be an opportunity for growth and increased flexibility.

As the national landscape continues to be mired with unforeseen crises and unpredictable lockdowns, many workplaces have found themselves transitioning to remote work. This shift, while providing flexibility and safety, can also bring about challenges in productivity, communication, and maintaining work-life balance for employees. If you are having difficulties transitioning back to remote work, here is a brief guide to help you navigate this change as smoothly as possible.

Setting up the workplace

Before jumping into your remote work, make sure you have a dedicated space in your home to actually work from. Choose a quiet and comfortable area that can serve as the workspace. Ensure the space is ergonomically set up so you don't face physical strain when sitting for a long time. Since you will be working on your laptop or home desktop, make sure you have a good chair, desk, and proper lighting so there are no sudden difficulties during work.

Since you will need uninterrupted internet during your work to stay connected with coworkers, choose a place where your home router's WiFi signals are the strongest - which is usually close to the router itself. Aside from your computer, make sure you have other essential tools or software required for your job. If you haven't used collaborative apps in a while, take some to refamiliarise yourself with Zoom, Slack, Discord, Microsoft Teams, etc.

Maintaining a routine

One of the main problems employees face when suddenly transitioning from on-site work to remote work is inconsistency in their work schedule. Chances are, you will have different work hours when working from home - as there are different requirements and break hours needed. However, to keep your work going at a steady rate, stick to a consistent schedule, preferably one you have made for yourself.

Begin and end your workday at the same time each day. Take regular breaks in between work to avoid burnout. The Pomodoro technique can be effective here. Basically, after deciding on a specific task to be completed first, set a timer for 25 minutes and work on that task only. Once the timer ends, take a break for 5 to 10 minutes. After which, set a timer for 25 minutes again until you either complete the task or finish these 'pomodoro' loops at least four times - which would equate to at least two hours of productive work-break balance.

Stay connected, even remotely

Working from home means that you won't be physically present in front of your colleagues, which might hamper in-person communication, especially for teams during group assignments. As such, even when working remotely, make sure you are sufficiently connected with your coworkers through messaging or communication apps. If you are a team supervisor, constantly check in with your team to see how they are doing, including asking for regular progress updates and asking how they are doing mentally and physically. A small gesture of goodwill can go a long way in driving employee motivation during trying times.

A key method of staying connected during remote work is hosting regular video meetings or group audio calls. This will help maintain a sense of connection and collaboration; similar to how it would be in a physical workplace. If you're in charge of workplace communications, be clear and precise, and give specific instructions, so that no misunderstandings may occur among coworkers.

Maintain boundaries

Whether you are working from home or somewhere else, committing to remote work means that as an employee, you are still respecting your company's time and your contribution to the workplace. As such, clearly communicate your working hours to your household members, and be sure to state your exact available hours to your colleagues so they know when they can reach you. When working at home, avoid personal commitments unless emergencies occur. Similarly, avoid work-related communications outside your designated working hours. Doing so will help you maintain the crucial work-life balance many struggle to uphold when working remotely.

Transitioning to remote work during a crisis can be challenging, but with the right strategies and mindset, it can also be an opportunity for growth and increased flexibility. Remember, it's a continuous process of adaptation and learning, and with time, you will find what works best for you.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

BRAC

Senior Officer, HR Field Operations

Deadline: August 10

Eligibility:

- Bachelor's degree in any relevant subject preferably in Business Administration or any related field.
Minimum experience: 1 year

Banglalink

Internal Audit Manager (Engineer)

Deadline: N/A

Eligibility:

- Bachelor's degree in Information Technology, Computer Science, Information Systems, or a related field.

Minimum experience: 4-5 years

Marico Bangladesh Ltd.

Senior Brand Manager

Deadline: N/A

Eligibility:

- BBA/MBA degree from any reputed university.

Minimum experience: 4 years

Save the Children

Integrations Developer

Deadline: August 10

Eligibility:

- BSc in Computer Science and Engineering or a related subject, with prior experience in software development.

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>
> **PELÉ**

How to approach the tricky topic of workplace mental health

Mental health is increasingly being recognised as a critical aspect of overall well-being, especially in the workplace where many of us spend a significant portion of our lives. During the ongoing national crisis, many employees being forced to resume work either at home or at the office will have severe mental hurdles to overcome to get back to the flow of things.

As an employee, understanding and implementing innovative approaches to mental health can not only enhance your personal well-being but also contribute to a healthier, more productive work environment. Here are some practical guidelines to help you navigate this important aspect of your professional life, especially during times of uncertainty.

Embrace flexible work arrangements

Ask your supervisor or employer if flexible work arrangements can be made, such as shifting to remote work, integrating flexible work hours, or compressing workweeks to reduce workload. Such arrangements will allow both employers and employees to have better control of their work-life balance.

If you're looking for flexible work arrangements, communicate with your higher-ups about your specific needs and preferences. Be specific, and mention the general interest in mind over looking selfish or conceited. If you're working remotely, create a structured routine that you can follow to divide your work and tackle tasks at your own pace. If your employer asks why you need more flexible work arrangements, tell them that these will increase your job satisfaction and reduce burnout, which in turn will produce higher quality and quantity of work.

Promote a healthy work culture

Many modern workplaces offer mental health programs and training sessions which can provide insights into managing stress and building resilience.

IMAGE: **UNSPLASH**

Be sure to attend any workshops or webinars on mental health topics, and especially engage in company-sponsored wellness programs. Have your close colleagues join these sessions with you; in turn, you will be contributing to a more positive work environment.

Many companies also offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) that provide confidential counselling and support for a range of issues, including mental health. Familiarise yourself with the EAP services available through your employer, if any. Don't hesitate to use these resources when needed and provide feedback to your employer on how these programs can be improved.

Promoting a healthy work culture is an obvious yet often overlooked aspect of maintaining mental health during work. Whenever you can, try to create an open conversation about peer support and inclusion; and if needed, request your supervisor or employer to do the same. If you know a colleague who is particularly struggling, do not hesitate to offer a lending hand. If you take the first step in encouraging a culture of empathy and understanding, others will slowly follow your step.

Prioritise self-care

At the end of the day, nothing you do may help improve your mental health during work. That is when you should set clear boundaries between your work and your personal life. Your jobs may come and go, but you have just one life to live. As such, prioritise your self-care, and take a break from work if absolutely needed. At a time when uncertainty abounds, you can't be shamed for asking for some time off.

Whether you take a break or continue working, you should regularly communicate with your supervisor or employer about your mental health needs. If you feel your workplace isn't offering its employees enough support, advocate for mental health initiatives and policies that benefit the entire workforce. You can do this via employee surveys or feedback sessions.

Maintaining mental health in the workplace is always a tricky task. Doing so becomes even more difficult during a national or global crisis. However, as long as you are embracing flexibility and taking breaks at your own pace, you are already taking your first steps in embracing an improved outlook. Remember, taking care of your mental health is not only beneficial for you but also contributes to a more productive and positive workplace for everyone.

Star
DHAKA TUESDAY AUGUST 6, 2024, SRABAN 22, 1431 BS
SPORT

What to WATCH

Sony Sports 2
The Hundred
Manchester Originals vs Oval Invincibles
Live from 8:00 pm
Birmingham Phoenix vs Northern Superchargers
Live from 11:30 pm

T Sports
Bangla Tigers
Mississauga vs Brampton Wolves
Live from 9:00 pm
Montreal vs Surrey
Live from 2:00 am (Wednesday)

'World's fastest anime fan'

AFP, *Tokyo*

Japanese media hailed Olympic 100m gold medallist Noah Lyles as the world's fastest anime fan after the American celebrated his win by miming an attack from "Dragon Ball".

Wrapped in a US flag after the race, an over-the-moon Lyles thrust his hands forward, fingers splayed, imitating the "kamehamaha" attack used to unleash a powerful burst of energy in the Japanese manga and anime franchise.

The 27-year-old Lyles has made no secret of his love for Japanese pop culture, including comics and cartoons such as the global 1990s megahit "Dragon Ball".

At the Olympic trials in June, he delighted fellow anime enthusiasts by whipping out his "Yu-Gi-Oh" cards and showing them off to the cameras.

"Yu-Gi-Oh!" ran in the Japanese weekly comic magazine Shonen Jump between 1996 and 2004 and gave rise to a media franchise including a trading card game.

"Mankind's fastest otaku", blared a headline in Japan's Daily Sports using the term for hardcore superfans in a new nickname.

World champion Noah Lyles celebrates after clinching the victory in 9.79sec to claim gold in a dramatic men's Olympic 100m final in Paris on Sunday. Lyles won in the closest Olympic 100m finish in modern history as just five-thousandths of a second separated him from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson. Lyles' victory was only confirmed after a photo-finish and it made the 27-year-old the first American, male or female, to win the event since Justin Gatlin took gold in the 2004 Athens Games. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

EQUISTRIAN
Jumping Individual
2:00 pm
SAILING
Women's Dinghy Medal Race
6:43 pm
Men's Dinghy Medal Race
7:43 pm
DIVING
Women's 10m Platform
7:00 pm
SKATEBOARDING
Women's Park
9:30 pm
WRESTLING
Men's Greco-Roman 60 kg
11:55 pm
Men's Greco-Roman 130 kg
12:30 am (Wednesday)
Women's Freestyle 68 kg
1:15 am (Wednesday)
CYCLING (TRACK)
Men's Team Sprint
12:10 am (Wednesday)
ATHLETICS
Women's Hammer Throw
11:57 pm
Men's Long Jump
12:15 am (Wednesday)
Men's 1500m
12:50 am (Wednesday)
Women's Steeplechase 3000m
1:14 am (Wednesday)
Women's 200m
1:40 am (Wednesday)
BOXING
Women's 60 kg
3:06 am (Wednesday)

'Wolf' Lyles claims 100m glory in thriller

AFP, *Paris*

World champion Noah Lyles roared to victory in 9.79sec to claim gold in a dramatic men's Olympic 100m final in Paris on Sunday.

Lyles won in the closest Olympic 100m finish in modern history as just five thousandths of a second separated him from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson.

Both were given the rounded-up time of 9.79sec but the American's name carried the all-important (.784) to Thompson's (.789).

It made Lyles the first American, male or female, to win the event since Justin Gatlin took gold in the 2004 Athens Games.

"It's the one I wanted... to prove that I'm the man amongst all of them. I'm the wolf amongst wolves," said Lyles, whose winning time was a personal best.

Lyles' victory was only confirmed after a photo-finish.

The American said of the wait for the final results: "And I was fully prepared to see his [Thompson] name pop up and to see my name pop up, I'm like goodness gracious. I'm incredible."

Lyles added: "It's been a rollercoaster, ups and downs.

"I'm usually a guy who likes to come out blazing in all my rounds, especially in the 200m. But the 100m, it's my first time here on the Olympic stage."

The relatively unknown Thompson, the fastest man this year with a best of 9.77sec, said he hadn't been "fresh enough" over the final 30 metres.

"I couldn't really see Lyles, I wasn't sure," 23-year-old Thompson said of the photo-finish. "It was that close.

Lyles' US teammate Fred Kerley took bronze in 9.81sec, just one-hundredth ahead of South African Akani Simbine, who timed 9.82sec.

"Whoever came off the best is the best. It's my second time around and I'm going off with a medal," Kerley said.

In an astonishing race, defending champion Marcell Jacobs of Italy was fifth in 9.85sec, Botswana's Letsile Tebogo sixth in 9.86sec, American Kenny Bednarek seventh in 9.88sec and Jamaican Oblique Seville eighth in 9.91sec.

Starting in lane seven, outside Seville and inside Tebogo, Lyles got off to an average start but was soon into his stride pattern.

Head tucked down through to the 40-metre mark, the American opened up, but the whole field pushed him all the way.

As Lyles dipped for the line with Thompson charging alongside him, the crowd erupted and a photo-finish was called before Lyles was confirmed as gold medallist.

There was an electric pre-race atmosphere in a 69,000-capacity Stade de France, a light show and booming music keeping the crowd entertained as the sprinters adjusted their starting blocks.

The lights then went off and the sprinters leaving the track to remake their entrance like prize fighters in a colosseum, with each sprinter individually introduced behind an image of their name above their flag.

Thompson roared, hands clenched in fists as his head rolled back. Kerley patted his heart.

Lyles bounded out like a kangaroo, bouncing 20 metres down the track. Jacobs was the definition of cool, raising both arms and calmly walking to his blocks.

Then came the moment where the sprinters set, at the starter's beck and call. The shot was fired and the field moved as if one up the purple track to the dramatic denouement.

The photo-finish officials examined the evidence and Lyles walked away with gold to bury the demons of the Tokyo Olympics three years ago where he harvested a mere 200m bronze.

Asked whether he was confident of doubling up in the 200m, an event in which he is a three-time world champion, Lyles said "That's my better event and now that I've got a new PR in the 100, I'm ready to take it to the 200."

USA women bag swim medley gold with world record

REUTERS, *Paris*

The United States smashed their own world record in the women's 4x100 medley on Sunday to close the Paris Olympics swimming meet with one last gold that lifted them clear of Australia at the top of the medals table.

Australia, who finished with seven swimming golds to the United States' eight, took the silver at the La Defense Arena and China the bronze.

The U.S quartet of Regan Smith, Lilly King, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske touched out with a final time of three minutes 49.63 seconds at the La Defense Arena to avenge their defeat to Australia by 0.13 in Tokyo three years ago.

"We've brought it (the record) down a lot, so it's really cool to continue to be a part of that relay and watching it faster and faster and faster, but pretty much the same people," said King.

The U.S. team led all the way, with Smith leading off and King increasing the advantage with her breaststroke leg before Walsh finished her stint 1.33 seconds inside the record and handed over to Huske.

The gold was a third of the Games for Huske, second each for Smith and Walsh and first since 2016 for King who was a double champion in Rio de Janeiro.

Refugee team's Ngamba makes history

REUTERS, *Paris*

Cindy Ngamba became the first representative of the refugee team to win a medal at the Olympics after making it to the boxing semi-finals of the Paris Games on Sunday, guaranteeing her at least a bronze although she is gunning for more.

Ngamba beat France's Davina Michel by a unanimous decision in front of a crowd who were heavily behind their countrywoman at the North Paris Arena to progress to the last four of the women's middleweight category.

The 25-year-old who was born in Cameroon has lived in England for 15 years but is still awaiting citizenship, and is competing for the refugee Olympic team, which was established at the Rio Games in 2016.

"It means the world to me, to be the first ever refugee to win a medal. I'm just a human, just like any other refugee, athlete and refugee all around the world. But I hope I can change the medal on my next fight," Ngamba said.

Graham Thorpe: A shining light for England

AFP, *London*

It is a measure of Graham Thorpe's class that despite emerging during one of English cricket's most difficult periods, he still managed to win exactly 100 Test caps.

Left-handed batsmen are often described as either "stylish" or "gritty" yet Thorpe, whose death aged 55 was announced on Monday, somehow managed to be both in an often struggling England team.

He enjoyed a spectacular start to his Test career with an Ashes hundred on debut in 1993 and retired 12 years later having won 99 more caps -- no mean feat in an era of inconsistent England selection.

England went through the whole of the 1990s without winning a single Ashes series yet Thorpe averaged more against Australia than he did in his career overall (45.74 against 44.66).

But the collapse of his first marriage, which took place in the full glare of media publicity, led to a bout of depression and separation from his children, with Thorpe taking an indefinite break from cricket in 2002.

As he movingly wrote in his autobiography, Rising from the Ashes: "There came a time when I would have given back all my Test runs and Test caps just to be happy again."

Thorpe, who enjoyed a happy second marriage, did manage a successful return to the Test arena.

Born on August 1, 1969 in the market town of Farnham, Surrey, Thorpe was both a promising schoolboy cricketer and footballer.

But it was cricket that claimed him and his first-class debut against Leicestershire saw the best England left-handed batsman of his time dismiss the one of the previous generation when Thorpe took the wicket of David Gower with his rarely-used medium-pace bowling.

His Test debut in the 1993 Ashes against Australia at Trent Bridge, saw Thorpe score a second-innings 114 as he became England's first debutant century-maker since Frank Hayes 20 years earlier.

One criticism levelled at Thorpe was that a man who got past fifty on 55 occasions in Test cricket, should have ended up with more than 16 hundreds.

But many of those centuries were memorable, be it his first overseas hundred for England on the notoriously quick WACA pitch in Perth against a formidable Australia attack in 1995 or an unbeaten 119 when facing West Indies greats Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh in Barbados in 2004.

Thorpe returned to England duty for the final Test of the following home season against South Africa, where his 124 at the Oval helped England to an unlikely series draw with the Proteas.

Thorpe's last Test was against Bangladesh two years later, with Kevin Pietersen effectively taking his place for England's celebrated 2005 Ashes triumph.

Overwhelmed with joy, An Seyoungof South Korea collapses in celebration after beating Bing Jiao He of China 21-13 21-16 in the women's badminton singles gold medal match at the Paris Olympics yesterday. "I dreamed, I spoke about the dream, I carried on the dream, and it was the moment that I achieved the dream. Now I have nothing to be scared of," An told media after win. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

The Daily Star

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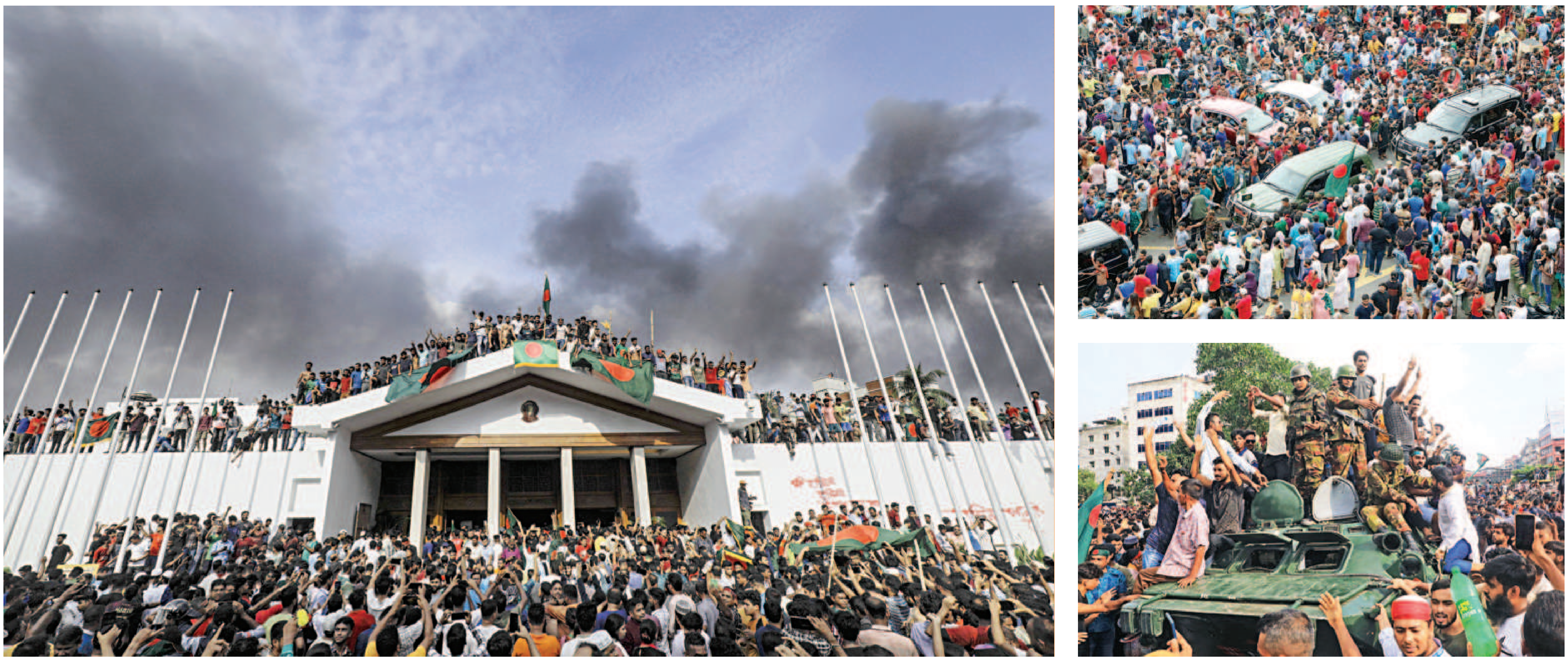


Anti-government protesters display Bangladesh's national flag as they storm the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka yesterday. *Top right*, the motorcade of General Waker-Uz-Zaman, chief of the army, entering the Bangabhaban as the crowd celebrating the exit of Sheikh Hasina makes way for it. *Bottom right*, people climb onto an APC and stand alongside army personnel as they celebrate in front of the PMO. PHOTO: AFP, PALASH KHAN

'Will come up with outline of interim govt in 24 hours'

Say organisers of quota protest movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Key organisers of the anti-discrimination student movement last night said the outline of the interim national government will be formulated within the next 24 hours.

Addressing a press conference in the capital's Tejgaon, they said the power must be handed over to the interim government proposed by the students and citizens who protested.

"I'm dedicating this victory to the martyred students who were killed during the movement," said Nahid Islam, a key organisers.

He said they will hold discussions about the outline with all the coordination committees, the civil society, and political and state stakeholders, and will later inform who else they will meet in this regard.

"But within the next 24 hours, a complete outline of the interim government will be provided."

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

66 dead as city convulsed with violence

More than a thousand hurt in clashes between agitators and law enforcers

STAR REPORT

Clashes between mobs and law enforcers at different parts of the capital left at least 66 people dead and over a thousand wounded yesterday.

In the morning, clashes began in some areas of the capital when law enforcers opened fire on protesters who were trying to take part in the march to Dhaka, announced the day before, defying the curfew.

Around afternoon, when hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets celebrating Sheikh Hasina's resignation, angry mobs attacked several police stations and key structures.

Police opened fire which caused most of the deaths.

Columns of thick smoke covered parts of the Dhaka sky as the mobs set fire to three Awami League offices, the police headquarters, several police stations, the residence of Dhaka superintendent of police, three TV stations and the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi-32.

The inspector general of police and several other top police officials were air lifted from the police headquarters while other officials managed to flee, said an official who escaped the attack unscathed.

"Many vehicles parked on the PHQ premise were burning when I managed to flee," said the officer.

Among the 66 dead, 41 were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital while 21 to a hospital in Uttara. Among the bodies taken to DMCH, 21 came from the Jatrabari area. At least four bodies were lying in front of Jatrabari Police Station.

DMCH

All the bodies that turned up at the DMCH had bullet

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

Protesters storm Gono Bhaban, PMO, parliament building

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Bhaban never hosted so many people in its lifetime before yesterday.

Minutes after Sheikh Hasina fled the country, a never-ending stream of people defied the curfew and marched towards the official residence of the prime minister. It seemed every city street and alley led to Gono Bhaban, the Bangla for house of the people, as people of all ages descended upon it from almost every part of capital Dhaka.

The main entrance was left ajar, and for hours since about 2:30pm tens and thousands of men, women, and children occupied the premises. Hundreds were seen climbing the thick brick walls – which is otherwise heavily guarded and inaccessible to members of the public – to enter the red brick palace.

Inside, the mood was of celebrations. Some were dancing, some clapping, some singing, some hugging, and some chanting slogans against Hasina. Some called her a killer; others called her an autocrat who has blood in her hand. Some were seen offering prayers.

Within minutes, some of the crowd scaled the roof and hoisted the national flag, while others entered the main residential building and started vandalising and smashing things.

Some photos taken by The Daily Star and social media videos show many went inside some of the bedrooms and lay on them, as they took selfies.

The scene resembled the occupying of Sri Lankan presidential palace in July 2022.

"So many lives have been lost

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

People stormed Gono Bhaban yesterday and took anything and everything they could get hold of, *right*, a group of young boys taking a bath in a pool there. PHOTO: STAR

76 killed in attacks, clashes outside capital

STAR REPORT

At least 76 people were killed and around 500 others injured in attacks and clashes outside the capital city yesterday.

The clashes took place between law enforcers, Awami League men and protesters as angry mobs attacked AL leaders, their men, properties, homes and offices soon after the news of Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure spread.

In Savar and Dhamrai upazilas, at least 20 people were killed and around 300 were wounded in separate clashes between police, Awami League men and demonstrators.

Eight bodies were kept in Enam Medical College in Savar, six in Gonoshasthaya Hospital, three Nari O Shishu Hospital and two in Habib Clinic in Ashulia.

The families of the deceased took the other bodies.

In Jashore, at least 13 people were burned to death and 19 others were injured after unidentified arsonists set

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

DISTRICT	DEATHS	DISTRICT	DEATHS
Dhaka	86	Chandpur	4
Jashore	13	Chattogram	3
Kushtia	8	Khulna	3
Gazipur	6	Barishal	3
Habiganj	6	Patuakhali	1
Satkhira	4	Brahmanbaria	1
Jhenaidah	4		
TOTAL	142		

UN, EU, US call for restraint

UK for ensuring democracy; Indian cabinet body briefs Modi

STAR REPORT

The United States has commended Bangladesh Army for its restraint yesterday and urged that formation of an interim government be democratic after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country.

"The United States has long called for respecting democratic rights in Bangladesh, and we urge that the interim government formation be democratic and inclusive. We commend the army for the restraint they have showed today [Monday]," a White House spokesperson said yesterday.

The White House and the State Department separately urged parties to refrain from violence and restore peace at the earliest, reports Reuters.

A State Department spokesperson said Washington welcomed the announcement that an interim government will be formed.

US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer also urged the establishment of a balanced interim government in Bangladesh that could set up swift democratic elections.

"PM Hasina's violent reaction to legitimate protests

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

Hasina will not return to politics

Joy tells BBC

STAR REPORT

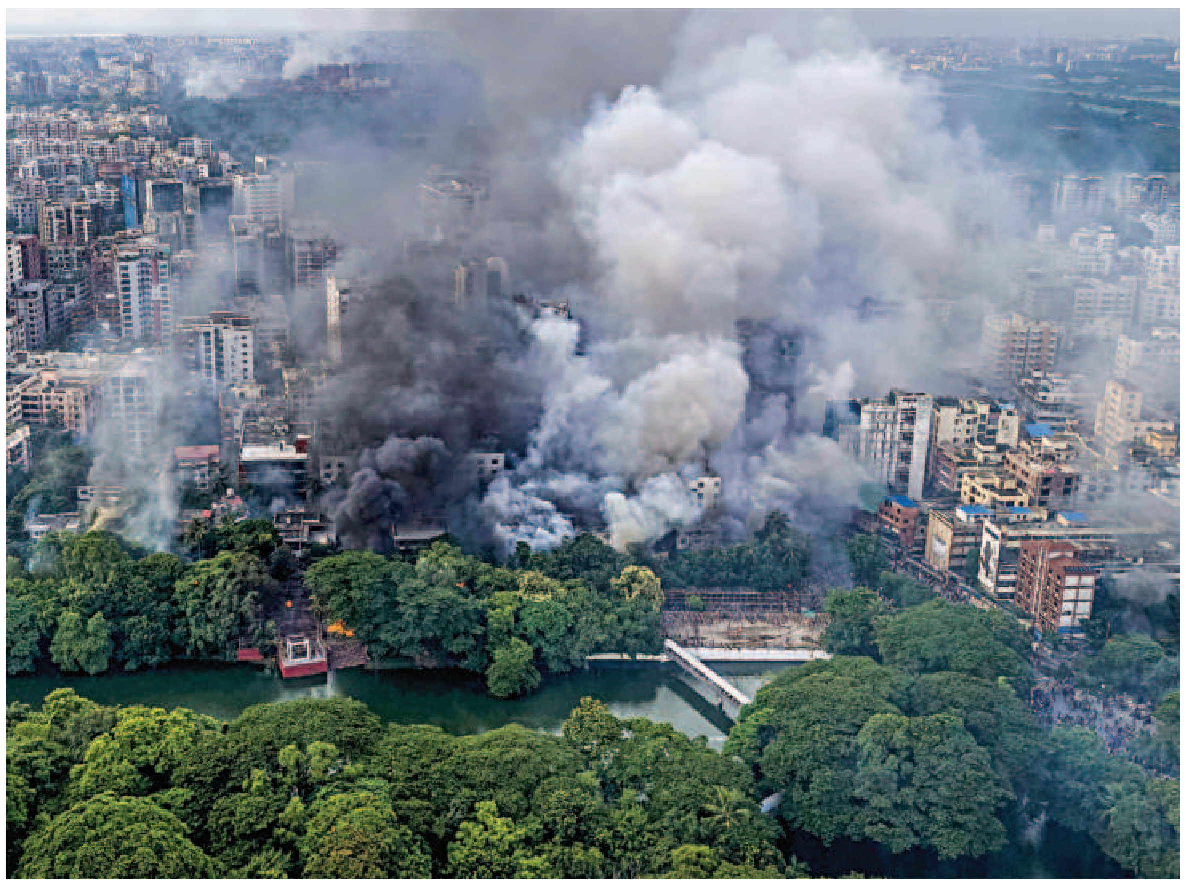
There will be no political comeback for Sheikh Hasina, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy told BBC yesterday, hours after the former Bangladesh prime minister resigned and left the country.

Joy said Hasina was "so disappointed that after all her hard work, for a minority to rise up against her".

Speaking to Newshour on the BBC World Service, Joy -- who was an official adviser of the prime minister until today – said his mother was considering resigning since yesterday and had left the country for her own safety after her family insisted.

"She has turned Bangladesh around. When

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6



An aerial photo shows Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi-32 burning yesterday afternoon after Sheikh Hasina resigned and left the country. PHOTO: AFP

Fakhrul urges calm and restraint

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday called upon people to remain calm and exercise restraint to maintain peace and stability in the country following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government.

"On behalf of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and Acting Chairman

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Dhaka stocks see highest rise in 3.5 years
B1

Students step up to ensure order
P3

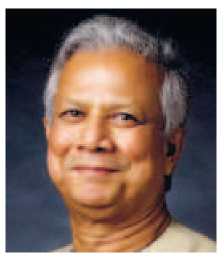
AL's Fall: Does it augur true victory of the people?
P8

This is not the Bangladesh we stood in the line of fire for
P9

Yunus to helm interim govt

Protest organisers meet president, chiefs of three services at Bangabhaban to discuss outline for a govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus is set to become the head of interim government.

President Mohammad Shahabuddin agreed to appoint Yunus as head of an interim government that is yet to materialise as the country continues to stagger in a power vacuum for the second day.

Organisers of the student protests met the president and chiefs of the army, navy, and air force yesterday to discuss their proposed outline for the interim government that will steward Bangladesh until the next election, key protest organiser Nahid Islam told reporters in front of the Bangabhaban early today.

The president suggested finalising the other members of the interim government in consultation with political parties, noting the country's precarious situation warranted quick appointment of an interim government.

Emerging from a four-hour meeting at the Bangabhaban that continued well past Tuesday midnight, Nahid said they made a list of 10 to 15 people to help Yunus run the interim government. "But the list will be finalised after discussions with political parties."

A Bangabhaban press release sent to media outlets early today said the president requested that a freedom fighter be included among those to help Yunus.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Key protest organiser Nahid Islam briefs journalists outside the Bangabhaban around midnight yesterday after he and 12 other organisers had a long meeting with the president and the chiefs of the three services on the formation of an interim government.

Hasina gave a short notice about going to India

Jaishankar tells Rajya Sabha

DIPLOMATIC CORRESONDENT

Former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina apparently made the decision to step down after a meeting with the leaders of the security establishment, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said yesterday.

"At very short notice, she requested approval to come for the moment to India," the minister said in a suo motu statement in the Rajya Sabha on the situation in Bangladesh.

India simultaneously received a request for flight clearance from the Bangladesh authorities, he said, adding that Hasina arrived in Delhi on Monday evening.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BLOODY MONDAY

At least 92 bodies recovered

STAR REPORT

At least 92 bodies, including those of students and cops, were recovered in different parts of the country yesterday following Monday's violent clashes between protesters and police and attacks on various establishments, including police stations.

In some areas, mobs vandalised and set fire to the homes and offices of Awami League leaders and government establishments over the last two days.

In the capital, at least 63 bodies were brought to different hospitals yesterday following clashes between the protesters and police the previous day.

Among them, 20 bodies, including two of cops, were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), and 10 to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital.

According to hospital sources, most of the bodies bore marks of bullet wounds.

The DMCH allowed the families of the deceased to take away the bodies without autopsies.

Twelve more bullet-hit bodies were taken to Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital, said Abdul Ahad, Ansar commander at the hospital.

They were killed after police opened fire on the protesters in Jatrabari and Bangshal areas, witnesses said.

Five bodies were taken to Uttara Adhunik Medical College Hospital.

Four charred bodies were found at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi-32, which was vandalised and set on fire on Monday afternoon.

Around 10:15am yesterday, a correspondent of The Daily Star found that the bodies were lying on the footpath in front of the museum.

Clashes broke out in some areas of the capital on Monday morning as law enforcers opened fire on the protesters who were trying to take part in the "March to Dhaka" programme defying curfew.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Army goes thru major reshuffle

NTMC chief Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan relieved of service

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ziaul Ahsan

Bangladesh Army has made changes to some top-ranking posts, said an ISPR press release yesterday.

Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan, director general of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC), has been relieved from service.

Maj Gen ASM Ridwanur Rahman has been appointed the DG of NTMC. Lt Gen Md Saiful Alam has been posted to the foreign ministry, reads the release.

Lt Gen Mizanur Rahman Shamim has been made chief of general staff of the army, Lt Gen Mujibur Rahman general officer commanding of the army training and doctrine command, and Lt Gen Ahmed Tabrez Shams Chowdhury quartermaster general.

Lt Gen Mohammad Shaheenul Haque has been made commandant of the National Defence College, the release added.

AL stares at a 'political death'

Some leaders now say they're victims of Hasina's whim

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE *and* **ASHIK ABDULLAH APU**

Trumpeted as a champion of democracy over the last 15 years by her party colleagues and followers, Sheikh Hasina, 77, has become a pariah overnight.

The five-time prime minister, who is also Awami League president since 1981, is now trying to secure refuge in the UK after fleeing to India on Monday in the face of an unprecedented anti-government movement in Bangladesh's history.

Party insiders say Hasina's "undignified exit" was unbecoming of her, and a damning indictment of the bankruptcy of a party that led the Liberation War against Pakistan in 1971.

This self-seeking decision, they point out, to leave everyone to fend for themselves not only reflected badly on her, but also set back Awami League for years, if not decades, before it can recover from this situation where it faces "political death".

Hasina's fleeing the country essentially sealed the fate of Awami League, which led all most all democratic movements before and after the birth of Bangladesh, they add.

The Daily Star yesterday randomly tried to speak to top party leaders by phone, but their phones were found switched off in most cases. A several others did not pick up the call. Only two leaders agreed to talk off the record.

They said Hasina's last moment's decision to leave the country placed them in terrific situation and that they did not get enough time to secure their own safety.

"We are victims of her whim," said a central committee member.

Another leader alleged Hasina never listened to party leaders and made decisions on her own, isolating herself from the party colleagues.

"In the January 7 election, many Awami League activists did not vote for the party-nominated candidates. And

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

Act responsibly to deal with the current situation

Editors' Council urges all

STAFF REPORTER

The Editors' Council yesterday called upon the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement, all political parties and their affiliated organisations, and the general public to play responsible roles in tackling the situation following the resignation of Sheikh Hasina.

Describing incidents of violence across the country, it also urged the president to take immediate measures to stop those.

In a press statement, the Editors' Council said the resignation of the Hasina came after many sacrifices. In the past three weeks, over 400 people lost their lives and countless others were injured. Five media workers were among the dead and over a hundred were injured.

"The Editors' Council expresses its condolences

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

2,400 get bail in cases over recent violence

Several BNP, Jamaat leaders among them

COURT CORESPONDENT

A total of 2,400 people, including several top leaders of BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, got bail yesterday in cases filed with different police stations in the capital over the violence centring the quota reform protests.

BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar, Bangladesh Jatiyo Party (Manju) Chairman Andaleeve Rahman Partho and Ducsu former vice-president Nurul Haque Nur are among them.

The magistrates working in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka granted them bail after the defence lawyers filed petitions with the court yesterday, said court staffers.

The 2,400 were produced before the court between July 17 and August 4 after being arrested in some 178 cases.

Of them, 253 were held in cases filed with Jatrabari and Demra police stations, 220 with Pallabi and Rupnagar police stations, 214 with Paltan, Motijheel,

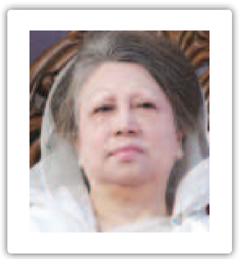
SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Students are seen controlling traffic at the Bijoy Sarani intersection in Dhaka yesterday, a day after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Khaleda Zia freed after presidential pardon

SAJJAD HOSSAIN



Former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, who was under house arrest for the last five years, was released yesterday after the president pardoned her punishments, a day after Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country in the face of a people's uprising.

Khaleda, 79, is currently receiving treatment at the Evercare Hospital, where she was admitted on July 15.

BNP leader Mirza Abbas, said: "Madam [Khaleda Zia] got very emotional after knowing that Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign and flee the country."

This is the first time since independence that the president has granted clemency to any former prime minister, according to senior Supreme Court lawyer ZI Khan Panna, who spoke with The Daily Star yesterday.

According to a home ministry circular

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Trade bodies demand quick restoration of law and order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Trade bodies yesterday urged for quick restoration of law and order and the resumption of economic activities at the earliest.

Economic activities are hampered due to the disruption in imports, exports and the supply chain, said the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry in a statement yesterday, a day after Sheikh Hasina stepped down as the prime minister and fled Bangladesh.

"Businesses and entrepreneurs are losing heavily. Under the circumstances, the damage to the economy will be high unless quick steps are taken," it said, while calling for opening factories at the earliest.

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) stressed bringing normalcy back as the economy suffered significantly since the beginning of the unrest centring on the students' quota reform movement that has so far claimed upwards of 300 lives.

Both the trade bodies called for forming the interim government lawfully as soon as possible.

"We request everyone to take necessary measures as we believe an interim government is a must to restore the democratic election process and hand the country back to its people and its elected representatives," the DCCI said.

The country's apex trade said it would extend its full cooperation to the interim government.

"The recent events have taken a large toll on our lives and economy, and unless effective measures are in place, supply chain disruptions will cause further damage and add to public suffering," the DCCI said.

A conducive environment must be in place to facilitate economic recovery, foster a stable political environment and rebuild businesses' confidence and activities at home and abroad, it said.

Members of the army clear an entrance to the Gono Bhaban a day after people stormed the prime minister's official residence following Sheikh Hasina's resignation.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Uncertainty looms over HSC exams

Question papers kept in various locations damaged in violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Uncertainty has risen over holding the HSC and equivalent exams following incidents of attacks on multiple locations across the country where question papers were stored.

Confidential exam materials, including question papers, were stored in various police stations and other facilities for safekeeping. Several of those locations came under attack on Monday following the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

During the attacks, question papers in many areas were burned or destroyed, according to multiple officials from the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board.

As a result, a new set of question papers needs to be prepared, which board officials indicate could take some time.

Meanwhile, a number of exam centres around the country were also damaged in similar attacks and are in urgent need of repair, reports UNB.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

His statement came a day after Hasina's resignation and fleeing to India.

Addressing an all-party meeting at the Parliament House, Jaishankar said India was giving Hasina some time "to recover" before talking to her as she was in a state of shock, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

The Indian government would give her the necessary assistance, he said.

Several leaders including Rahul Gandhi of Congress conveyed their full cooperation to the government in this regard.

Rahul enquired about the Indian government's short-term and long-term strategy in dealing with diplomatic ramifications of the power shift in Dhaka, reports India Today.

In response, Jaishankar said it is a developing situation and the government is analysing it closely so that it can fine-tune its next move.

Rahul also wanted to know about the state of minorities in Bangladesh and the possibility of a "foreign hand" in the unrest.

The minister said it would be too soon to talk about external interference as it is still a developing situation.

Jaishankar told the Rajya Sabha that India remains deeply concerned until law and order is visibly restored in Bangladesh.

"We are also monitoring the situation with regard to the status of minorities."

There are reports of initiatives by various groups and organisations to ensure their protection and well-being.

The minister said Indian border guards have been instructed to be exceptionally alert in view of the complex situation.

He hoped the Bangladesh government would provide the required security protection for the Indian High Commission in Dhaka and the assistant high commissions in Chattogram, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet.

"We look forward to their normal functioning once the situation stabilises."

India is in close and continuous touch with its nationals in Bangladesh through its diplomatic missions. There are an estimated 19,000 Indian nationals in Bangladesh.

Jaishankar said that India-Bangladesh relations have been exceptionally close for many decades, adding that the concern about recent violence and instability there is shared across the political spectrum.

Since the national election in January this year, there have been considerable tensions, deep divides and growing polarisation in Bangladesh politics.

This underlying foundation aggravated a student agitation that started in June, he said.

There was growing violence, including attacks on public buildings and infrastructure, which continued through July.

On August 4, events took a very serious turn. Attacks on police and government installations intensified as overall levels of violence greatly escalated. Properties of individuals associated with the regime were torched across the country, Jaishankar said.

"What was particularly worrying was that minorities, their businesses and temples have also come under attack at multiple locations."

The full extent of the damage caused to minorities by vandalism is still not clear.

US ORDERS NON-EMERGENCY STAFF OUT OF BANGLADESH

The United States government yesterday said it had ordered non-emergency personnel to leave Bangladesh as a precaution after mass protests ousted Hasina, reports AFP.

The State Department said that all non-emergency diplomats and other personnel as well as their family members had been ordered to leave as of Monday, although the US embassy in Dhaka remains open at limited capacity.

The US had last month warned its citizens not to travel to Bangladesh, citing the risk of civil unrest, crime and terrorism.

Yunus to helm interim govt

FROM PAGE 1

According to a unanimous decision on Monday by the chiefs of the three services, politicians, and civil society representatives, the president dissolved the parliament earlier in the day without an outline for an interim government or a clear transition path.

With the dissolution of the 12th parliament, he also set off a 90-day countdown for the general elections as mandated by the constitution.

With the entire police force remaining absent and without any directives or announcements about law and order, students and volunteers took up the responsibility of directing traffic on the streets of Dhaka yesterday.

Police stations and outposts remained deserted as hundreds of them had been burnt or razed to the ground.

The power vacuum comes in the wake of Bangladesh's former prime minister Sheikh Hasina resigning on Monday and fleeing the country amid a mass uprising where hundreds of thousands began to march towards Dhaka.

Earlier in the day, Nahid, proposed Yunus as head of the interim government and said Yunus had agreed to shoulder the responsibility.

"We want to see the process rolling by the morning. We urge the president to take steps as soon as possible to form an interim government headed by Dr Yunus," said Nahid, who came under the spotlight when he was abducted by law enforcement agencies during the height of the student protests.

Nahid was found a day later by the side of a road with bruises and clear signs of torture.

Nahid reminded everyone that no government other than the one the students proposed would be acceptable. "As we have said, no military government, or one backed by the military, or a government of fascists, will be accepted."

Yunus, attending the Paris Olympics as a special guest, had initially been reluctant to accept the proposal but eventually gave in to repeated requests from the students.

"If the students can sacrifice so much, if the people of the country can sacrifice so much, then I also have some responsibility. Then I told the students that I would accept," a reliable of source quoted him as saying.

Sheikh Hasina's government had hounded the Grameen Bank founder and microcredit pioneer for almost a decade.

Nahid said they were expecting Yunus to reach Bangladesh later today or early tomorrow.

The Election Commission remains completely in the dark, as confirmed by a top official, about the next polls. And it is becoming increasingly likely that the envisioned transition to an interim government will not be in strict adherence to the constitution.

Shahdeen Malik, a Supreme Court lawyer and a noted commentator on legal issues, said it might not be possible to fully abide by the constitution in the context of such an extraordinary political upheaval in Bangladesh.

"This has happened in the past. Since it is not possible to follow the constitution to make reforms for national interest, these reforms could be legitimised by amending the constitution later," he told The Daily Star.

Asif Nazrul, a Dhaka University law professor who has been vocal against Hasina's government, was alongside the protest organisers at the briefing in front of the Bangabhaban.

He spoke along the same strain as Malik. He also indicated the possibility of bypassing the constitutional requirement in the interest of political legitimacy.

"There are different constitutional means and customs to legalise certain actions. We will do that."

The law professor said that the meeting also discussed other details of the interim regime, including its duration and the number of people and so forth. But since those were not finalised, he did not divulge them.

At least 92 bodies recovered

FROM PAGE 1

Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in the afternoon to celebrate the resignation of Sheikh Hasina as prime minister. At around the same time, mobs attacked several police stations and buildings.

Mobs also set fire to some police stations, leading to the deaths of several policemen. In some cases, cops were also beaten to death.

At least 12 bodies of police officers were taken to the Central Police Hospital in Rajarbagh as of 8:00pm yesterday, Rezaul Hyder, director of the hospital, told The Daily Star.

AKM Shahidur Rahman, additional inspector general of police, said they were still collecting information about how many cops died.

"Our teams are working to recover the bodies. We are yet to ascertain how many policemen are missing."

DEATHS OUTSIDE DHAKA

In Jashore, 11 more bodies were recovered yesterday from hotel Zabeer Jashore that was vandalised and set on fire by unidentified criminals on Monday afternoon.

With this, the death toll from the attack went up to 24, said AM Mamun, assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defence.

The hotel, located at the district town's Chitrar Mor, is owned by Jashore district AL General Secretary Shahin Chakladar.

In Noakhali, at least seven people, including three policemen, were killed in clashes between the demonstrators and police on Monday afternoon.

The clashes broke out when the agitators attacked Sonaimuri and Chatkhil police stations, said Md Asaduzzaman, superintendent of police in Noakhali.

Of the deceased, six died during the clash at Sonairmuri Police Station between 4:30pm and 6:30pm. Three of them are policemen.

The SP, however, could not confirm how many people were killed in the clash at Chatkhil Police Station.

According to local journalists, at least one person was shot dead at Chatkhil.

The SP claimed that at least 15 policemen from the two police stations went missing after the clashes.

In Lalmonirhat, six bodies were recovered from the home of Suman Khan, joint secretary of the district AL, after it was set alight by unidentified criminals on Monday evening.

A fire service team recovered the bodies in presence of army, said Wadud Hossain, deputy assistant director of Lalmonirhat Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Witnesses said several hundred unidentified criminals attacked, vandalised and set fire to Suman's home in Kalibari area of the district town.

In Habiganj, three people, who sustained injuries during a clash between police and demonstrators in Baniachong upazila on Monday, died of their injuries between Monday night and early yesterday at the upazila health complex.

Besides, the body of a police sub-inspector was also recovered yesterday.

With this, the death toll from the recent violence in the upazila rose to 10, said Shamima Akhter, Baniachong upazila health and family welfare officer.

In Thakurgaon, two people, who suffered burns on Monday night, died of their injuries yesterday. They were Al Mamun, 35, and Shahan, 14, residents of Thakurgaon Road area in the district town, said locals.

A group of unruly people looted and set fire to several shops at Baliadangi intersection of the district town on Monday night. As the blaze spread, a gas cylinder caught fire and blasted, leaving six people, including Al Mamun and Shahan, injured.

Shahan died on the way to Rangpur Medical College Hospital Dhaka early yesterday while Mamun breathed his last on the way to Dhaka yesterday morning.

The rest of the injured were receiving treatment at different hospitals in Thakurgaon.

On Monday, at least 76 deaths were reported in 13 districts outside Dhaka.

In Pirojpur, agitating people vandalised and set fire to the district AL office in the district town yesterday afternoon. Houses of several AL leaders were also torched.

In Pabna, criminals yesterday attacked the houses and businesses of several AL leaders, including Md Mintu, director of Pabna Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

'SHUN VIOLENCE, LOOTING'

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) yesterday urged the people not to get involved in violence, looting, and destruction during their victory celebrations.

The civil society platform also urged all not to take the law into their own hands, and to resist any initiative of carrying out killing and destroying state and personal properties.

Shujan called for protecting different religious centres, including temples.

Act responsibly to deal

FROM PAGE 1

and condemns these incidents," the statement reads.

The editors' body, however, said the political situation that has emerged from Sheikh Hasina's resignation has given way to a kind of anarchy.

"Everyone is anxious about the safety of lives and property, both public and private," the statement said, adding that there have been incidents of arson and vandalism at important establishments, including factories and law enforcement facilities.

"Media has reported incidents of attack on minorities, which must stop immediately," the statement reads.

Additionally, there have been incidents of looting and vandalism at multiple television and media organisations.

"To prevent these unwanted incidents, the president must immediately take necessary actions," the statement reads.

Khaleda Zia freed

FROM PAGE 1

issued yesterday, President Mohammed Shahabuddin, exercising his power under Article 49 of the constitution, granted Khaleda Zia clemency in two cases based on the law ministry's recommendation and ordered her release.

The development came after the president and chiefs of armed forces agreed to on the decision during a meeting at the Bangabhaban on Monday, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told reporters.

Khaleda Zia on February 8, 2018, was sent to the Old Dhaka Jail after a special court in Dhaka sentenced her to five years' imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case. The High Court later doubled her five-year jail term.

In the same year, the same special court in Dhaka sentenced Khaleda to seven years in jail in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case.

Amid the coronavirus outbreak, the government temporarily freed Khaleda from jail through an executive order suspending her sentence on March 25, 2020, with the condition that she stay in her Gulshan house and not leave the country.

She has long been battling various ailments, including liver cirrhosis, arthritis, diabetes, and issues related to the kidneys, lungs, heart, and eyes.

Although the government has extended the period of her conditional release on multiple occasions, it has denied BNP's every call to take her abroad for advanced treatment.

'SHE GOT EMOTIONAL'

Khaleda Zia learnt about the news of Hasina's departure from television and her doctors. "Initially, she got very emotional but later smiled," a member of BNP's media cell said.

"It's not right to oppress the people. Sheikh Hasina is proof of the consequences of wrongdoings. Allah has judged her," Khaleda was quoted as saying by hospital staff.

Khaleda was kept informed about the country's situation when the quota reform protest started last month by her doctors.

"Khaleda Zia was aware that the country's situation was deteriorating day by day. But she was very surprised to learn that Hasina was forced to resign and flee the country," a top BNP leader said.

BNP Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas said, "Hasina caused great harm to Madam's life."

Asked about her health condition, he said, "Madam is very ill and cannot even speak properly. If she could be sent abroad for better treatment, it would be very good for her health. We are now considering it."

"We are hoping that Madam will return to the political field again."

Another BNP leader Selima Rahman told The Daily Star that Khaleda Zia was imprisoned "in false cases and out of vindictiveness."

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told reporters, "Whenever she [Khaleda] feels fit and healthy, she will appear in public."

Following her release, BNP supporters celebrated outside the Nayapaltan party office, chanting slogans in her name.

Khaleda might address the public the day she returns to her residence from the hospital, said two standing committee members.

Rights bodies voice

FROM PAGE 12

and journalists.

It specifically mentioned attacks on Hindu temples and the failure of law enforcement agencies, fire service, and civil defense to provide adequate assistance.

They demanded vigilance to prevent such incidents and appropriate compensation for victims.

Transparency International Bangladesh expressed profound disappointment and strongly condemned incidents of violence across districts, including attacks on homes, temples, and business establishments belonging to religious minorities.

Condemning the arson and looting of important state establishments and vehicles, TIB in a statement called on all responsible authorities to take immediate steps to ensure the security of religious minorities and state assets.

Such self-interest and criminal activities can derail and cast doubts on the opportunity to rebuild the nation with equality, justice, and good governance, which was achieved through the unprecedented loss of lives and sacrifice of students and citizens, it said.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said, "It is extremely disheartening and disappointing that we have to demand protection of religious minorities and state assets."

"We sincerely urge all the responsible groups to fulfill their essential responsibilities in ensuring that the opportunity to rebuild our country brought by the sacrifice of students and citizens don't go to the hands of communal forces and narrow interests."

Mentioning the recent violence and attacks on various establishments, including the parliament building, Iftekharuzzaman said, "All state assets are built on the hard-earned money and taxes of people."

"To avert such self-destructive activities, it is imperative that all responsible people, in addition to the general public, take an active role."

TIB urged the army chief and other responsible stakeholders to uphold their commitment to maintain law and order.

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) also condemned the incidents and called for the protection of state and private properties, as well as religious institutions.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar, said, "Yesterday [Monday], we achieved an unprecedented and unimaginable victory, considered by many as our second independence. This victory opens new possibilities to rebuild the state and construct a democratic, non-communal, developed, and livable nation."

"However, if we fail to act responsibly, this potential may be lost. We observed some undesirable incidents during the celebrations. We condemn the attacks and vandalism and urge everyone to refrain from such activities."

Rights body, Ain o Salish Kendra, condemned the incidents of vandalism, particularly targeting religious minority communities.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad also urged authorities to take immediate action to prevent

attacks, arson, looting, and vandalism.

Meanwhile, the Left Democratic Alliance, Anti-Fascist Left Front, and Bangladesh Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal urged citizens to ensure the safety of life and property, particularly of those from religious and ethnic minorities.

At a rally in Paltan, they warned that during this time, corrupt individuals and looters might take advantage to burn their corruption files at offices. The public must stay vigilant and stand against them.

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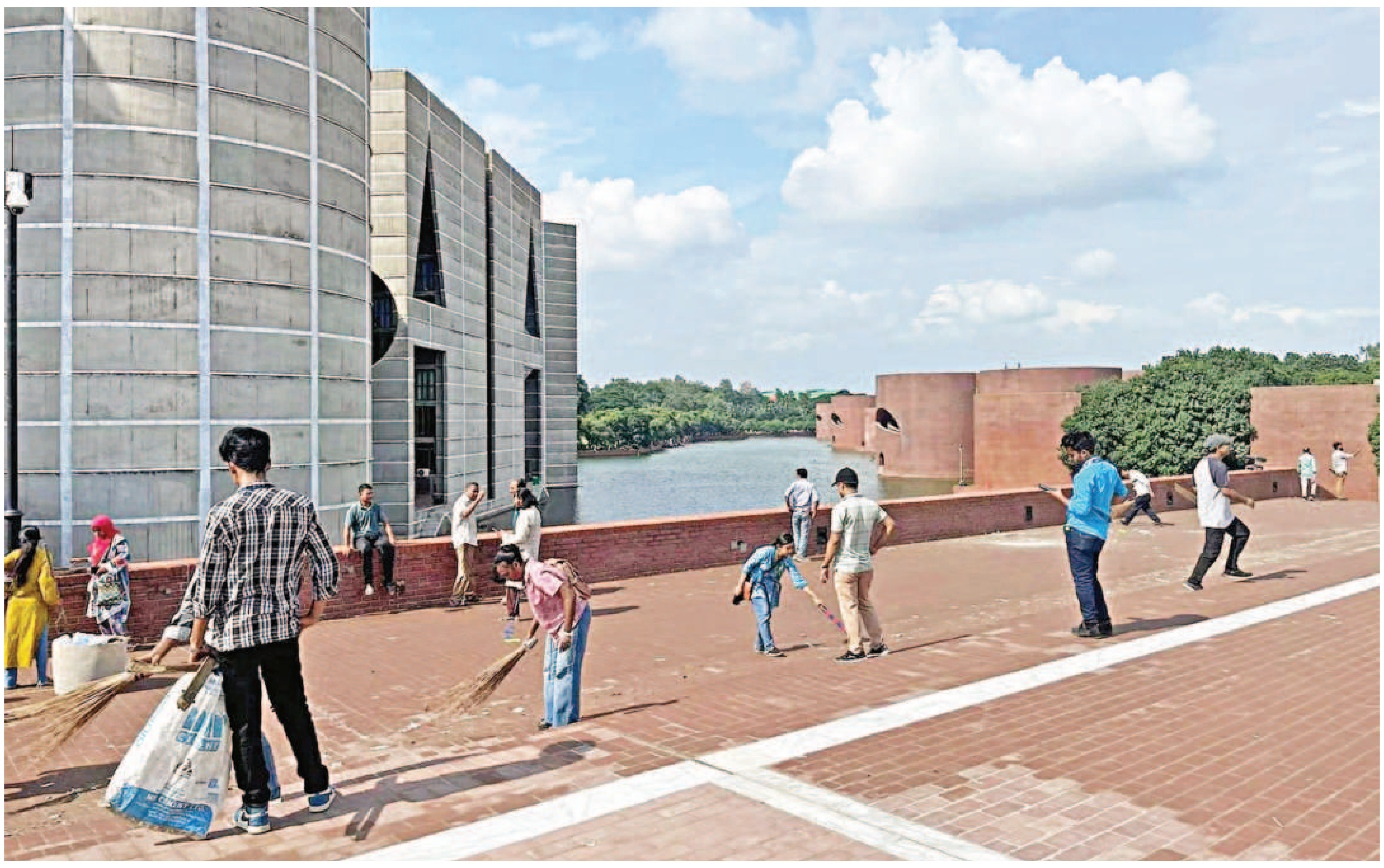


PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

Students step up to ensure order

Help manage Dhaka traffic, clean JS premises, collect and return Gono Bhaban items

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chaos engulfed the streets of Dhaka in the immediate aftermath of Sheikh Hasina's resignation as mobs vandalised and looted many establishments in the absence of police.

Law enforcers, including traffic police, were largely absent on the streets of Dhaka yesterday. Many feared anarchy and repetition of widespread violence.

So, students decided to take matters into their own hands. School and college goers took to the streets again, equipped with sticks and megaphones.

This time, they were not protesters but volunteers striving to maintain law and order and ensure the smooth flow of traffic.

Although the number of vehicles on Dhaka roads was fewer than usual, they were moving in a noticeably disciplined manner.

Some students were seen requesting pedestrians to use footpaths and footbridges with their megaphones. They told drivers to obey traffic rules. Others signaled to vehicles using their hands and sticks, directing the flow of traffic.

This brought back memories of August 2018, when students took to the streets demanding road safety.

Abdullah Al Wasee, a student of BRAC University, was seen controlling traffic with his friends at the Panthapath intersection.

He said, "There is no police anywhere in the city. Law and order must be restored. This is why we are doing this voluntarily. This was our movement. So, we felt obliged to help restore law and order."

Shahriar Emon, a student of Tejgaon College, was controlling traffic at the Farmgate intersection, one of the busiest and most crowded road junctions in the city.

He said, "We also participated in the road safety movement in 2018. Back then, we were school students, and we learned practically about the importance of road safety. So, I am doing this voluntarily to help restore normalcy."

"We hope that an interim government will soon be formed by the proposal of our coordinators and the administration will be restored. We want to go back to our educational institutions as soon as possible," he added.

Around 2:00pm, while crossing the Agargaon intersection this newspaper found a group of students controlling the traffic situation. Similar scenes were found at the Bijoy Sarani intersection.

Besides, no traffic officers were present at key locations including Mirpur-2, Mirpur-10 intersection, Bangla Motor, Asad Gate, Shyamoli, Dhanmondi-32,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Panic at the secretariat

UNB, *Dhaka*

The Bangladesh Secretariat witnessed a wave of panic yesterday as rumours of impending attacks and arson spread, prompting officials and employees to vacate their offices.

Speaking with several individuals within the secretariat, it was learnt that the Ministry of Home Affairs had advised all ministries to prioritise safety, reports UNB.

Adding to the chaos, police have reportedly expressed their inability to ensure security within the secretariat.

Employees from various government departments, including the Electricity Board, Food Department, Education Department, and Registration Department, located on Dhaka's Paltan and Goni roads, also left their workplaces amid the situation.

BGB beefs up border security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has beefed up security on borders to prevent illegal crossing across the country.

Shariful Islam, public relation officer of BGB, confirmed it.

The security measures were strengthened when many Awami League men reportedly tried to leave the country after the fall of AL government.

Sheikh Hasina resigned on Monday and left the country.

Additional attorney general resigns

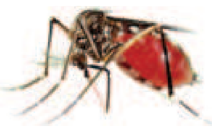
STAR REPORT

Advocate SK Md Morshed resigned from the post of additional attorney general citing "personal difficulties" yesterday.

"I have submitted the resignation letter to the president through the attorney general. I mentioned personal difficulties and poor health condition in the resignation letter," Morshed told The Daily Star.

Two more die of dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



At least two dengue patients died while 192 others were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the new cases, the total number of deaths rose to 60, while the total number of cases rose to 7,189.

Currently, 656 patients are undergoing treatment, of which 271 are from outside Dhaka, according to the DGHS.

BANGABANDHU MUSEUM ON DHANMONDI 32

Torching an integral part of country's history

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After Sheikh Hasina resigned amid nationwide protests on Monday, the mob decided to take their rage out by vandalising various structures.

Even the historic residence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, an infrastructure that symbolised the country's independence struggle, on Road 32 in Dhanmondi, was not spared.

The mob set ablaze the residence, which was later turned into a museum.

"When the news of Hasina's resignation circulated, police and officials guarding the residence quickly fled. Thousands of people broke into the house, took everything, and celebrated on the adjacent street," said an eyewitness.

"The fire service did not arrive to control the blaze, so the fire quickly spread to nearby buildings, causing severe damage," he added.

The modern extension of the museum complex, which housed a library, auditorium, and photo gallery, was also completely destroyed. An adjacent restaurant was burned as well.

When this correspondent got inside the historic building, he saw many burnt books lying on the floor, many of the furniture and household items were either stolen or torched. The doors and windows were damaged.

Yesterday, numerous people also visited the residence, took photos and painted protest graffiti on the wall.

Army personnel were seen at the spot trying to control the situation. They were also joined by students.

Md Abdullah Al Mamun, a student helping soldiers control the crowd, said, "We are ensuring no more

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

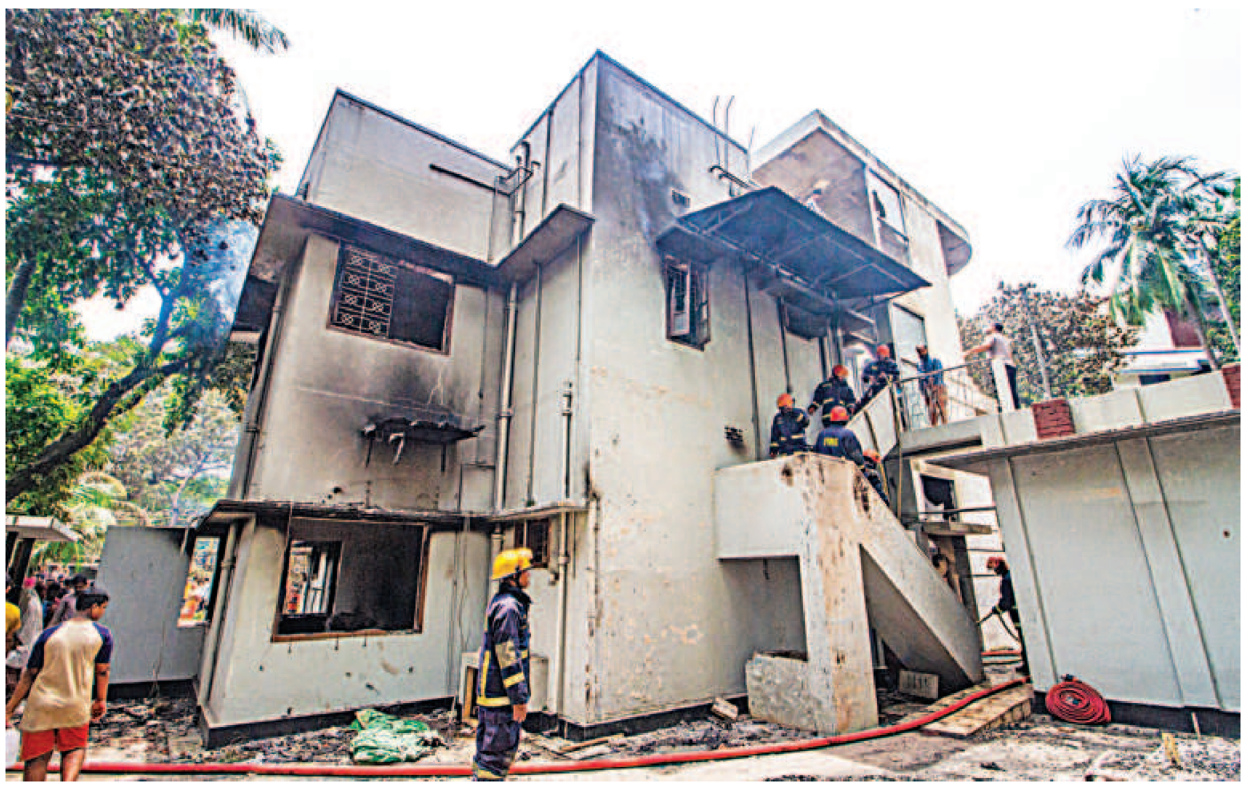


PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

The historic residence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, later turned into a museum, at Dhanmondi 32 in the capital, was vandalised and set on fire by the mob following Sheikh Hasina's resignation on Monday. Many books, furniture and other items were either stolen or torched. The photos were taken yesterday afternoon.

Fishing trawlers stay anchored for rough sea

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Following a ban on catching hilsa in the Bay of Bengal for 65 days, fishermen resumed their activities from July 23.

However, for around two weeks since then, the sea has been remaining rough, leaving them with a meagre catch.

Many fishermen, who went to the sea on trawlers from Patuakhali and Barguna, have been returning empty handed during this time.

Fish traders at Patuakhali's Alipur and Mahipur, and Barguna's Patharghata fish landing stations are largely disappointed.

Visiting the fish landing stations recently, this correspondent saw numerous trawlers were anchored at the ghats (docks). Some of those had returned from the sea after days while others were unable to leave due to turbulent sea.

"Our trawler FB Mayer Doa left Patuakhali two days back with 14 fishermen, but had to return empty handed as the sea has been very rough while there hardly any hilsa in the waters," said a fisherman Anisur Rahman.

Rasul Mia, owner of the trawler, said he had to take a loan on high interest from moneylenders to send the fishermen to the sea for fishing.

"As they could not manage to catch any fish, I am now concerned how I am going to pay back the loan," he added.

Another fisherman, Nasir Uddin, echoed him, saying he wanted to stay longer in the sea but had to return as the sea has been becoming rough and unsafe.

"If the weather turns favourable soon, we might leave for the sea again and try our luck," he added.

Many trawler owners and fishermen said they will become destitute if such adverse weather conditions continue to persist longer and affect their livelihoods.

Members of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) brings out a "peace rally" in the capital's Jatiya Press Club area yesterday. PHOTO: **STAR**

PHOTO: **STAR**

Fewer shops open as curfew lifted

Poor sales leave traders worried in Sylhet

MINTU DESHWARA, *Moulvibazar*

Even after curfew was lifted from 6:00am yesterday, very few shops and businesses opened in Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sunamganj and Sylhet district towns following a prolonged period of unrest and uncertainty.

Visiting different areas including Central Road-Paschimbazar, a major shopping hub in Moulvibazar town, this correspondent observed that many shops remained shuttered between 10:00am and 5:00pm yesterday, as shop owners feared vandalism and arson attacks by mobs.

The few shops that did open, witnessed a poor presence of customers and significantly low volume of sales, raising concerns.

Local traders said people are still hesitant to come out of their homes despite the curfew being lifted. People have been hardly venturing out unless it is absolutely necessary. The lack of public transport on the roads also contributed to this poor turnout.

Since the end of July, many traders have been struggling to pay rent, utility bills, and salaries to their employees.

"After Sheikh Hasina resigned on Monday, a festive atmosphere sparked celebratory processions. However, things soon took a dark turn as numerous properties, businesses, and shops, including some owned by people from minority communities, were vandalised and looted in the town," said Sumesh Das Jisu, a shop owner at Manager Stall.

"Our traditional 76-year-old sweet shop at Manager Stall, as well as Radhika Stall on M Saifur Rahman Road in Moulvibazar town, were left severely damaged," he added.

Locals said the police outpost at Chaumohana Chatwar (Circle) was attacked, and Mamar Bari Restaurant on Court Road also suffered vandalism. The wave of destruction caused widespread panic among the town's residents.

Atikur Rahman Akhoi, general secretary of Kulaura Traders Association, said, "Our businesses were already struggling due to recent flood. We were yet to recover before the student movement demanding quota reform turned violent and led to a curfew being imposed. This overall lack of business over the past month has left us in dire straits. People are still fearful, and most avoid leaving their homes, which is why there are so few customers."

Kamal Hossain, general secretary of Sreemangal Traders Association, said, "I personally appeal to all traders to remain steadfast and open their shops without succumbing to panic. We must all have the courage to continue our operations," he said.

No reservation over interim govt

Says Fakhrul

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

BNP will not show any reservation over the formation of the interim government.

It is seeing the process of formation of the interim government positively, said party leaders.

They said they would not have any differences of options with the coordinators of the student movement over the positions of chief adviser and other advisers.

But if the tenure of the interim government is longer then they will show their reservation as they want parliamentary elections at the earliest to keep the continuation of the constitution.

"If a new government is not formed dissolving the parliament, then there will be a political void," said Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, the party's secretary general, at a press conference.

Within hours of his statement, the parliament was dissolved. The issues were discussed at the party's standing committee meeting with acting chairman Tarique Rahman.

At the meeting, the party decided to stage a huge showdown as the Awami League government had fallen.

The party will hold a rally in front of its Nayapaltan headquarters at 2:00pm today where Tarique will be the chief guest and will be connected virtually.

Meeting sources said they will not make any negative comments on the position of advisers, whoever it is.

If there is a proposal on who can be recommended for the position of chief adviser, the party will hold a meeting with the leaders of the anti-quota student movement and the parties involved in the simultaneous movement, including Jamaat and then give their opinion.

When informed that the quota reform students want Muhammad Yunus as chief of the interim government, Fakhrul said, "If the president wants a name from us, we will propose our nomination. It is the jurisdiction of the president but we have full confidence in the students. We expressed our solidarity with the students' movement."

Regarding the return of Tarique Rahman, the party leaders have already requested him to return to Bangladesh soon. "We have requested him to come back and he will soon," Fakhrul said.

Students step up to ensure order

FROM PAGE 3

Science Lab, and New Market areas. In their absence, students were seen managing traffic flow.

In Shyamoli, students organised separate lanes for different types of vehicles to ensure smooth traffic movement. They made sure that vehicles, including rickshaws and motorcycles, followed proper routes and did not block intersections.

In addition, approximately 200 students took on security duties at various police stations, churches, and temples in Mirpur.

"We've been stationed at Mirpur Police Station and all churches and temples in Mirpur since 9:00am," said a student who along with others has been guarding the police station.

The police station had been set on fire by a mob the previous night, causing significant damage.

In the aftermath, students found an abandoned firearm, damaged firearms, ammunition, a grenade, and a walkie-talkie, and have requested that the army take custody of these items.

In response to the situation, the Ansar headquarters announced that members of Bangladesh Ansar and VDP will now oversee traffic management in and around the capital.

Meanwhile, a group of students were seen cleaning the premises of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, which was ransacked a mob on Monday following Hasina's resignation.

Several photos of students voluntarily cleaning the iconic building were doing rounds on social media. They were seen sweeping the ground and cleaning open spaces of the important structure.

A number of volunteers were also seen collecting valuables that had been looted from Gono Bhaban and the parliament. Some people, who looted the valuables, were seen handing over those to the volunteers, who then returned them to the authorities.

Maj Gen AKM Aminul Haque, director general of Bangladesh Ansar & VDP, said, "There are no police personnel at any police stations across the country, nor any Armed Police Battalion (APBn) at the airports. Following directions from the army chief and the air force chief, we have been tasked with deploying forces to ensure the security of police stations and airports."

He said forces are being deployed in phases across the country, with an initial focus on securing police stations and other critical establishments.

Torching an integral part

FROM PAGE 3

vandalism occurs here or in nearby buildings. We will close the site after 5:00pm and will not allow any visitors."

"We have rescued many books from the library, and the Bangladesh Army has brought a truck to send the books to the public library," he added.

Students and troops blocked several attempts to steal or loot from the site. At 5:00pm, while controlling the crowd, some people were caught loading construction materials onto a truck from an under-construction building.

When visitors reported this, soldiers and students quickly intervened.

The looters, identifying themselves as "contractors," were detained and taken inside the camp.

A student said, "We are protecting the site now. We will not allow any more looting or vandalism."

Students and troops blocked several attempts to steal or loot from the site.

PMO AND JS

Like on Monday, a huge number of people gathered in front of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) yesterday, but they could not enter as army personnel had taken complete control.

Soldiers guarded the main gate.

Samiul Ahsan, along with his wife Lutfa Sahana and their two children, came to the PMO. "I saw people enter the PMO yesterday, so I came, but I could not enter today [yesterday]," Samiul said.

Some people stood at the gate, asking the army personnel to take pictures. Various goods, including sofa sets, were seen lying scattered on the PMO lawn.

A similar crowd was spotted at the parliament building. Many people entered the premises by rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, and motorcycles via the VIP road to the Sangsad Bhaban from the side of Gono Bhaban.

However, the main parliament building was guarded by Army personnel who were not allowing anyone inside. People walked in the open courtyard outside the building and by the lake.

Parul Akhtar, who arrived by rickshaw with her two children, said, "Yesterday, I saw on TV people inside the parliament building without any fear or obstruction. That's why I came today."

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 7

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

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হারিয়েছে

আমার ১০,০০,০০০ /- (দশ লক্ষ) টাকার স্ট্যান্ডার্ড চার্টার্ড ব্যাংক হইতে ইস্যুকৃত পাঁচ বছর মেয়াদি বাংলাদেশ সঞ্চয়পত্র হারিয়েছে যাহার নিবন্ধন নং- BSP2018/6002360, এস.পি নং- PA THA248881-248881 নিবন্ধন তারিখঃ ০৭/০৬/২০১৮ । ভাটারা থানার জিডি ট্র্যাকিং নং -RA08SE, জিডি নং- 166 তারিখ- ০৩/০৮/২০২৪ ।

শাহিন আকতার D - 09

হারিয়েছে

আমার ১,০০,০০০ /- (এক লক্ষ) টাকার স্ট্যান্ডার্ড চার্টার্ড ব্যাংক হইতে ইস্যুকৃত তিন বছর মেয়াদি বাংলাদেশ সঞ্চয়পত্র হারিয়েছে যাহার নিবন্ধন নং- 3MS2013/6000942, এস.পি নং- TIN KA1639999-1639999, নিবন্ধন তারিখঃ ১৯/০৬/২০১৩ । ভাটারা থানার জিডি ট্র্যাকিং নং -RA08SE, জিডি নং- 166 তারিখ- ০৩/০৮/২০২৪ ।

শাহিন আকতার D - 08

হারিয়েছে

আমার ১০,০০,০০০ /- (দশ লক্ষ) টাকার স্ট্যান্ডার্ড চার্টার্ড ব্যাংক হইতে ইস্যুকৃত পাঁচ বছর মেয়াদি বাংলাদেশ সঞ্চয়পত্র হারিয়েছে যাহার নিবন্ধন নং- BSP2018/6002362, এস.পি নং-PA THA248882-248882, নিবন্ধন তারিখঃ ০৭/০৬/২০১৮ । ভাটারা থানার জিডি ট্র্যাকিং নং -RA08SE, জিডি নং- 166 তারিখ- ০৩/০৮/২০২৪ ।

শাহিন আকতার D - 10

Planning and Development Division
Khulna University, Khulna

Tender No :KU/PD-189/2017- Date : 06/08/2024

e-Tender Notice No. 01/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (http:/www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of the Work	Online Tender Closing and Opening date
1005997	KU/PD-382/2024	Procurement and Installation of 60 pcs Brand Computers for Khulna Universiy	27-Aug-2024 11:15:00
1006277	KU/PD-386/2024	Procurement and Installation of Scientific Equipment for IISSCE of Khulna University (Lot-02)	27-Aug-2024 12:00:00
1005572	KU/PD-383/2024	Procurement and Installation of Scientific Equipment for SWE Discipline of Khulna University	28-Aug-2024 11:30:00
1005586	KU/PD-384/2024	Procurement and Installation of Scientific Equipment for IISSCE of Khulna University (Lot-01)	28-Aug-2024 11:00:00
1006300	KU/PD-385/2024	Procurement and Installation of Medical Equipment for Shahid Buddhi Jibi Dr. Alim Chowdhury Chikitsha Kendra (Medical Center) of Khulna University	27-Aug-2024 14:30:00

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Gp system portal (http:/www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-Gp system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branches up to banking hours on e-GP system. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-Gp system portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Signed
(Md. Khairul Bashar)
Director (Current Charge)
Planning and Development Division
Khulna University, Khulna

GD- 121

General Manager- Sales & Marketing
Transcom Beverages Limited (TBL)

Job Responsibilities:

- Responsible for managing and leading overall Sales & Marketing functions of TBL.
- Drive value/revenue /profitability objectives for the country as per Annual Operation Plan through execution while building the team and organizational capability for business growth and sustainability.
- Driving team to ensure market execution as per plans, to increase outlet base, strengthen distribution base and enhance asset charging.
- Monitor progress against the business plan and Sales & Operating plan on a regular basis.

Education:

Graduation from a reputed local or international institutions; Post Graduation Diploma in (Marketing/Strategy) will give preference.

Experience Requirements:

- At least 16 year(s) of relevant experience in FMCG
- Experience in beverage industry specially with global beverages brands are required, TT Channel understanding and strong distribution experience.
- Excellent Leadership Capability.

Please send your CV to the email:
jobs@tbl.transcombd.com
Application Deadline: August 22, 2024.

Janata Bank PLC.
Estate Department (5th floor)
110, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.
Phone : 02-55110085, 02-55110019
web: www.jb.com.bd

Ref No : JBPLC/ED/AC & Civil works/Local Office/24/397 Date : 04.08.2024

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of the following items :

Serial No.	Tender ID	Description of Works	Online (e-GP System) Tender Publication date & Time	Tender Document Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Document Closing and Opening date and time
1	1005323	Supply, Installation & Supply, Installation & Commissioning of Split type Air-Conditioner Machine at Janata Bank PLC., Local Office, 1, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	04.08.2024 17:00	28.08.2024 14:00	28.08.2024 15:00
2	1005324	Construction of Partition wall (Glass and board Partition) and door at different location of Janata Bank PLC. Local office, Dhaka (Re-tender).	04.08.2024 17:00	28.08.2024 14:00	28.08.2024 15:00

This is an Online Tender, Where only e-Tender will be accepted in national e-GP portal and no official hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-tender, Registration in the national e-GP system Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fee for downloading the e-tender document from national e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP Help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

04.08.2024
Md. Monzurul Alam
Deputy General Manager

GD-123

No end to UK protests

Govt expands jail capacity

REUTERS, *Liverpool*

The British government has increased its prison capacity to help tackle violent, week-long anti-immigrant riots that have prompted a growing number of countries to warn their citizens about the dangers of travelling in Britain.

Riots across a number of towns and cities have erupted following the murder of three girls at a Taylor Swift-themed event in Southport, a seaside town in northern England, after false messaging on social media wrongly identified the suspected killer as an Islamist migrant.

The Justice department, which is being forced to release some prisoners early as it battles a jail overcrowding crisis, said nearly 600 prison places had been secured to accommodate those engaged in violence.

Representatives lay flowers at the Peace Memorial Ceremony held at the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, Japan yesterday, during ceremonies to mark the 79th anniversary of the world's first atomic bomb attack.

PHOTO: **AFP**

US ELECTION

Harris picks Walz as her running mate

REUTERS

Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris selected Minnesota Governor Tim Walz to be her running mate yesterday, choosing a progressive policy champion and a plain speaker from America's heartland to help win over rural, white voters, according to sources familiar with the matter.

Walz, a 60-year-old US Army National Guard veteran and former teacher, was elected to a Republican-leaning district in the US House of Representatives in 2006 and served 12 years before being elected governor of Minnesota in 2018.

As governor, Walz has pushed a progressive agenda that includes free school meals, goals for tackling climate change, tax cuts for the middle class and expanded paid leave for Minnesota workers.

Walz has long advocated for women's reproductive rights but also displayed a conservative bent while representing a rural district in the US House, defending agricultural interests and backing gun rights.

Harris, the daughter of immigrants from Jamaica and India, is adding a popular Midwestern politician whose home state votes reliably for Democrats in presidential elections but is close to Wisconsin and Michigan, two crucial battlegrounds.

Such states are seen as crucial in deciding the November 5 election, and Walz is widely seen as skilled at connecting with white, rural voters who in recent years have voted broadly for the Republican Donald Trump, Harris' rival for the White House.

Harris chose Walz over Josh Shapiro, the governor of Pennsylvania, who had been seen as essential to delivering his crucial battleground state.

Haniyeh's killing aims to prolong Gaza offensive

Says Palestinian President Abbas before Moscow visit

REUTERS

The killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was intended to prolong the Gaza conflict, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas told Russia's state news agency, adding that he will discuss the regional crisis with President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

RIA, citing a diplomatic source, said Abbas will come on a long-expected visit to Moscow on August 12-14.

Haniyeh, the political leader of Palestinian group Hamas, was assassinated in the Iranian capital Tehran last week in an attack that drew threats of revenge on Israel and fuelled concern that the conflict in Gaza was turning into a wider Middle East war.

In an interview published by state news agency RIA yesterday, Abbas said he considers Haniyeh's assassination "a cowardly act and a dangerous development in Israeli politics".

"There is no doubt the purpose of Mr Haniyeh's assassination is to prolong the war and expand its scope," he said. "It will have a negative impact on the ongoing negotiations to end the aggression and withdraw Israeli troops from Gaza."

The interview was published in Russian. Haniyeh was the face of Hamas' international diplomacy since the offensive started on October 7, 2023, and had been taking part in internationally brokered efforts to reach a ceasefire in Gaza.

Iran, which backs Hamas, has blamed Israel for the killing and said it will "punish" it. Israeli officials have not claimed responsibility.

Abbas also told RIA that the Gaza Strip must be transferred to the control of the legitimate Palestinian authorities.

"We strongly oppose Israeli plans that provide for some temporary solutions," he said.

Russia, which has forged close ties both with Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Arab leaders including Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has condemned Haniyeh's killing and called on all parties to refrain from further destabilisation of Middle East.

75 migrants rescued off Greece

AFP, *Athens*

The Greek coastguard yesterday said it had rescued 75 migrants in an area where one of the Mediterranean's worst migrant shipwrecks occurred last year.

They were on board a sailboat southwest of the Peloponnese coastal town of Pylos and will be taken to the port of Kalamata, the coastguard said, without mentioning the nationalities or port of origin.

In June 2023, a rusty and overloaded trawler sailing out of Tobruk in Libya believed to be carrying more than 750 people sank southwest of Pylos.

There were 104 survivors, but more than 600 people are considered to have perished.

Dozens of survivors have filed a criminal complaint against the Greek coastguard, alleging that they took hours to respond despite warnings from EU border agency Frontex and the NGO Alarm Phone.

The Italian coast guard said on Sunday two migrants died and one was still missing after a boat carrying more than 30 people sank around 17 miles south-east of the Italian city of Syracuse, Sicily.

After receiving a distress call late on Saturday, a coast guard boat and an aircraft went to the area, rescued 34 people and took them to the port of Syracuse, the authority said in a statement.

AL stares at a 'political death'

FROM PAGE 1

during the recent protest, she failed to inspire party men to come to the streets," he said over the phone so sheepishly that it was difficult to hear.

Asked about the future of the party, he replied, "I first need to save my life. The thought of the future of the party can wait," he said, sounding frustrated.

Both leaders said Hasina's last efforts to bring partymen on the Streets to resist protesters that killed around 100 people across the country on Sunday to survive was a wrong decision. By making this decision, she set Awami League against the countrymen.

Hasina created a circle around her with some opportunists who "used" the party and the government for their personal benefits. Their advice has destroyed her own political career, a historical party like Awami League and tens of millions of party leaders and activists.

Whereabouts of the top party leaders and ministers of the immediate past cabinet are also not clear, as many have gone into hiding to save their lives amid violent attacks on ruling party men in different parts of the country.

Some of them, including Junaid Ahmad Palak and Hasan Mahmud, were reportedly caught at the airport while trying to flee the country yesterday. Several others were also beaten up.

According to the officials at the Dhaka airport, the civil aviation authority also detained general secretary of Bangladesh Chattra League's Dhaka University unit Tanbir Hasan Shaikat and the student body's Dhaka North unit president Riaz Mahmud. The detainees were handed over to the Bangladesh Army, according to officials.

Besides, the family members of two former ministers -- education minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury and Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives minister Md Tazul Islam left the country through the airport.

Former finance minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, sports minister Nazmul Hassan Papon and Mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh also left the country through the airport since Sunday, sources said.

Former MP of Munshiganj-3 Mrinal Kanti Das also left the country.

Bangla daily Prothom Alo yesterday reported that Hasina was in favour of using greater force till the last moment, even as security personnel and top police officials declined to continue the bloodshed.

By Monday noon, tens of millions of people were marching towards the capital and Gono Bhaban with their one-point demand for her to leave office.

According to the Bangla daily, on Monday morning Hasina pushed top leaders of different law enforcement agencies and armed forces to take harsher actions against the protesters. She also refused to accept the briefing by the security personnel that the situation was completely out control.

Some of the party leaders and her advisers who were present at that time requested her to resign and hand over power to the armed forces, but Hasina did not pay any heed and asked them to strengthen the curfew instead, according to the report.

Hasina also expressed resentment at the top bosses of the armed forces and law enforcement agencies for their failure to tackle the situation and contain the protesters. Later, after consulting with her younger sister Sheikh Rehana, who was at Gono Bhaban with her, and her son Sajeeb Wazed, who is in the US, Hasina decided to step down.

According to Prothom Alo, Hasina at the last moment wanted to record a speech addressing the nation, but she was not given the time as there was intel that protesters would occupy Gono Bhaban in 45 minutes.

Hasina was given 45 minutes to pack up. She and her sister then left Gono Bhaban for Bangabhaban where she tendered her resignation to the president. Hasina took off in a military aircraft around 2:30pm and landed in India around 5:36pm.

'VERY SHORT NOTICE'

Indian external affairs minister S Jaishankar told an all-party meeting yesterday that Sheikh Hasina requested permission "at very short notice" to come to India following her forced resignation.

He also said Hasina, was in shock at the turn of events, reports Indian news portal NDTV.

He said the Indian government will give Hasina time to decide her next step.

There was discussion that Hasina may fly to the UK from India.

However, British immigration rules do not allow individuals to travel to that country to seek asylum or temporary refuge, the UK Home Office told NDTV yesterday, amid speculation that Hasina will seek asylum in that country.

The UK government also said individuals seeking asylum must do so "in the first safe country they reach".

"The UK has a proud record of providing protection for people who need it. However, there is no provision for someone to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum or temporary refuge," a UK Home Office spokesperson stated.

Also, amid growing queries on visa status of Hasina and others, the US said visa records are confidential under the US law, reports UNB.

"Visa records are confidential under US law; therefore, we do not discuss the details of individual visa cases," a spokesperson at the US Embassy in Dhaka told reporters yesterday.

> **The window of opportunity for Ukraine is narrowing.**
>
> Says **Sergei Shoigu**,
> secretary of Russia's Security Council, on peace talks

Sonali Bank PLC
Establishment and Engineering Division
Engineering Department
Head Office, Dhaka.
Phone: +8802-223351050
Email: dgmeed@sonalibank.com.bd

e-GP Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Additional Chief Engineer, Establishment & Engineering Division, Sonali Bank PLC, Head Office, Dhaka for the procurement of following Works:

Sl. No	Tender ID	Name of works	Tender publication date & time	Last selling/ downloading date and time	Tender closing/ opening date & time
1.	1001590	Painting & Roof Water Proofing works of C-Type Building (Meghna & Jamuna) and Barbed wire & Grill fencing works of Boundary wall (Partial) of Sonali Bank Staff College, Uttara, Dhaka.	08-Aug-2024 11:00	21-Aug-2024 15:00	22-Aug-2024 15:00
2.	1006287	Repair Works(Civil) of CSD Godown's floor and wall at semi-basement of Sonali Bank PLC, Head Office, Dhaka.	08-Aug-2024 11:00	21-Aug-2024 15:15	22-Aug-2024 15:15

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/HelpDesk.jsp).

Sd/-
(Md. Abul Bashar)
Additional Chief Engineer

GD- 122

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
পরিচালকের কার্যালয়
সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল, সিলেট।

স্মারক নং-ওমেকহাসি/দরপত্র/২০২৪/৩৮৭৯
তারিখঃ- ০৫/৮/২০২৪ইং

"আউটসোর্সিং পদ্ধতিতে জনবল সরবরাহের সংশোধনী দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতালের অফিস স্মারক নং-ওমেকহাসি/দরপত্র শাখা/আউটসোর্সিং/২০২৪/৩৭৮১ তারিখঃ ০৬/০৭/২০২৪ ইং অনুযায়ী প্রকাশিত "আউটসোর্সিং পদ্ধতিতে জনবল সরবরাহের দরপত্র" বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে সিডিউল ক্রয়ের সর্ব শেষ তারিখ ০৬/৮/২০২৪ ইং দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ছিল এবং দরপত্র গ্রহনের তারিখ ০৭/০৮/২০২৪ইং ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ছিল। দেশের বর্তমান সার্বিক পরিস্থিতিতে অনির্দিষ্টকালের কারফিউ এর কারনে দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ এবং দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ নিম্নোক্ত ভাবে সংশোধন করা হলো। দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির অন্যান্য অংশ অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

ক্রমিক নং	পূর্বের নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়	সংশোধীত তারিখ ও সময়
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ব্রিগেডিয়ার জেনারেল মাহবুবুর রহমান ভূইয়া
পরিচালক
সিলেট এম এ জি ওসমানী মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল, সিলেট।

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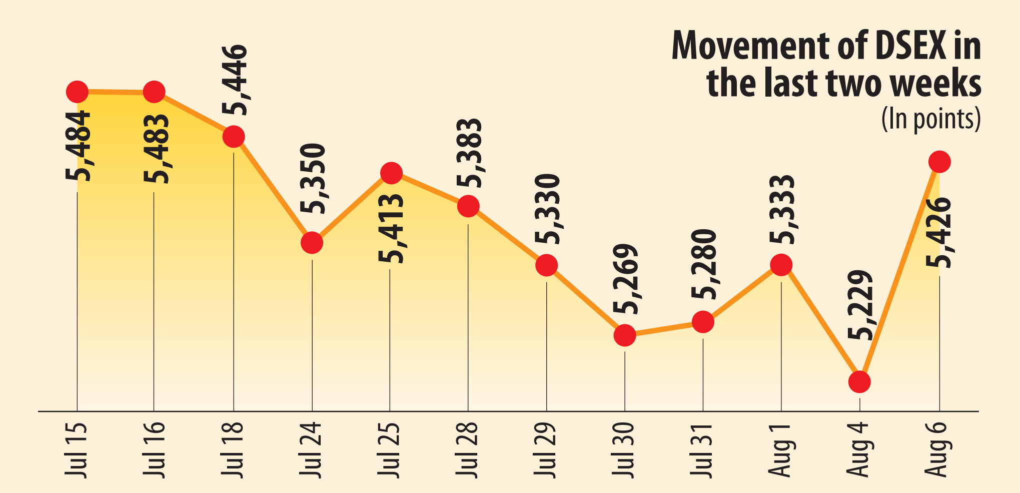
DHAKA WEDNESDAY AUGUST 7, 2024, SRABAN 23, 1431 BS ● starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Star BUSINESS

Stocks see highest rise in 3.5 years



MAJOR POINTS

- Changing political situation creates hopes of revival of the market
- The key index of DSE jumped **197** points or **3.77**%
- It was the biggest surge in three and a half years
- Turnover soared **262**% to Tk **750**cr
- Banking sector dominated turnover chart
- Of the issues traded, **328** advanced and **60** declined

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Stocks in Bangladesh witnessed a massive jump yesterday amid hopes of a revival of the market following the exit of Sheikh Hasina from Bangladesh after her resignation from the post of prime minister on Monday.

The Awami League-led government fell amidst protests over the killing of more than 300 people and arrest of thousands centring a quota reform movement of students.

The DSEX, the key index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), surged 197 points, or 3.77 percent, from that on Sunday to reach 5,426, the biggest surge in the past three and a half years.

At the same time, the DS30, the index for blue-chip stocks, increased 75 points, or 4 percent, to 1,934.

The DSES, the index for Shariah-based firms, advanced 32 points, or 2.86 percent, to 1,176.

This rare change in the political situation gave hope to investors because they knew that only a change in the regulatory body cannot ensure good governance in the market, said Saiful Islam, president of DSE Brokers' Association (DBA).

Bangladesh's stock market has been languishing in the face of violence centring the quota reform movement since the second half of July. Trading was closed for four days because of general holidays following a curfew.

Between July 15 and August 5, the DSEX lost 4.64 percent.

DBA President Islam said if the banking sector does not suffer that much of a damage, the stock market will run smoothly.

On the other hand, the index and turnover had plunged to a massive extent over the last couple of days and now those had come back to that of an average day, he said.

Turnover, an important indicator of the market, soared 262 percent to Tk 750 crore.

This type of turnover is common in the market but recently it dropped below Tk 500 crore due to the instability, Islam said.

"The market is full of junk shares, and low-performing companies and the market are behaving like a casino," he said.

Most of the owners of listed companies are into the share business instead of focusing on their own business. The regulator has not taken strong steps against these activities, Islam said.

Now, people are hopeful of proper regulatory activities and good governance in the stock market under a new government, he added.

A similar trend was witnessed at Chittagong Stock Exchange. The Caspi, the broad index of the port city bourse, surged 467 points, or 3 percent, to 15,393.

Mir Ariful Islam, managing director and chief executive officer of Sandhani Asset Management, said people now have hope which was the main reason behind the rise.

During another change in government on November 1, 2007, the then broad index of the DSE had gone up around 17 percent in one month. So, a rise in the stock market during any historical regime change is expected, he added.

A mid-level official of a leading stock brokerage firm said after the resignation of Sheikh Hasina, investors were optimistic about the return of good governance in the market.

So, they were buying stocks which had remained at a low price for many years. The participation of people also rose based on that optimism, he added.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Prof Shibli Rubayat-Ul Islam did not come to office yesterday. A commission meeting scheduled for tomorrow was also postponed.

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IMF says it is 'fully committed' to Bangladesh

REUTERS, *London*

The International Monetary Fund said it remained "fully committed to Bangladesh and its people" after protests ousted the prime minister.

Bangladesh's president dissolved parliament on Tuesday, clearing the way for new elections a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country following student-led protests that left hundreds dead.

Long-term lending from multilaterals including the IMF, World Bank and the Asia Development Bank amounts to roughly a quarter of Bangladesh's GDP, according to emerging market experts Tellimer, making their continued backing key to the country's economy.

The IMF, which approved a $4.7 billion loan programme with the country in January 2023, said it was following developments and "deeply saddened by loss of lives and injuries."

"We remain fully committed to Bangladesh and its people and support efforts to ensure economic stability and deliver inclusive growth," IMF says

"We remain fully committed to Bangladesh and its people and support efforts to ensure economic stability and deliver inclusive growth," an IMF spokesperson said in an emailed statement.

On Monday, the World Bank, which had total commitments of $2.85 billion in the year to June 30, said it was still assessing the impact of the events on its lending, but remained committed to Bangladesh's development.

Bangladesh does not have any foreign currency bonds, and its short-term external debt is just 5 percent of GDP, limiting market reaction to the political turmoil.

But a stagnant economy contributed to the protests; nearly 32 million young people in the nation of 170 million are out of work or education in a population. Inflation hovers around 10 percent per year and dollar reserves have shrunk to just three months of import cover.

Multilateral lenders will be closely watching the next steps taken by the government and the military.

Absence of security affects banking services

AM JAHID

Although banks reopened yesterday, a day after prime minister Sheikh Hasina handed in her resignation, overall activities including financial transactions were affected due to security concerns among lenders and clients.

Many banks operated on a limited scale across the country, closing outlets and booths in areas where the risk is greater amid the absence of law enforcement agencies, according to bankers.

Due to similar concerns, banks could not deliver cash to branches or ATM booths, reducing financial transactions significantly.

The security concerns deepened in Dhaka and the rest of the country yesterday as police observed a work abstention, citing that they feared for their own safety amid reports of deadly attacks on policemen on Monday night.

Bangladesh has been in turmoil since July, with over 300 dead in clashes between protesting students, police and ruling party men.

Reports of violence and arson also flared on Monday night as an interim government was in the process of being formed.

Apart from the limited presence of army personnel, streets and important establishments in the capital were without security.

In the absence of traffic police, students were seen controlling the flow of traffic on the streets around the country.

Naser Ezaz Bijoy, chief executive officer of Standard Chartered Bangladesh, said they resumed operations on a limited scale yesterday.

AT A GLANCE

- Many banks operated on a limited scale
- Most branches and ATM booths were closed
- Presence of clients and bankers was thin
- Cash transportation was affected
- Transactions were significantly lower
- Security concerns deepen in absence of police force

"As police services are not available, we stopped operating in places where we feel there is less security or the situation is uncomfortable," he said.

Based on their security assessment, Bijoy said they provided banking services through only four of their 18 branches across the country, three in Dhaka and the other in Chattogram.

Besides, banking operations were halted in Khulna, Sylhet and Bogura.

"We have taken this decision to ensure the safety of our clients and colleagues amid security concerns due to the absence of law enforcement agencies," he said.

The doors of several banks were closed in Motijheel but some branches operated through pocket gates.

Many banks operated on a limited scale across the country, closing outlets and ATM booths in areas where the risk is greater amid the absence of law enforcement agencies, bankers said

Selim RF Hussain, chairman of the Association of Bankers Bangladesh, said banks opted for risk assessment of branches in line with the suggestion of Bangladesh Bank and opened branches accordingly.

He added that there was panic yesterday. "But this will reduce as things normalise. So, more branches will be opened," added Hussain, also managing director of BRAC Bank.

A senior official of Eastern Bank Ltd said the private lender could not open all its branches yesterday due to security concerns.

"We have kept branches shut in areas with a risk of violence and robbery. Customers' presence was also very thin," he said.

Golam Maula, a resident of Indira Road in Dhaka, said he could not withdraw money as ATM booths were closed due to violence over the last few days.

He has already run out of cash, he lamented.

"Most of the booths in the surrounding area are closed, so I could not even withdraw money yesterday," he said.

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director and CEO of Mutual Trust Bank Ltd (MTB), said they also operated on a limited scale because of the prevailing situation.

"Those who felt unsafe did not come," he said.

He also mentioned that miscreants vandalised and stole an ATM from their branch in Madaripur.

However, the presence of customers was significantly low in the capital as clients did not take any services unless there was an emergency.

An official of a state-owned bank in Motijheel said fewer customers have been seeking services for the past several weeks due to the unrest centring the students' movement.

"But it was significantly lower yesterday, owing to security concerns in absence of security personnel," he said.

On the other hand, there were also fewer employees and most of them only worked a half-day.

Bijoy of Standard Chartered said many clients refrained from taking banking services yesterday as the decision to reopen banks came very late on Monday night.

Lamenting the death of an employee during the recent unrest, he said: "It is a big loss for us. So, we must ensure the safety of our clients and colleagues."

"If law enforcement agencies can ensure security and we feel that there is a safe environment through our assessment, then we will operate all the branches," Bijoy added.

Shop owners on high alert for looting, vandalism

They are counting huge losses as many stores and shopping malls are closed across the country

SUKANTA HALDER

Fearing looting and vandalism amidst the political crisis that culminated in Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation following 15 years at the helm of an iron-fisted regime, many shops and malls in the country were closed yesterday, causing huge losses for businesses.

Businessmen said many establishments and shops were looted, attacked and vandalised across different parts of the country, including the capital of Dhaka, for the past two days due to a complete collapse of law and order.

Consequently, businesspeople did not open their shops while malls remained closed. Many traders were also seen standing in front of their shops ready to protect their goods.

Soumik Das, chief executive officer of Rang Bangladesh, said all 20 of their outlets across the country were closed yesterday due to the unsafe atmosphere.

"I have seen various news reports of people's business places being looted. In this situation it is not possible to open our outlet," he said.

The glass storefront of their outlet in Netrokona was broken, he said, adding that if the situation improves, the outlet would be opened on Wednesday.

Even if the shop is reopened, buyers will not be seen anytime soon, Das lamented.

After groups of miscreants realised that the country's law and order system had collapsed in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the Awami League-led government, they started looting and causing mayhem on a massive scale.

Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun yesterday urged all members of the force to patiently perform their duties.

"I am requesting all members of the police to perform their duties with patience and strong morale while maintaining their security," he said in a video message sent by Police Headquarters.

Clashes between protestors, Awami League (AL) men and law enforcement agents on Monday left at least 66 people dead and over a thousand wounded in the capital while at least 76 people were killed and around 500 others injured outside the capital city.

Angry mobs also attacked AL leaders as well as their properties, homes and offices soon after the news of Sheikh Hasina's resignation and escape from the country spread.

AM Salimullah, sales manager of Kay Kraft, a retailer of fashion wear, accessories, home textiles, handicrafts and handloom-based products, said 14 of their 16 outlets were closed yesterday.

They only opened outlets at Jamuna Future Park and Police Plaza Shopping Mall in Dhaka, he said.

GLOBAL STANDARD

Shopping malls in the capital stayed closed apprehending looting yesterday, a day after Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister. The photo was taken near Noor Hossain Square in Gulistan. PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Meanwhile, most roadside shops alongside shopping complexes in Dinajpur and Rangpur have remained shut since Monday, according to the traders.

During a visit to different places in Dinajpur on Tuesday, including Gulsan Market, Begum Plaza and Maldhapatti as well as malls and showrooms of different brands, our correspondent found all of them closed.

Reza Humayun Kabir Chowdhury Shamim, president of the Dinajpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said shops remained closed in Dinajpur due to fear of looting, adding that most traders were guarding their shops.

Most businesses in Sylhet also remained closed yesterday for similar reasons.

Abdur Rahman Ripon, joint secretary of the Bangladesh Dokan Malik Samity's Sylhet unit, said: "Many businesses, including a megamall, were looted during the chaos on Monday. Most businessmen are in fear.

"We encouraged business owners to reopen businesses. Together, we will work to protect each other."

Malls and shops in Narayanganj were also closed. They are thinking of opening the market from Wednesday.

Atiqul Islam, owner of Samir Fashion at the Riverview Complex in the Tanbazar area, said: "Some traders went to the market in the morning. They wanted to open their shops, but the market committee decided not to reopen yesterday considering the overall situation."

Visiting five shopping malls in Narsingdi sadar upazila, it was found that all of them were closed.

However, some businessmen were sitting in front of the mall and providing security.

Mahim Islam Sajib, owner of Sajib Brothers at Narsingdi Index Plaza, said AL leaders had been in charge of the market management committee for a long time.

But now, miscreants can attack their business places as they don't have any backing, not even from law enforcement.

"The law enforcement agencies, including the police, are in no position to help us. So, shops are closed," he said.

He said it is not possible to resume business if security is not strengthened.

Kongkon Karmaker from Dinajpur, Dwoha Chowdhury from Sylhet, Saurav Hossain Siam from Narayanganj and Jahidul Islam from Narsingdi contributed to this report.

Very few buses plied long-distance routes yesterday as most opted to stay parked due to fear of violence amid the changing political situation in the country. The photo was taken at the Sayedabad bus terminal in Dhaka in the morning.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Goods transport in limbo as operators play it safe

Assessment stopped at customs houses; passenger transport resumes on a limited scale

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Intercity and long-route passenger transport providers resumed bus services on a limited scale yesterday afternoon amid a lack of passengers, but transport of goods remained largely halted, according to sector insiders, especially with assessment activities halted at three customs houses around the country.

They added that passengers would not feel comfortable travelling and transporters would not risk their vehicles and cargo until security is assured around the country following a spate of unrest.

The streets of Bangladesh convulsed with violence and death over the last three weeks, leaving over 300 dead, the vast majority of whom were student protesters.

The movement, which has been raging since July, climaxed on Monday with Sheikh Hasina handing in her resignation from the post of prime minister.

However, many reports of violence and arson were reported in the aftermath.

Due to security concerns stemming from the uncertainty clouding the nation, customs officials stopped assessment activities at several stations, including Chattogram, Dhaka and Benapole Customs House, from 1:30 pm on Tuesday.

Officials also said the clearance of goods from the port was low.

According to the Chattogram Port Authority, importers released 1,350 containers by 4:00pm on Tuesday. However, on average, the port authority releases 6,000 to 8,000 containers each day.

"There was a lack of security considering that a customs house is an important establishment. So, customs operations were stopped from 1:30pm in line with orders from senior officials," an official of the Chattogram Customs House told The Daily Star.

"The army later assured us of security from Wednesday and we hope our operations will be normal from Thursday."

Mohammed Amirul Haque, managing director of Premier Cement Mill Limited, added that businesses cannot stabilise until normality is restored.

He said that delivery of goods as well as import and export activities are yet to start, adding: "We will not start delivery of cement to dealers and retailers until the situation stabilises."

Since the political landscape changed drastically just a day prior, he said more time was needed to observe the situation.

"When the situation is favourable, we will resume business activities," he stated.

Chowdhury Zafar Ahmed, general secretary of the Bangladesh Covered Van-Truck-Prime Mover Goods Transport Owners Association, said they did not begin operations as importers are yet to start releasing imported goods due to a lack of security along the Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

According to him, until the situation becomes normal, transport owners will not operate regularly.

"There is no alternative but to wait for everything to become normal," he said.

However, some transport providers began providing bus services.

Md Abdus Sattar, general manager of air-conditioned bus service provider Green Line, said their buses began operating on seven routes yesterday noon on a test basis.

"But the number of passengers is very low and business is unviable," he said.

He added that they resumed operations to help their staff and workers, who are paid on a daily basis.

At best, 20 to 30 of their fleet of 200 buses operated yesterday, he said.

Meanwhile, Hanif Enterprise began operating buses on all routes yesterday noon, with an official remarking that the situation was gradually becoming normal.

However, he added that the number of passengers was low due to security concerns.

Garment factories to reopen today

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Garment factory owners yesterday decided to reopen their production units from today to ensure timely shipments as they are facing pressure from international clothing retailers and brands.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at its office in Dhaka, confirmed a BGMEA director alongside a statement of the platform afterwards.

The reopening was decided for the fact that factory owners would have to continue to pay workers' wages, said the director, adding that if the goods are not produced and shipped timely, the buyers would not clear payments.

This will result in factory owners failing to pay workers on time, he said.

The garment factories were kept shut initially for three days and then for another four days over a student movement which led to the resignation of Sheikh Hasina from the post of prime minister.

Industry insiders, exporters and international retailers and brands have already expressed concern over the delays in production and suspension of transportation of raw materials to the factories and shipment of goods.

July, August and September comprise the peak season for both shipment of Christmas goods and for booking work orders for the next summer and spring seasons.

Mohammad Ali Khokon, president of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said he did not ask anybody to reopen their units but anyone could do so at their own risk as law and order was still to improve.

Mohammad Ali Khokon, president of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said he did not ask anybody to reopen their units but anyone could do so at their own risk as law and order was still to improve.

Mohammad Hatem, executive president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), said they would also reopen factories from today despite the risks as there was pressure from international retailers and brands for the timely shipment of goods.

Garment exporters are expecting a strong recovery in exports and business as normalcy is being gradually restored with the changing political scenario.

Another BGMEA director who was present at the meeting said another reason behind reopening factories was to keep workers busy so that they did not get involved in any unrest.

Most factories will pay workers' salaries today or tomorrow, the director said, adding that if the factories were not reopened, it would be difficult to disburse the salaries.

However, the factory owners also decided to shut down their units whenever they sense any unrest to save their business and properties, the director also said, asking not to be named.

The apparel exporters have been facing challenges in sending goods to retailers through the Chattogram port amidst the violence.

Islami Bank staff demonstrate alleging deprivation

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Over 100 officials and staff of Islami Bank Bangladesh yesterday staged a demonstration in front of the bank's head office in Dhaka's Motijheel alleging that they were deprived of benefits and promotions.

They also took down and destroyed portraits of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Some officials also vandalised the "Bangabandu Corner", located at the bank's head office in Dilkusha, said officials of the bank.

Hasina resigned and fled the country on Monday in the face of deadly protests centring a public job quota reform movement.

The demonstrators alleged that senior officials of Chattogram-based S Alam Group, which bought a majority stake in Islami Bank in 2017, hired bankers of their choice and deprived many officials who were appointed earlier of their benefits.

They also alleged that appointments were made through irregularities and did not follow due procedure since then and so such appointments should be cancelled.

They also sought the reinstatement of officials who were "illegally" sacked.

From the demonstration, Anisur Rahman, a leader of the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) of the bank, said executives who joined after 2017 must not be allowed to stay in the bank.

Those who have been deprived of promotions should be promoted accordingly, they demanded.

Insiders said many officials were forced to quit jobs while many junior officers were promoted to senior positions after the change in ownership.

Islami Bank officials said Managing Director Mohammed Monirul Moula met with the CBA leaders and assured that he would provide promotions gradually.

The Daily Star tried to reach Moula over the phone but he did not pick up.

A nearly empty wholesale fish market at Jatrabari in the morning yesterday, signifying that a very little amount of fish arrived in the capital due to fear of violence and attacks amid the changing political situation.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

'We had to save our jobs'

BB deputy governor says over irregularities in banking sector

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank yesterday said they often had to turn a blind eye towards irregularities as they have limited capacity to fight against politically influential people who bring about such malpractices.

"We have to manage various things in order to save our jobs as we too need job security," said the official, Md Khurshid Alam.

"We have to work with many limitations to save our jobs, which are contractual. This leaves the scope to terminate us at any time with three months' salary as severance pay," he added.

He also said the authorities can hire or sack people as they wish, making it very difficult to fight against influential people engaged in malpractices, especially those who are politically connected.

Alam made these comments in response to journalists' queries about the cause of widespread corruption, money laundering and other irregularities in the country's banking sector.

He was speaking at a view-exchange meeting between journalists, led by Economic Reporters Forum (ERF) President Refayet Ullah Mirdha, and Bangladesh Bank officials at the central bank headquarters in Dhaka.

Four deputy governors of the Bangladesh Bank -- Kazi Sayedur Rahman, Nurun Nahar, Md Khurshid Alam and Md Habibur Rahman -- its Executive Director and Spokesperson Md Mezbaul Haque and ERF General Secretary Abul Kashem were also present.

The ERF president said as a guardian of Bangladesh's banking sector, the central bank should look into the situation of default loans, which now stand at more than Tk 182,000 crore.

Also, money launderers and other corrupt people in the banking sector should be identified and punished accordingly, he added.

Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder was absent from his office yesterday.

On the reason behind the absence, Bangladesh Bank Deputy Governor Kazi Sayedur Rahman said Talukder has fallen sick and was still inside the country.

However, a confidential source said the central bank governor was likely to resign from his post and to try to leave the country as soon as possible.

Rahman, whose tenure as deputy governor will end soon, told journalists that the central bank was working to restructure the banking sector and was ready to work with the new government.

In a step for improving transparency in its activities, Bangladesh Bank yesterday withdrew the restriction on journalists' entry to the central bank.

Rahman said all types of information would now be freely shared with journalists, as was the case before the restriction was imposed in April.

Bangladesh Bank had taken the decision at a time when the country's economy was facing several challenges, including growing irregularities in the financial sector, high inflation and a forex crisis.

During an emergency meeting without their governor, high-ups of the central bank instructed all its staff to keep calm amidst the changing situation to avoid conflict.

A source at Bangladesh Bank said Rahman has instructed them not to disclose any information on social media or other platforms amid the ongoing situation.

US retailers' body wants quick restoration of normalcy

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) hoped the situation would improve and normalcy would be restored soon in Bangladesh, which is the third largest garment supplier to the USA.

"We are heartbroken by the ongoing tragedy in Bangladesh that has taken hundreds of lives. We continue to urge calm and urge all sides to come together peacefully so we can jointly move past this crisis," AAFA President and CEO Steve Lamar said in a statement on Monday.

"It is imperative that full democratic institutions be maintained and stability be assured. These are key steps in supporting the lives and livelihoods of Bangladeshi citizens and ensuring short-term disruptions will indeed be temporary," Lamar also said.

The AAFA released the statement in response to Sheikh Hasina handing in her resignation from the post of prime minister on Monday in line with the demands of protesting students.

Bangladesh is the third-largest supplier of garments to the US and has been a fast-growing supplier of footwear and travel goods as well, the statement also said.

The USA is Bangladesh's single-largest export destination and is considered by American clothing retailers and brands as an important sourcing destination for their end-consumers.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Injustice must not beget injustice

Attacks on minorities and lootings must stop

As we venture into a brave new world, we are alarmed to see celebrations of the fall of Sheikh Hasina spiral into vengeful violence and attacks on minority communities. At least 142 people were killed in attacks and clashes around the country, with thousands injured, and Hindu houses and businesses were looted and torched in at least 27 districts, on the day the students' movement declared "independence" from the Awami League's authoritarian regime, dampening the mood of celebration for many. We also saw major public establishments, including those of great historical importance, being desecrated or set on fire, without any consideration that these do not belong to the Awami League but to the country and its people. In short, it was anarchy in many places around the capital and all over the country, with mobs taking out their pent-up anger on those associated with the Awami League and members of law enforcement, going so far as to burn some of them alive. The latter, in many places, opened fire on the agitating mob, leading to more deaths. The army, who stated they were taking control of the country after Hasina's resignation, were conspicuously missing from the scene, even as people were killed and their houses burnt to ashes.

Such looting and vandalism are perhaps expected following the fall of any regime, yet we cannot but be disheartened that a movement that was built on the premise of anti-discrimination should descend into such ruthless intolerance. A movement which was against mindless killings cannot be allowed to conduct brutal killings of its own, no matter how grievous the accusations against the persons on whom the violence is conducted; otherwise, we become the very monsters we sought to overturn. The rule of law and justice must prevail, not revenge; and law enforcers and members of Awami League who were involved in killing, corruption and all forms of injustice must be tried under the law. In this regard, the students' movement has already condemned the attacks and called upon all to refrain from lynching, looting and attacks on minorities and to stop any such violence from taking place in their communities. In many places, it has been heartening to see students and civilians, including madrasa students, setting up committees to protect temples, churches or houses of minorities. This is the Bangladesh we want to (re)build, one where we come together to protect those vulnerable, ensure the rights guaranteed by our constitution and uphold the values of the Liberation War.

While the mob descended into madness, we were flabbergasted to see the inaction of the army in ensuring peace and people's security, and protecting key historical sites of the nation. We need not remind them that the responsibility of the deaths and destruction lies with those running the country. We urge them to restore the rule of law, identify the perpetrators of arson, vandalism and killings, and take urgent steps to ensure security of the minorities. We cannot let the sacrifices of our students go in vain—we must uphold their vision of free, just and democratic society for all.

Stabilising economy is a top priority

There are many hurdles to overcome in the coming days

It goes without saying that Bangladesh's economy stands at a critical juncture. It has been suffering immensely amidst all the political unrest of late and the prolonged crisis that preceded it. Following Sheikh Hasina's resignation as prime minister, we're now in the process of having an interim government. It is, therefore, crucial to take advantage of the normalisation of the situation to kick-start economic activities with full vigour, and bring the country on a path of recovery.

Among the main challenges we are facing are high inflation, falling foreign exchange reserves, high burden of default loans, poor governance in banking sector (and in general), and corruption. On top of that, the recent spate of violence leading to the massive destruction of public and private properties will have terrible impacts on the economy. Hence, it is urgent for order to be restored and for any further act of vandalism to stop. The air of uncertainty regarding the type of government that will be formed next needs to be addressed. It must be remembered that the system of governance has become so corrupt that people's democratic and economic aspirations cannot be met without significant structural changes.

Parallel to bringing back normalcy in the country and ensuring justice, all forms of disruption to internet connection and other communications have to be prevented. Moreover, regular educational and business activities need to be resumed with full vigour to restore confidence among people. Transportation and logistical operations received significant hits during recent weeks. These must also be resumed with utmost urgency. And the supply chain disruptions that are leading to rising inflation must be fixed.

There are a number of systemic issues that have been plaguing the banking sector, all regulatory bodies, stock market, bond market, the insurance industry, and the tax administration. So, separate committees need to be set up to identify and address the problems plaguing these sectors. While these steps are taken, it must be recognised that lower-income groups are already enduring severe financial hardship. They cannot wait for committees to be set up and for things to stabilise. Many need urgent help, for which we request the relevant departments to take special initiatives including social safety measures.

Ultimately, the political and economic quagmire that the country currently finds itself in has been the result of years of undemocratic practices. So while we focus on fixing the damage that has been done in recent weeks and over the years, we must strive to transition to a more democratic system so that rent-seeking, inequality and all other economic ills can be overcome in the long run.

AWAMI LEAGUE'S CRUSHING FALL

Does it augur true victory of the people?

Dr Iftekharuzzaman
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IFTEKHARUZZAMAN

The humiliating fall of Sheikh Hasina and her party the Awami League represents a powerful reaffirmation of the invincibility of people's power, particularly youth power. It has opened the gateway to an extraordinary political transformation catalysed by a completely non-political and peaceful quota reform protests that grew into the anti-discrimination movement. The youth and civic uprising has shattered the foundations and structures of a political regime that not only failed to learn the important lessons of youth power in our history—of which the party itself was the main beneficiary on several occasions—but also failed to realise that they were incessantly inviting disastrous consequences for themselves.

The unaccountable abuse of power and unbridled corruption with impunity in a monopolised politico-governance space, dependent on politicised and professionally bankrupt state institutions, blinded them to the extent that they developed a culture of ridiculing the writing on the wall and paid the inevitable price.

The student movement soon transformed into a people's movement, thanks to the spontaneous participation of common people protesting not only the use of force by law enforcement agencies, but also the misrule symbolised by abysmal governance failures. It represented a powerful outburst of public sentiment against the use of political, public or governmental positions as licences for corruption and self-enrichment at the expense of the vast majority of people thrust into a day-to-day survival crisis due to the failure to manage the economic situation. By then, all indicators were clear about the inevitable outcome.

The price paid in terms of hundreds of deaths and multi-dimensional violations of the fundamental rights of students, children, adolescents, and common people is enormous and must be accounted for. These tragedies and losses could have been avoided if not for the regime's intransigent ostrich syndrome and the state institutions, whose only capital was blatant lies, which distanced them further from the people. The anti-discrimination movement led by the students will forever remain a lesson for the political leaders of Bangladesh that, when politicians turn into authoritarians, they only defeat themselves, and that youth-led people's power cannot be suppressed by any form or level of force.

Sheikh Hasina's exit marks the fall of an authoritarian regime, but whether it will eventually lead to a sufficiently robust democratic transition, consistent with the true spirit and aspirations of the youth movement and the people at large, remains to be seen. This will depend on whether the transition government and its successor can deliver a genuine overhaul of the state structure, particularly the key state institutions mandated to ensure genuine public participation and representation in governance, rule of law, justice, transparency, accountability, and fundamental freedoms. Failure to ensure these may not only take us back to business as usual, but also push us from the frying pan into the fire.

On top of the challenges ahead for true victory is the issue of accountability for everyone involved, without fear or favour, who was responsible for various injustices and violations during the movement—a promise made by the new authority. Will this accountability be based on a nationally and internationally acceptable investigation conducted by a fully independent commission, possibly at the initiative of the United Nations? How robust will the scope of accountability be? Will it address only those who indiscriminately used disproportionate force and lethal weapons, or will it also include those who ordered and approved such multi-level and multi-dimensional violations of human rights? Will the accountability agenda encompass the security agencies for their systematic and blatant abuse of power? What about the vested groups that intruded into the movement space to exacerbate the chaos as part of their own agendas?

What about the vengeful violence in the name of celebrating the downfall of the ousted regime, and no less ominously, the targeted attacks against religious minorities, including killings, looting, vandalism, and the destruction of properties such as temples? What about various professionals, such as media workers, who have been victims of violent and targeted revenge, or have lost their jobs without due process? The same applies to government officials, including police officers, who have been subjected to revenge. The students have demanded accountability and justice through due process, not revenge and mob justice. Targeted attacks on minorities or others based on any marker of identity are completely contradictory to the core agenda and spirit of the anti-discrimination movement. Why, then, can these not be immediately stopped and those responsible brought to justice?

The list of aspirations of the student movement is both pertinent and challenging. Will the interim government undertake the task of creating a framework and process for overhauling the state structure, including the key institutions involved in establishing the rule of law, which the government will be required to follow? The current state of politicisation, dysfunction, and professional bankruptcy in our institutions is the result of decades of deliberately sustained governance deficits. Whether the interim government and its successor will have the courage and strength to undertake such a project remains to be seen.

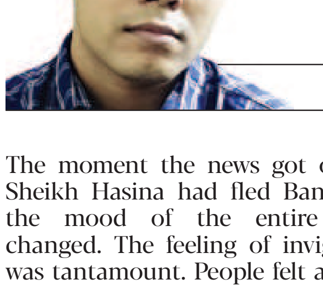
No less important are the issues surrounding the politico-institutional and legal context related to fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, the right to protest, freedom of assembly, media freedom, and the right to privacy. An atmosphere of intimidation and universal sense of insecurity have been created by a series of legal and institutional measures based on surveillance and securitisation as means of suppressing dissent and freedom of opinion.

Above all, how will corruption, which is the core underlying cause of the unlimited hunger for power and the zero-sum game of politics driven by a desire for permanent control, be handled? The cost of reconciling with the possibility of losing power is synonymous with losing the licence to abuse power and accumulate illicit income and wealth, both at home and abroad, through corruption, loan defaults, swindling, and money laundering. No one should be under any illusion that these "virtues" are the monopoly of the Awami League alone, especially given the track record of potential political beneficiaries of the forthcoming transition.

The vision, aspirations, and takeaways of the student movement are crystal clear to the people of the country. Whether this will be the case for the incoming power holders or not remains to be seen.

The state of politicisation, dysfunctionality and professional bankruptcy in which our institutions are today is the creation of decades of deliberately sustained governance deficits.
PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

We must never let such an environment of fear reign again



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SHAHRIAR SHAAMS

The moment the news got out that Sheikh Hasina had fled Bangladesh, the mood of the entire nation changed. The feeling of invigoration was tantamount. People felt as if they had finally been able to escape the haze of oppression that clung to the back of their necks and overseen all their hesitations to speak out. It won't be an exaggeration to say that much of the celebration that we witnessed on August 5, 2024 was due to this. The final nail in the coffin of this environment of coercion had been hammered up.

Every Macbeth has their Macduff, for whom Birnam Wood arrives sooner or later. But by the time it does, the needless loss of lives, the killings, the forced disappearances and the despotic rule of might cannot merely be mopped up as casualties under the rug. For so long, an iron hand ruled and it emanated an environment of fear. The general public, overwhelmed by this fear, had to undergo a play of amnesia just to go through their day-to-day lives.

Fear cannot ever lead to forgetting. It is an untreated wound in the nation's body, and it festers around, growing worse and worse until drastic action is needed. The escalated end of Awami League's 15-year-old regime is proof of that. What we must ensure now is that it is never repeated. Increasingly, over the past decade, we have seen how slowly and efficiently the freedom to state one's views has been destroyed. Whether it be a Facebook post or an editorial in a national newspaper, self-censorship led the way for peculiar dancing around with words on paper. We barely ever said anything against the powers that be, and when we did, we had to couch our words with such fluff that we might as well have said nothing.

Journalists must understand that this is a historic event, that they must seize the moment and bring back the voice they lost over the past several years. They must take hold of their teeth and not let go. The power of words can never be underestimated. The power of unarmed youth who weathered blackouts and butchering deserve a record of their struggle. There must be a record, too, of all the grift that went around among intellectuals during this time. The reason this environment of fear was successful was in good part because of the collusion of a section of the intelligentsia, who had long traded in their morals for pitiful brushes with power. We must ensure that no tolerance is given to these grifters who moulded words over TV screens and op-ed pages to support regimes and their atrocities. We must strengthen our institutions so that journalists cannot be picked up due to captions that may go against the state narrative, or be forced to tangle with legal harassment over words of obvious satire.

Fear cannot ever lead to forgetting. It is an untreated wound in the nation's body, and it festers around, growing worse and worse until drastic action is needed. The escalated end of Awami League's 15-year-old regime is proof of that. What we must ensure now is that it is never repeated.

Consistently providing a platform to such grifters have weakened our idea of journalistic courage, resulting in a new generation having to read between the lines by nature. Sheikh Hasina's resignation does not automatically liberate our tongue, for it will take time to settle into the new order of things. The following days will also show us how congenial the new order would be. The movement will truly end when the people are able to live under a clear sky, free of an encroaching greyness of coercion and arm-twisting. That work begins now.

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The cadences of a people's victory

NO STRINGS ATTACHED

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AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

The thunderous sounds in the streets were no longer of sound grenades and bullets. They were the reverberating cheers of thousands of people celebrating the culmination of an arduous, painful and, sadly, bloody journey to victory. It is, no doubt, a victory of the students and the people of Bangladesh. And it is the total defeat of a leader and government that has shown their most monstrous side by turning state machinery, along with their party goons, on their own people.

This victory has come at the cost of hundreds of lives of overwhelmingly young people, mostly students. Even small children have not been spared—basically the future of this nation. Was it possible for a government to continue to stay in power after killing the country's future, for murdering ordinary citizens in cold blood? Was it possible for a leader to keep on denying the truth about these murders by her own direction, blaming them on her political opponents when the evidence is out in the open for all to see? Could any leader and cabinet be more detached from the pulse of the people, from the hearts of the youth?

The outcome of the events of the last few weeks were inevitable. Even after killing more than 200 people in less than a week and with no let up from the protesters, Sheikh Hasina's obstinance prevailed. On August 4, the violence escalated to newer levels, leaving at least 93 dead. The former prime minister had become deaf to the cries of the people, blind to the sea of blood she had spilled with the help of the police, BGB, and the unnamed goons who fired guns right beside these forces. Thus, on August 5, despite an indefinite curfew being called, in spite of the memory of those chilling sounds of impending death, the people could not be held back. In Dhaka, the eerie calmness of the morning changed very quickly with crowds forming practically on every main thoroughfare, with the biggest one in Shahbag, where everyone seemed to congregate. As hard as it is to believe, only a little while ago, protesters had been shot near the Shaheed Minar and other areas.

When the army started to clear the way for the crowd, the mood changed even more dramatically. Even before the news of the unseemly exit of the former prime minister from Gono Bhaban by helicopter started spreading, the sounds of freedom from a repressive regime that had shown just how merciless it could get to retain power, resonated throughout the streets. The incredibly brave young people of this country have steadfastly stood up once again against the full force of an autocratic government—and won!

But volatility is a constant in our reality; all too soon, things did take an ugly turn. The pent-up anger of people was displayed in the most distasteful way with the ransacking of Gono Bhaban, seen as the seat of a hated regime, setting of fire to the Bangabandhu Bhaban at Dhanmondi 32 and to police stations all over the country, and attacks on houses and businesses belonging to the Hindu community and on their temples. The feeling of jubilation was tainted by the violence which went on without any hindrance. After watching children, students and ordinary citizens being ruthlessly murdered by the orders of the government, the fury of the public is understandable. But violence cannot bring justice for violence.

This is the message that the members of the Bangladesh Student Uprising Central Committee have voiced during their press briefing on Channel 24. They have categorically told their fellow protesters to be vigilant of those taking advantage of the situation, who have carried out arson attacks and vandalism in order to malign the movement. They asked everyone to be mindful of instigators and refrain from any kind of looting, arson, communal violence and protect all minority communities and public assets. They have insisted that their movement is peaceful and has brought about a national unity that transcends political party or religion. They promised to stand against any kind of communal violence.

The clarity and determination of these young leaders is awe-inspiring. More so because we have not heard our leaders talk like this for decades. Yes, we have claimed to be a democracy for the last 33 years. Yet, when was the last time we heard words like "justice" and "equality" from the mouth of a leader? When was the last time we heard that all cases of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings would be tried and those involved would be brought to book?

As of this writing, a group of representatives of the movement were set to visit Bangabhaban to meet up with the president. They have made it very clear that any government that comes without the endorsement of the members of the movement would not be acceptable and would result in the continuation of the movement.

There are, of course, misgivings that the former regime will somehow manipulate the situation, that other players including extremist forces will take over. We don't know what lies ahead for us, and the uncertainty makes us jittery and holds us back from unreservedly celebrating this victory.

But listening to the resolute voices of these young people who have a clear idea of what kind of country they want to build, one that enshrines the true values of democracy, one cannot help but feel hopeful that a real change, one that will truly free us from the suffocating clutch of fear, could actually be possible. When I see young protesters managing traffic and pictures of Muslims guarding Hindu temples on social media, the feeling gets stronger. Abu Sayed and his fellow martyrs would be proud.

The sounds of freedom from a repressive regime that had shown just how merciless it could get to retain power, resonated throughout the streets of Dhaka and the rest of the country on August 5, 2024.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

This victory has come at the cost of hundreds of lives of overwhelmingly young people, mostly students. Even small children have not been spared—basically the future of this nation. Was it possible for a government to continue to stay in power after killing the country's future, for murdering ordinary citizens in cold blood? Was it possible for a leader to keep on denying the truth about these murders by her own direction, blaming them on her political opponents when the evidence is out in the open for all to see?

This is not the Bangladesh we stood in the line of fire for

Mindless violence, looting, and vandalism cannot be who we are

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NAZIFA RAIDAH

At 2pm on Monday, Bangladesh was freed from an autocrat. It baffles me that I can finally use the word "autocrat" on print to describe the fallen Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina because our law made sure we couldn't since 2018.

My brother and I rushed to the streets not being able to hold our excitement. The wind was electric. I had never seen so many people on the streets, with flags in their hands. Families carried their children on their shoulders, chanting slogans of victory. Rickshaw pullers saluted students, giving speeches standing on their rickshaws on how they refuse to live life under any tyrant, goons or *chandabaaj* (people who use their muscles to extort money).

We could breathe a sigh of relief; as Sheikh Hasina fleeing the country meant the enforced disappearances—of students, journalists and activists, police-run raids in the houses of student protesters under the directive of the former premier and the mindless killing of students at the hands of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) had come to a stop. Bangladesh is (for now) a country free of censorship of any kind. But the joy soon transitioned to utter horror as we walked from Motijheel to Shahbagh.

At Motijheel, crowds gathered in front of Sonali Bank and ripped off the posters of the autocrat Sheikh Hasina. We cheered till we heard someone discussing how we should tear down everything built under the Awami League regime. We brushed it off at first, thinking that after such a long time, people's sense of freedom has been awakened and there will be some extreme views coming in because of this momentary period of boundless freedom.

However, as we started walking towards Shahbagh, the smiles started to fade from our faces. People were carrying army officials on their shoulders thinking they were the ones who stepped in and brought this freedom. They got on top of their armoured vehicles, raised their flags, danced. I could see some people in the public visibly uncomfortable by the scene, but they too shrugged it off because hey, we're celebrating!

When we were crossing Suhrawardy Uddyan, we could see a thick cloud of smoke from the outside, so we walked in to see what happened. Vandals had set large stages, which were set up for commemorating mourning day by the Awami League regime, on fire. A statue replicating Bangabandhu's historical March 7 speech was set on fire. We asked people to stop the fires immediately since if it spreads to a few nearby trees, the whole park would be set ablaze. In return, we got looks of disgust from people. A student wearing his ID card ran up to us and said, "We have been trying to stop these people from setting things on fire. Don't waste your breath, apu."

Worried, we started walking past the burning pandals. The smoke was so thick that it became hard to breathe and we walked into a crowd of people beating up a BCL-affiliated student with whatever they could find. Rods, bricks, bamboo, sticks—you name it.

The angry mob said they found him with weapons. There were a few students protecting the person, shouting and requesting that we hand him over to the army and not take the law in our hands. At one point, all of us, who were trying to save this person's life were being called Chhatra League or Razakar, just because we didn't want another life being taken before our eyes. As protestors, all of us who stood in the line of fire had seen enough people, particularly students, being shot, maimed, and killed. It was ironic how we were now taking hits from a mob to save the life of someone we were supposed to hate. At one point, the mob outnumbered us, and the person was beaten to death. We couldn't retrieve his identity or cross-check if he was associated with BCL fearing we might get killed.

A few of us had strayed from the mob to ask the army officials at the barrack of the Shahbagh intersection to just show up and clear the people. They said they can't help. From then on, we knew the kind of anarchy we're seeing may be only the beginning. Being on the ground, we hadn't yet heard of the communal violence on Hindu communities, temples being torched, and the attacks on Awami League affiliated members and their families, alongside policemen and their families.

We walked towards TSC and saw microbuses being set on fire. Vandals were aggressively telling people not to take videos or photographs. Chairs were being stolen from the halls and the people who looted Gono Bhaban, the prime minister's residence, were cheered on as they brought in the chairs.

At 5pm, I started from Shahbagh towards *The Daily Star* building. On the way, multiple men on bikes were honking their horns, catcalling women. Mobs were targeting TV news offices in Karwan Bazar, which did not telecast the student protest coverage, as they feared pressure from the authorities. ATN Bangla's office was completely vandalised till the fifth floor, some people were seen looting the building. The same happened to a few other TV news channel offices. I could see a witch-hunt in place and, fearfully, I kept thinking, "They'll kill me if I speak up now."

I didn't know what to think and I felt numb at the horror I witnessed. What was the point of Abu Sayeed, Mir Mugdho and Farhan Faiyaz and the 200-plus people's deaths if, during the first hours of independence, this is the picture of freedom we paint throughout the country? Are we really free if we don't take into the consideration the concern of our minority communities? Many had asked the same question after witnessing the mindless vandalism on Monday. We are so vulnerable and afraid now that rational people have started to believe in the endless disinformation.

If we still find hanging Sheikh Hasina's undergarments on fans and valiantly showing them in front of the media funny, I must say we are paving a dangerous precedence for religious begets and other radical groups to use the same rhetoric and crack down on women empowerment with the logic—if you empower women, you will get a tyrant like Sheikh Hasina. The politics of the AL regime will be used as a line of defence for them to channel their hidden agendas. As a nation, we need to be far more vigilant than we have been in these dark days of no law and order.

The reason why I think I was most horrified is that the mob justified their vandalism with the argument that "they did this to us, so we will do the same to them." No. Students did not sacrifice their lives to establish an order of vigilante justice. They did it so that people, no matter from what background, have the right to speak up, claim justice and call out injustice.

The movement is called "Anti-discrimination Movement" and in no way can we let that rhetoric be politicised or diluted. Many of you can already notice how BNP has band-wagoned on the student's right to justice as a movement that they had always sided with.

I am proud that the student leaders I have put my faith in have called out this mindless violence and set up watch parties. I am proud that they are constantly distinguishing that these mindless acts of vandalism are not what we side with. I hope they continue to create this stride. Because when I saw vandals parading with their motorbikes at Manik Mia avenue on Monday, it seemed to me that we just replaced Chhatra League with Chhatra Dal, thus opening up an avenue for the historical cycle to repeat.

We are at a monumental time in Bangladesh's history to create change. We have an opportune moment to redefine the Bangladesh we want to see without being deterred by the apathetic thought of: "We will simply never see this in Bangladesh."

The civic society has the biggest role to play now, to draw a line in the sand—and that's the only thing that has been giving me hope. Amidst this mindless vandalism, civic society groups made human chains to stop vandals from destroying police stations, they helped to return stolen items from Gono Bhaban, imams from mosques along with students joined the watch parties outside temples to protect them. This is the Bangladesh I dreamt of, my grandfather dreamt of as a student politician during the Liberation War, and the countless other freedom fighters who took a bullet. This is the time to call out all sorts of injustice that hindered our society under an autocracy for so long—not just politicians, but also businessmen who licked Awami League's feet and who will now show support for our students, acting like they were supporting them all along.

It is time for us to be vigilant on all fronts, it's so much harder to protect freedom than to achieve it. If nothing else, what this protest proved is that students have the power to take down an autocrat that everyone feared, we can again take down any one who stands in the way of building a free Bangladesh for all. Our work has just begun.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

The aftermath of the vandalism at Khilgaon Police Station in Dhaka on August 5, 2024.

STARS WITH SPINE

Media personalities who voiced out for students

"The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who, in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality," Italian poet Dante Alighieri wrote in his famous 'Inferno'.

MAHIYA TABASSUM

This quote was widely circulated on social media during the peak of the student-led quota reform protest, which evolved into an anti-government movement. This protest became one of the most significant and largest mass uprisings the country has witnessed since its independence.

In such challenging times, when protesters and civilians were indiscriminately killed, wholesale arrests, block raids, and a nationwide internet shutdown violated citizens' fundamental rights, keeping the nation on edge for weeks– only a few had the courage to raise their voices against the oppression and injustice.

As early as July 15, violent clashes erupted between student protesters and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists at Dhaka University, resulting in around 300 injuries. In response, a wave of support emerged from celebrities, with some courageously criticising the former AL-led government's harsh response to the protesters. The following day, six people were killed amid the clashes.

On July 16, veteran actor and freedom fighter Sohel Rana, renowned cultural figure Ramendu Majumdar, noted playwright Mamunur Rashid, Actors Equity Bangladesh General Secretary Rawnak Hasan, actor Niloy Alamgir, among others, backed quota reform. Meanwhile, director Ashfaque Nipun, filmmaker Mishuk Moni, author Mohammad Nazimuddin, director Khijir Hayat, actors Pori Moni and Sadia Ayman voiced their concern in a straightforward manner and criticised the former ruling party for hard-handling the demonstrators.

Filmmaker Mishuk Moni criticised the former government's tendency to label dissenters as traitors, saying, "In this country, speaking against the government labels you a traitor. Criticising any government official's corruption also makes you a traitor. Participating in a movement for rightful demands makes you a traitor."

On July 17, bands Artcell, Chirkutt, Shironamhin, Arbovirus, and Bangla Five joined the chorus of support. Arbovirus stated, "Quota reform is now a demand of the time." Tasrif, vocalist of Kureghar, raised questions, "Doesn't your heart tremble when you beat another human? Those who are demanding their rights, are they so unknown to you?"

Actors Shobnom Bubly and Puja Chery raised concerns about violence. Puja stated, "What kind of freedom is this? Such violence towards women in an independent country is unacceptable. I strongly condemn it."

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

PHOTOS: **STAR & COLLECTED**

Sina Hasan from Bangla Five was among the firsts to boycott the former government-funded ***Joy Bangla Concert***, saying, "As an artiste, I am boycotting it. I do not want to be invited to this sycophantic concert either as an artiste or an audience member."

On July 18, as 229 platoons of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) were deployed nationwide and at least 29 people were killed, prominent celebrities Shakib Khan, Chanchal Chowdhury, and Afran Nisho voiced concern for the victims. Rapper and barrister Towfique Ahmed offered legal assistance to protesters, while actor Ziaul Faruq Apurba urged the former government to seek peaceful solutions.

Following a 150-hour internet blackout, services resumed on July 23, leading to increased celebrity activism. On July 30, as the Student Against Discrimination (SAD) Movement announced new programmes, social media platforms were flooded with red profile pictures in solidarity. Director Mostofa Sarwar Farooki were among those who joined this campaign and rasied voice against oppresion publicly. He wrote lengthy post on his official Facebook page, questioning the accountability of those in power.

Director Shihab Shaheen posted a photo featuring the children killed in recent violence on that same day. Referring to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's metro rail visit, Shihab said, "I used to see leaders and public figures visiting the homes of the affected or distressed, offering comfort, inquiring about their well-being, embracing them, and sometimes even apologising. Where has that culture gone?"

Actress Sadia Ayman wrote a sarcastic post on her social media handle hinting at the artistes who visited BTV station and mourned over inanimate objects. Popular content creator Salman Mohammad Muqtadir stood with the students since the initial days of the protests and provided assistance to them on ground.

A vast array of celebrities showed support by changing their profile pictures red, including Kamar Ahmad Simon, Akram Khan, Amitabh Reza Chowdhury, Leesa Gazi, Sadia Khalid Reeti, Siam Ahmed, Azmeri Haque Badhan, Zakia Bari Mamo, Oni Hasan, Zohad, Arafat Kazi, Prince Mahmud, and many more.

On August 1, visual media artistes organised a protest rally at Farmgate intersection in Dhaka. Notable attendees included Ashfaque Nipun, Azmeri Haque Badhan, and Nazia Haque Orsha. Badhan, who had attended the Cannes Film Festival, emotionally stated, "It could have been my daughter at the protest, she could have lost her life... Any state that kills its own people to assert power, cannot be a democracy."

Following Sheikh Hasina's resignation on August 5, celebrities expressed both joy and caution. Pori Moni posted, "How my independence was taken away on this day three years ago, mother nature takes its revenge," later adding a call for peace. Ashfaque Nipun declared, "Bangladesh is now FREE from the long rule of the tyrant Sheikh Hasina!"

This unprecedented display of solidarity from Bangladesh's entertainment industry played a crucial role in amplifying the voices of the protesters and shaping public opinion during this pivotal moment in the country's history. Their courage in speaking out against injustice, even in the face of potential repercussions, set a powerful example for future generations and contributed to the eventual success of the movement.

NEWS

UN, US, Canada, EU

FROM PAGE 12

independently, and my Office stands ready to support this. The demands for justice and reform must be heeded."

At this pivotal moment, Bangladesh's international human rights obligations can serve as a road map for the transitional authorities and all political leaders.

"This is a time for national healing, including through an immediate end to violence, as well as accountability that ensures the rights of victims to truth and reparations, and a truly inclusive process that brings the country together on the way forward," Türk added.

Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged calm and restraint by all sides and emphasised the importance of a peaceful, orderly and democratic transition.

Guterress said he stands in full solidarity with the people of Bangladesh and calls for the full respect of their human rights and underscored the need for a full, independent, impartial and transparent investigation into all acts of violence, said Farhan Haq, his deputy spokesperson, in a briefing in New York.

The US saluted the military for forming an interim government instead of cracking down further on protesters, said Matthew Miller, spokesman for the US state department.

"If it is true in fact that the army resisted calls to crack down on lawful protesters, that would be a positive development," he said, adding that the transition to an interim government is conducted in accordance with Bangladesh's laws.

A full and transparent investigation into the rights abuses is vital to ensure accountability for the deaths, he said, while also urging all parties to refrain from further violence and maintain calm.

Meanwhile, the EU diplomats in Bangladesh said they were "very concerned" about reports of attacks on minority groups and places of worship.

On Monday, more than 100 people were killed in mob violence in the capital and other districts. Police stations and Awami League offices also came under attack and looting.

Canada strongly condemns the human rights violations, deaths, torture, arbitrary arrests and lethal force used against the people, said its Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly.

"During this transition, we urge all parties to respect and uphold democratic institutions and processes and the rule of law. It is vital that all those arrested in recent weeks be accorded due process in the justice system and that a full and impartial investigation be pursued to ensure accountability for crimes committed."

Canada calls for a quick and peaceful return to a democratic and inclusive civilian-led government in Bangladesh.

"We urge the people of Bangladesh to unite around the principles of freedom and democracy upon which their country was founded."

Attacks on Hindu houses, temples, businesses go on

FROM PAGE 12

was also vandalised there.

Affected villagers informed the police but they did not take any action.

In Birampur upazila, the house of Dilip Kundu, a fertiliser and agrochemical trader, was attacked. He said the plan to attack was even announced on a loudspeaker to gather more people. They also attacked, vandalised and looted his shops.

Several Hindu families of Bochaganj upazila came under attack and arson, said Chakrabarty.

In Patuakhali's Kuakata, a temple was attacked and set ablaze, and the homes of two members of the Hindu community were vandalised yesterday.

Around 5:00pm, around 20-25 people attacked the home of Ananta Mukherji and razed the Radha-Krishna temple adjacent to it.

Less than an hour later, another group ransacked Kolapara municipal Mayor Bipul Haldar's house and set it on fire. They also burnt a private car of the mayor parked in front of the house.

In Barishal's Gouranadi upazila, miscreants vandalised and looted a clothing store owned by Bhola Saha on Monday night.

Meanwhile, the head teacher of Mahilara Secondary School was assaulted in her home in Mahilara union.

Attackers also set ablaze the house of Jibon Krishna Piplai, a prominent businessman in Barishal city, but residents came forward to extinguish the fire.

In the predominantly Hindu areas of the city's Katpatti, Chawkbazar and Bazar Road, miscreants were seen running around with sharp weapons, reported our correspondent.

Arichul Haque, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said they could not get out of their station due to security concerns.

In Bogura, Tapan Kumar Chakraborty, secretary of Bogura's Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad, said, "Members of the Hindu community here are in a state of panic as their businesses, shops and homes were attacked yesterday [Monday]."

On Monday evening, attackers set ablaze some haystacks in some Hindu homes in Palpara village in Bogura's Gabtali upazila, Ashik Iqbal, OC of Gabtoli Police Station, confirmed to The Daily Star.

Similar incidents were reported in at least 27 districts during the first hours of the government's ouster.

Md Mainul Islam

FROM PAGE 12

1991. He has also served in police's elite force, Rapid Action Battalion.

Meanwhile, the contract of Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun as the IGP was cancelled in a separate circular on the same day.

Mamun's removal comes in the wake of a complete breakdown of law and order situation across Bangladesh.

Chowdhury was first appointed as the IGP on September 21, 2022.

He was scheduled to retire on January 11, 2023. However, on January 9, the government appointed him on a contractual basis for one and a half years.

Earlier in July, the government had extended his contract by one year.

2,400 get bail

FROM PAGE 1

and Shahjahanpur police stations, 203 with Mirpur and Sher-e-Bangla police stations, 194 with Badda and Bhatara police stations, 193 with Uttara Purbo, Uttara Paschim, and Turag police stations, 133 with Kadamtoli police station, 121 with Tejgaon, Tejgaon industrial, and Hatirjheel police stations, 115 with Rampura and Sabujbagh police stations, and 110 arrested in cases lodged with Gulshan and Banani police stations.

According to the court records, over 270 cases were lodged with 39 police stations in the city between July 16 and August 4. The complainants of most cases were police personnel.

The charges of the cases include illegal gathering, rioting, assaulting law enforcers, damaging assets, and arson.

Insecurity grips

FROM PAGE 12

army about the recoveries.

They also informed that around 200 students had been on guard at churches and temples in Mirpur since 9:00am yesterday.

Students were also seen guarding the fire-ravaged Pallabi Police Station.

Two army officers, visiting the site, said they saw firearms scattered all around.

Requesting anonymity, they said they came to know from locals that some firearms were looted.

Fire service officials said at least 29 police stations had been torched across the country. But, the fire service has not been informed of all the arson attacks.

In the capital, Uttara East, Khilgaon, Wari, Ashulia, Badda, Jatrabari, Adabor, and Lalbagh police stations and a deputy commissioner's office in Kallyanpur were ransacked and set on fire.

On the streets of Mirpur 2, Mirpur 10, Agargaon, Bijoy Sarani, Dhanmondi and Bangla Motor, both male and female students controlled traffic. Similarly,, general people were seen maintaining traffic in Bogura.

The duty officer of the fire service said they rescued 50 policemen trapped inside the burning Mirpur Police Station on Monday night.

An official of Dhaka Metropolitan Police said, "Most of the police stations were vandalised, torched, and weapons were looted. How will the police perform their duties in this situation?"

Members of Bangladesh Ansar and Village Defence Party were deployed to ensure security at all police stations and Dhaka airport, the officer said.

In another development, there was an attempt to free militants from the Kashimpur High Security Central Jail in Gazipur. Convicts inside the jail also tried to break free during the attack, officials said.

Last night, a group of at least 50 people vandalised the empty house of former DMP commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia in Nikunja, locals said.

The property is registered under the name of his younger son, Asif Mahadeen.

In his first briefing since Hasina's departure, Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, before he was replaced as inspector general of police, yesterday urged members of the force to perform their duties with patience and strong morale.

In a video message sent by the Police Headquarters, he urged the political and student leaders to request the countrymen to refrain from attacking police.

Many top police officials went into hiding after the fall of the government.

Hasina's resignation came following three weeks of clashes between police, Awami League men, and protesters that left over 200 people, including many policemen, dead.

He stated that steps will be taken to find a logical solution to the problems that the police face.

Earlier, Additional Inspector General of Police AKM Shahidur Rahman told reporters at Rajarbagh Police Lines that they were trying to establish a chain of command soon.

He urged the commanders to understand the situation and gradually return to the workplaces, and not pay any heed to rumours.

AFP reported that Bangladesh Police Association, which represents non-cadre police officers, said its members were going on strike.

"Until the safety of every police member is secured, we are declaring a strike," said the association.

At least two dozen cadre officers wrote on Facebook about abstaining from work.

Besides, Additional DIG Sohel Rana in a statement said, "The problem is in the leadership, not the police force. The guilty will be punished. Please, do not attack innocent policemen."

Sons of Ghulam Azam

FROM PAGE 12

As they went inside, family members of the victims waited outside the headquarters.

Anisha Islam Insha, the teenage daughter of forcibly disappeared Ismail Hossain Baten, broke down in tears after having to leave without her father.

Timber trader Baten was allegedly picked up from Dhaka by members of a government security agency in 2019.

"I have been walking the streets of Dhaka holding my father's photo all these years, and I had hoped I would be able to walk back home with him today. But that did not happen," said a crying Insha.

"I have waited all these years for my husband. I am going back disappointed today, but I have faith that I will get him back tomorrow," said Shahnaz, wife of Humayun Kabir Parvez, the BNP president of Laksham pourashava unit, who was picked up on November, 27, 2017.

Yesterday's meeting followed the release of former army brigadier general Abdullahil Aman Azmi, the second son of former Jamaat ameer and war criminal late Ghulam Azam; and Mir Ahmad Bin Quasem (Arman), the younger son of executed Jamaat leader and war criminal Mir Quasem Ali.

Afroza Islam Ankhi, sister of forcibly disappeared BNP leader Sajedul Islam Sumon and one of the coordinators of Mayer Daak, a platform for the families of the victims of enforced disappearances, told The Daily Star that Azmi and Ahmad have been found.

They were handed over to their family members in Uttara's Diabari yesterday morning, she said.

Azmi had been forcibly detained since August 23, 2016, and Mir Ahmad, since August 9, 2016.

Star
SPORT
DHAKA WEDNESDAY AUGUST 7, 2024, SRABAN 23, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

Sports 18-1
Paris Olympics
Live from 11:30 am
T Sports
Sri Lanka vs India
Third ODI
Live from 3:00 pm
Sony Sports 2
The Hundred
Trent Rockets vs London Spirit
Live from 11:30 pm

Duplantis fulfils childhood dream

AFP, *Paris*

Armand Duplantis says the defence of his Olympic pole vault crown in world-record style came as no surprise as he had visualised it a "million times" when practising as a child in his own backyard.

Coached by his American father Greg, a former pole vaulter, Duplantis is a product of a track and field-crazy family which had their own vaulting apparatus in the garden.

They were all present in the stadium and it was to them that Duplantis hurtled after sailing over 6.25 metres with no "pre-canned nonsense".

"That's just overflowed with emotions, freaking out," said Duplantis, the new record improving his previous best by 1cm in front of a delirious 69,000-capacity crowd at the Stade de France on Monday night.

"I've been fortunate enough to do it several times now, but every time the feeling is kind of the same. This was a more extreme version.

"When I'm going over the bar it's like AI (artificial intelligence), it doesn't feel real. That was more hysteria and freaking out."

Having started vaulting at the age of four in his backyard on a makeshift runway and landing pad, Duplantis revealed his deja vu moment.

"I've visualised this moment a million times in my life. I mean, this is every time I was in my backyard," he said of his world record vault.

"I would just imagine that the bar was at the world record mark. It was the Olympic final -- that's pretty much exactly what I visualised."

Duplantis was happy to bask in the moment and not be drawn into looking too far into the future after his success.

It was the ninth time the Swede had broken the world record, an astonishing achievement given he is still only 24 years old.

The silver medallist on the night, American Sam Kendricks, managed 5.95m, a full 30cm short of Duplantis' mark.

What next for two-time Olympic champion Duplantis, who is also twice world outdoor and indoor gold medallist, three-time European champion and a three-time Diamond League winner?

"Probably one of the moments where I cared least about the future is right now, soaking up this moment right now," said Duplantis.

"How can I care about anything else? When things align the way they did for me, you've got to enjoy those kinds of things.

"I try to enjoy as best as I can."

Duplantis could have waited until back on the circuit for a tilt at the world record, for which prize money is given, but he chose to attempt it on track and field's biggest stage.

"The biggest dream since a kid was to break the world record at the Olympics," he said.

"I've been able to do that in front of the most ridiculous crowd I've ever competed in front of.

"If I don't beat this moment in my career, then I'm pretty pretty okay with that. You know, I don't think you really can get much better than what just happened. So it's dang amazing."

Of his final vault, Duplantis said he was "just trying to control the energy rather than let it control me".

"I didn't really have anything to lose either. I'd already won and broke the Olympic record, I was already Olympic champion for a second time."

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

ATHLETICS
Marathon Race Walk Relay Mixed
11:30 pm
MEN'S DISCUSS THROW
12:25 am (Thursday)
Men's 400m final
1:20 am (Thursday)
MEN'S 3000M STEEPLECHASE
1:43 am (Thursday)
SPORT CLIMBING
Women Speed
4:54 pm
Sailing
Mixed Multihull Medal Race
6:43 pm
Mixed Dinghy Medal Race
7:00 pm
WEIGHTLIFTING
Men's 61 kg
7:00 pm
Women's 49 kg
11:30 pm
SKATEBOARDING
Men's Park
9:30 pm
CYCLING TRACK
Men's Team Pursuit
10:33 pm
Women's Team Pursuit
10:57 pm
WRESTLING
Men's Greco-Roman 77 kg
Men's Greco-Roman 97 kg
Women's Freestyle 50 kg
Starts from 10:15 pm
ARTISTIC SWIMMING
Team Acrobatic Routine
11:30 pm
TAEKWONDO
Women's 49 kg
1:19 am (Thursday)
Men's 58 kg
1:37 am (Thursday)
BOXING
Men's 63.5 kg
2:34 am (Thursday)
Men's 80 kg
2:51 am (Thursday)

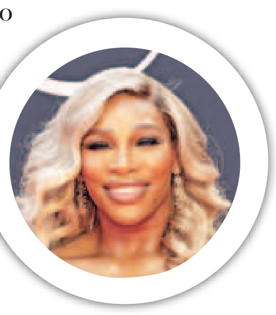
Unaccommodating Paris restaurant apologies to Serena

REUTERS, *Paris*

A luxury Parisian hotel has apologised to tennis great Serena Williams after she complained, in a social media post seen by millions, that she and her family were turned away from its restaurant on Monday.

"Yikes @peninsulaparis I've been denied access to rooftop to eat in a empty restaurant of nicer places but never with my kids. Always a first," Williams said on X.

Williams, a four-times Olympic gold medallist, was one of the Olympic flame's torchbearers during the Paris Games' opening ceremony. She is also among celebrities who have come out to see U.S. gymnastics star Simone Biles compete in the Games.



Her post was seen by more than 4 million viewers.

The Peninsula Paris, a five-star hotel whose gourmet restaurant offers a view of the Eiffel tower, swiftly responded: "Dear Mrs. Williams, Please accept our deepest apologies for the disappointment you encountered tonight. Unfortunately, our rooftop bar was indeed fully booked and the only unoccupied tables you saw belonged to our gourmet restaurant, L'Oiseau Blanc, which was fully reserved."

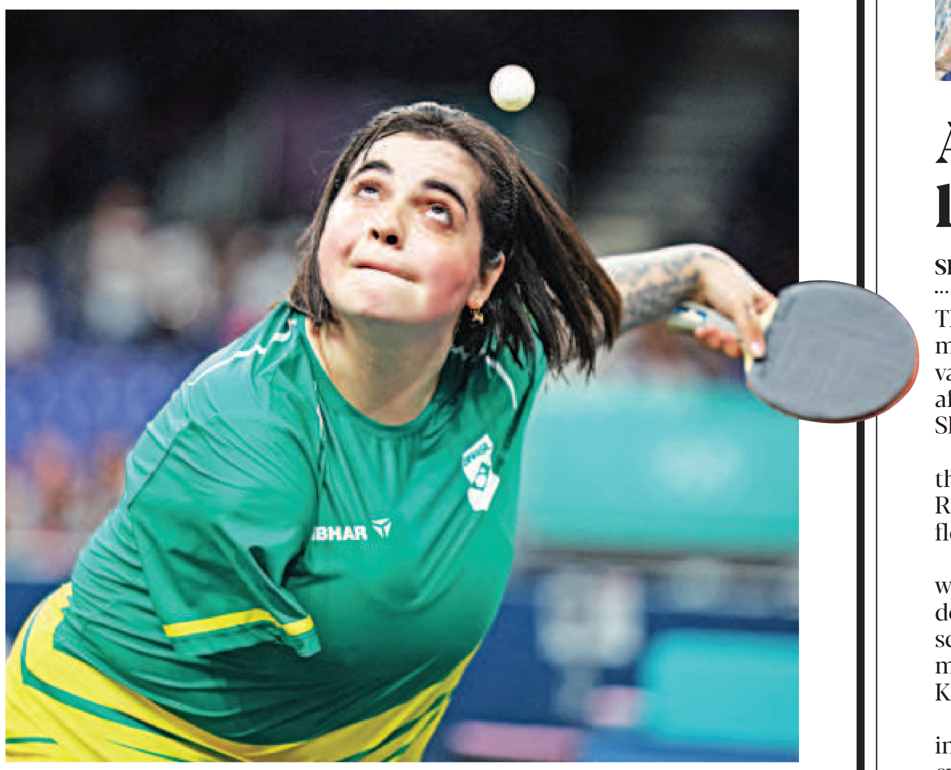
A second message followed, saying: "We have always been honored to welcome you and will always be to welcome you again."

Some of the responses to William's post were supportive, saying it was unacceptable that the restaurant didn't make room for her, others said that celebrities have no more right to a fully booked restaurant than anyone else.

Williams was much more positive after the Games' July 26 opening ceremony, claiming it to be an 'unforgettable' event on social media platform X.

Brazil's Alexandre makes historic debut

REUTERS, *Paris*



Brazil's Bruna Alexandre smashes and chops just like the other table tennis players at the Paris Olympics but when serving she uses the paddle in her left hand to throw the ball high.

That move, which now seems easy and natural, was what a seven-year-old Alexandre once struggled with the most as a one-armed girl who wanted to play the sport.

On Monday, she made history as the first Brazilian to compete at the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Alexandre's first Olympic journey was cut short by an unfortunate draw, with Brazil on Monday facing the world's top South Korean team in the first round, but she managed to put up two good performances in losing her doubles and singles matches.

"It wasn't the result I was hoping for, but we're very satisfied with what we achieved," said 29-year-old Alexandre after Brazil lost 3-1.

"We didn't give up until the end. Korea is one of the best teams. I managed to score some points, which made me very happy personally, and I'm very proud of my team for fighting until the end."

At three months old, Alexandre lost her arm due to a blood clot. She picked up table tennis aged seven and went on to win several championships plus a bronze medal at the Paralympic Games in Rio 2016 and silver at Tokyo in 2021.

"Never give up on your dreams, regardless of whether you have one leg or one arm. Believe that everything is possible. After 22 years of my career today I'm here at the Olympics," she said.

Alexandre added that she was now eyeing gold in the Paralympics and plans to come back to the Olympics in Los Angeles in 2028.

"There were other athletes who managed to play in the Olympic Games as well. I think this can help not only the sport but also the inclusion of people with disabilities," she said.

The Paralympics run from Aug. 28 to Sept. 8.

Abahani tent looted, vandalised

SPORTS REPORTER

The club tent of Abahani Limited, one of the most popular sporting clubs of the country, was vandalised and looted by miscreants a few hours after the resignation of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday.

The club was founded in 1972 by Sheikh Kamal, the eldest son of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and younger brother of former PM, who fled to India following her resignation.

Videos and photos shared by the club's press wing showed a trail of destruction at the players' dormitory and its offices, where documents were scattered and furniture were vandalised. The miscreants had also set fire to a portrait of Sheikh Kamal in front of the dormitory.

"Some miscreants entered the club premises in the evening and vandalised everything. They even took away tables, chairs, computers and documents," said a club employee seeking anonymity.

"The miscreants, who are probably from the Modhubazar, Shangkar and Rayerbazar areas, also took away approximately 500 trophies of football, cricket, hockey, table tennis, handball and volleyball," the official said, adding that no one was hurt in the incident as there was no players or officials at the dormitory during that time.t in the incident as there was no players at the dormitory at that time.

Uncertain times in BCB

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has fallen into uncertain times after the fall of the Awami League government, still quite a few board officials returned to work yesterday as the BCB like the rest of the country tried to return to some resemblance of normalcy.

The BCB has its hands full at the moment with many assignments lined up for various teams which includes the national team's tour of Pakistan in August.

The ICC is also reportedly monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and mulling whether or not to shift the ICC Women's T20 World Cup, set to begin in Bangladesh in October, elsewhere.

Members of the Army observed the BCB premises during a visit yesterday and assured the BCB of providing security in case of any trouble.

Although many BCB officials were absent, which includes president Nazmul Hassan Papon, those who were present yesterday said they are working according to the plans which had already been laid out.

The women's team players underwent individual training sessions in Mirpur even though their practice sessions for the T20 World Cup will officially begin on August 10, informed head of operations of BCB's women's wing Habibul Bashar.

Bashar also said that a decision on the tournament taking place in Bangladesh is likely by August 10.

The women's National Cricket League (WNCL), which will be played in the T20 format to help prepare the cricketers for the upcoming tournament, is set to begin on August 19, and Bashar saw very little scope of that getting postponed.

"I talked to the players and told them not to stop practicing. The WNCL is very important ahead of the World Cup," Bashar told The Daily Star yesterday.

বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ড (বিসিবি) বর্তমান পরিচালনা
যোগ্য ক্রিকেট সংগঠকদের বিসিবি পরিচালনার দায়িত্ব
বিসিবির সকল আর্থিক, অনিয়ম, দুর্নীতির চিত্র
ক্রিকেট সংগঠকবৃন্দ

"We can't postpone [NWCL] since Sri Lanka A are also touring. It's not finalised yet but it has to take place in the first week of September. So, we can't postpone the WNCL," he added.

BCB chief executive officer Nizamuddin Chowdhury was absent in the BCB offices yesterday but when contacted, he told The Daily Star that no decision has come through on the present governance of the board, "The situation is still a bit uncertain and it's still too early. It's best to observe," he said.

Plans for the men's A team's departure for Pakistan are being made, "We were set to depart today [yesterday] but that has been postponed. But in 48 hours we will make a decision," Nizamuddin added.

At around 11:00 AM, a group of organisers and club officials gathered in front of the BCB premises under the banner of 'Cricket Organisers'.

Led by former joint secretary and grounds committee chairman Rafiqul Islam Babu along with other club officials, they showed up demanding justice for prevalent irregularities and corruption in the board.

Even though the incumbent board has not been dissolved, they also talked to officials yesterday, "After coming here we saw many are absent and we didn't like that. We want the officials not to interrupt the proceedings and the tours should go on as per schedule," Rafiqul told the media yesterday.

HP lose big against Pak Shaheens

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh High Performance (HP) unit finished their campaign in the Bi-Lateral 50-over series in Australia on a losing note, suffering a crushing eight-wicket defeat to Pakistan Shaheens at the DXC Arena in Darwin on Tuesday.

Asked to bat first, the HP unit lost half of their side for just 32 runs in 9.4 overs and they hardly could recover from the early collapse, getting bundled out for just 78 runs in 24.3 overs.

For the HP unit, Parvez Hossain Emon was the highest scorer, making 19 runs.

For Pakistan, Mohammad Imran Jnr finished with 3-22.

Pacer Ripon Mondol removed Sahibzada Farhan (0) in the second over before Usman Khan and Abdul Faseeh shared a 48-run stand for the second wicket to take them close to victory.

Faseeh soon became Ripon's second scalp in the contest but Usman's unbeaten knock of 39 off 45 balls, aided by Tayyab Tahir's 17 off 36 balls not out, guided them to 79-2 in 17 overs.

This was Shaheen's back-to-back win in the series after they beat NT Strike by four wickets in their opening match. Bangladesh HP unit earlier clinched a massive 112-run win over NT Strike.

SHORT CORNER

Alvarez set to join Atletico in 95m euro deal

Julian Alvarez is set to depart Manchester City for Atletico Madrid according to widespread reports on Tuesday with the English champions set to bank a huge profit on the Argentine in a deal worth up to 95 million euros (£81 million). The 24-year-old, who scored 36 times in two seasons at City, cost the Citizens just £14 million when he signed from River Plate in January 2022.

Romania turn to 79-year-old Lucescu for World Cup qualification

Romania turned back the clock on Tuesday when they appointed 79-year-old Mircea Lucescu as their new national coach -- 38 years after he left the post. Lucescu, who managed the side between 1981 and 1986, takes over from Edward Iordanescu, who stepped down after taking Romania to the last 16 of Euro 2024 in Germany. His club coaching career has taken him across Romania, Italy where he was in charge of Ronaldo at Inter Milan, Turkey and Ukraine, winning over 30 titles in the course of his career.

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Insecurity grips city as many police stations deserted

Firearms, ammunition looted from several stations in city, elsewhere

SHARIFUL ISLAM *and* **SHAHEEN MOLLAH**

With many police stations unmanned and arms and ammunition looted, there is a sense of serious insecurity among people in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

During a wave of violent mob attacks, many police stations were vandalised and set on fire after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure on Monday.

These correspondents saw Mirpur and Pallabi police stations, from where arms and ammunition were looted, being guarded by students yesterday afternoon.

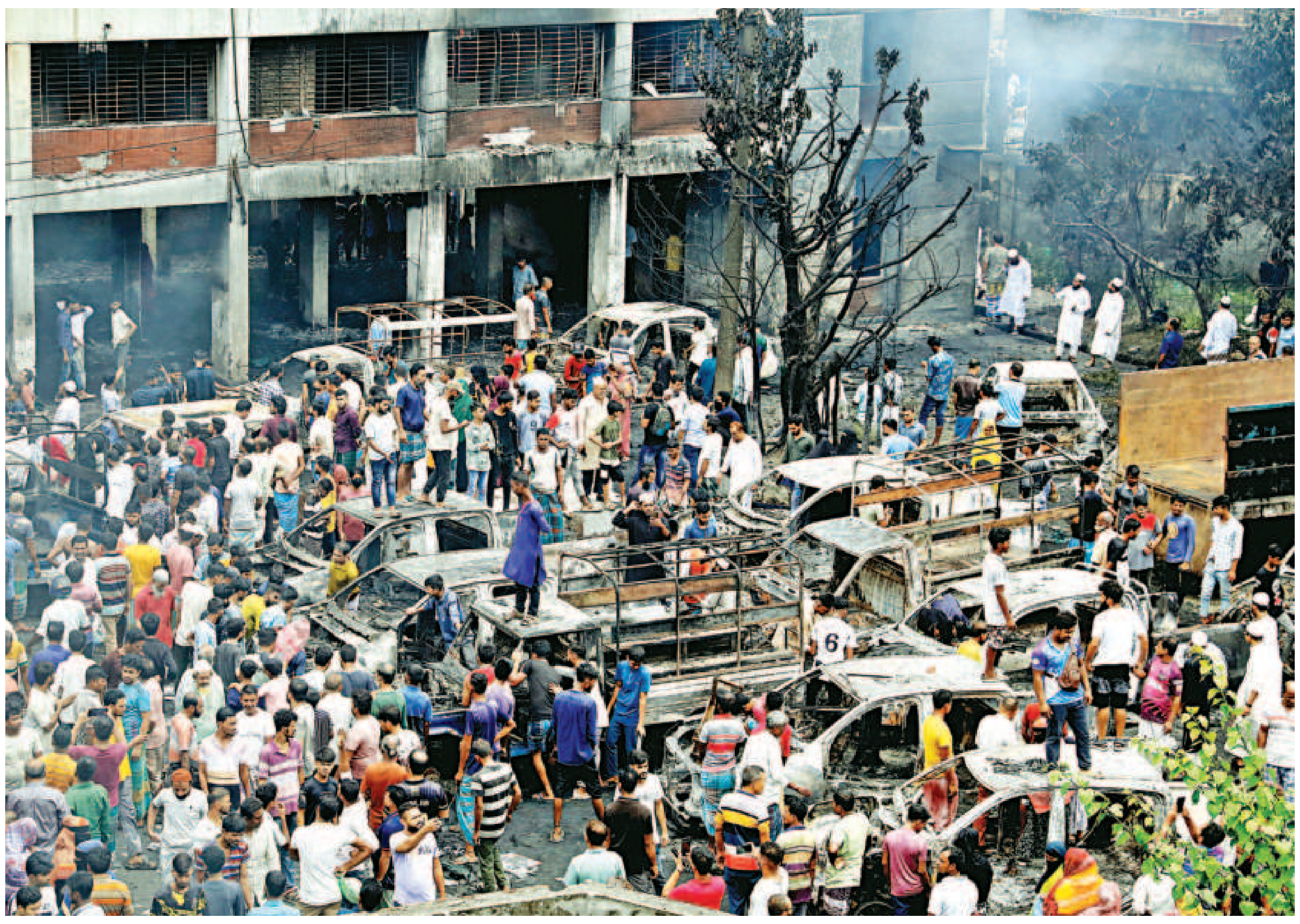
The buildings that were set on fire the night before resembled skeletal remains, completely stripped bare.

At Mirpur Police Station yesterday afternoon, this correspondent saw that the collapsable gates were bent out of shape and shards of broken glass littered the floors of the ransacked rooms of the two-storey building. A coat of soot and ash covered the charred furniture, and the air was still hot from the fire.

Around a dozen students guarding the police station put a bamboo fence at the main gate. There were several burned vehicles, motorcycles, and a riot vehicle on the premises.

The students said they found a shotgun behind the building. They also recovered a grenade, two broken firearms, ammunition, and a wireless radio, and requested that these correspondents to inform the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



People looking at the damage done to Jatrabari Police Station, a day after a mob set it on fire. Several vehicles, furniture and valuables were burnt in the arson attack. There were no law enforcers at the facility yesterday.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Md Mainul Islam is now IGP

Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun's contract cancelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Mainul Islam has been appointed as the Inspector General of Bangladesh Police (IGP). He was the commandant of the Traffic and Driving School.

The Public Security Division of the home ministry announced his appointment in a circular issued last night.

Mainul Islam, 58, began his police career in Jan

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Attacks on Hindu houses, temples, businesses go on

STAR REPORT

Within the first day and a half since the fall of Sheikh Hasina-led government, the country witnessed a spate of violence, specifically targeting Hindu homes and places of worship across multiple districts as law and order is yet to be restored.

In the absence of law enforcers, attacks on Hindus have flared unprovoked in many communities since Monday.

In Dhaka's Dhanmondi, the home of band Joler Gaan's frontman Rahul Ananda was set on fire and burnt to the ground on Monday.

"As soon as they broke down the gate, they started ravaging the house, taking whatever they could find for themselves. They took everything -- from furniture and mirrors to valuables. After that, they torched the whole house along with Rahul da's musical instruments," a close family source of Rahul told The Daily Star.

The home was nearly 140 years old, according to an earlier report of this newspaper.

Rahul and his family managed to flee to safety.

Later that same day, the Dhanuka Manasa Bari temple in Shariatpur was ransacked by an angry mob. They crushed the idols of Radha-Krishna and razed the temple to the ground. They also damaged all 16 CCTV cameras installed inside the temple premises.

Gobindo Chakrabarty, the temple committee's general secretary, said, "After attacking the temple, they surrounded our homes and were going to attack us. The army intervened and saved us."

Also on Monday, the Dinajpur Centre Cremation yard was vandalised, said Sunil Chakraborty, president of Dinajpur Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad.

Besides, five temples, including a Kali temple, in the district's Parbatipur upazila were attacked.

The homes of some Hindu families came under attack in Chirirbandar upazila. A place designated for Harisobha

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Rights bodies voice concern over looting, arson attacks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights bodies have expressed grave concerns over widespread violence, arson, looting, and vandalism following the resignation of Sheikh Hasina on Monday.

Condemning the attacks, they urged everyone to refrain from violence and act with patience.

They also called on the authorities to take appropriate steps to maintain peace and order.

In a press statement, the Human Rights Forum Bangladesh urged the authorities to take a responsible role in protecting the lives and properties of people, especially those of minority communities.

They highlighted heinous incidents such as vandalism of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's mural, arson at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, and attacks on the residences of the chief justice and other judges.

The rights body also noted attacks on police stations, administrative buildings, media outlets,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

US working 'round the clock' to avert Middle East war

Says Blinken as Israel remains high alert for potential Iranian retaliation

AGENCIES

The United States said it was working "round the clock" to avert an all-out war in the Middle East, as Israel remained on high alert yesterday for potential Iranian retaliation for two high-profile killings.

US President Joe Biden, whose country has sent extra warships and fighter jets to the region in support of Israel, held crisis talks on Monday evening with his national security team.

Biden and his top diplomat Antony Blinken sought to calm tensions that have soared since a suspected Israeli attack in Tehran last Wednesday killed Ismail Haniyeh, the political leader of Palestinian group Hamas.

Biden called King Abdullah II of Jordan, which helped down Iranian drones and missiles in an attack on Israel in April, while Blinken called top officials in Qatar and Egypt, the key intermediaries seeking a ceasefire in the 10-month Israeli offensive in Gaza.

"We are engaged in intense diplomacy, pretty much around the clock, with a very simple message -- all parties must refrain from escalation," Blinken said after joining other top officials in a White House meeting.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian hit out on Monday at what he called the "criminal acts" of Israel "against the oppressed and defenceless people of Gaza" as well as Haniyeh's killing.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is in no way seeking to expand the scope of war and crisis in the region, but this regime will definitely receive the response for its crimes and arrogance," Pezeshkian said during talks with a senior visiting Russian official, according to the official news agency IRNA.

Yesterday, five Hezbollah fighters were killed in an Israel strike on southern Lebanon, according to a security source. Israeli warplanes flew low over the Lebanese capital Beirut, with witnesses saying they could see the planes with the naked eye and creating one of the largest sonic booms heard by residents in years, reports AFP.

Interim govt must prioritise human rights

Says Amnesty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights group Amnesty International yesterday said any interim government, which will be formed after the ouster of Sheikh Hasina-led government, must prioritise human rights and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

"The first order of business for any interim government should be to ensure protection of people's right to life, right to free speech and peaceful assembly and to find ways of de-escalating any potential for further violence," said Smriti Singh, Amnesty International's regional director for South Asia, in a statement.

Any measures proposed to move forward from this deadly chapter in Bangladesh's history need to be rooted in the principles of justice, accountability and non-recurrence, she said.

"The human rights violations in the last three weeks that have led to the death of more than 300 people, with thousands injured and arbitrarily arrested, should be independently and impartially investigated in a transparent manner," said the regional director.

"We again call for the establishment of a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into the deaths and injuries resulting from the protests. Those found responsible must be held accountable and the victims of the violence should receive full reparations from the state, which includes compensation, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition."

"It's an opportune moment for any new interim government in Bangladesh to show solidarity with its people, protect the most vulnerable, and not repeat the mistakes of the past."

Sons of Ghulam Azam and Mir Quasem released

DGFI to update on victims of enforced disappearance today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

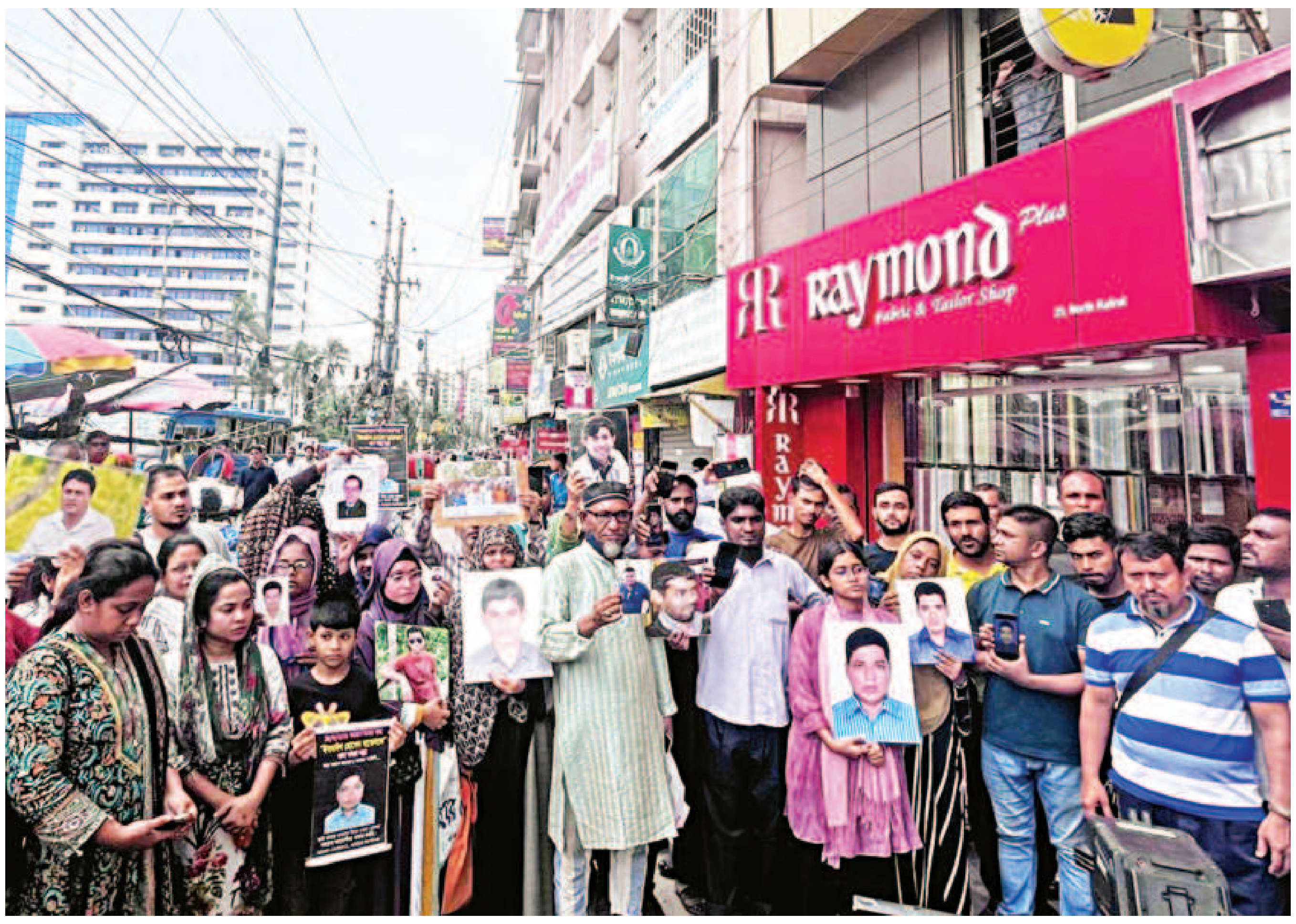
Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) said it would share an update today on the victims of enforced disappearance at the facility known as "Aynaghor".

This was conveyed at a meeting between human rights advocates and Brig Gen Tamjidul Haque, director of the Signals Intelligence Bureau of DGFI.

UN Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis; Mayer Daak cofounder Sanjida Islam Tulee; Senior Human Rights Adviser to UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Bangladesh Huma Khan; prominent photojournalist Shahidul Alam; women's rights leader Shireen Huq; and Vice-chair of Forum Asia Taskin Fahmina went to the DGFI headquarters yesterday morning.

At the meeting, they demanded access to the detention facility, alleged to be located inside the DGFI premises, and victims of enforced disappearances be set free.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



Families of the victims of enforced disappearances yesterday in front of the DGFI headquarters holding the photos of their loved ones.

PHOTO: **STAR**

UN, US, Canada, EU want democratic transition of power

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN, US, Canada and the EU have called for democratic transition of power and immediate actions to restore law and order in Bangladesh.

In separate statements, they also emphasised on ending vandalism and violence against the minorities and vengeance attacks, while also holding accountable those responsible for the killing of hundreds and injuring of thousands of people.

"The transition [of power] must be conducted in a transparent and accountable way, and be inclusive and open to the meaningful participation of all Bangladeshis," said Volker Türk, the UN Human Rights chief, on Monday following the resignation and fleeing of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India.

It is vital the transition of power in Bangladesh is peaceful and guided by human rights, in line with the country's international obligations quickly and that all emergency measures must be strictly limited in accordance with international law, he said.

"Everyone arbitrarily detained must be released, and all those responsible for human rights violations must be held to account," he said, adding that underlying issues and grievances must be addressed.

Türk reiterated his calls for a comprehensive, impartial and transparent investigation into all alleged human rights violations since July.

"In the current circumstances, and to ensure public confidence, an investigation should be conducted

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

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Stay calm, refrain from violence

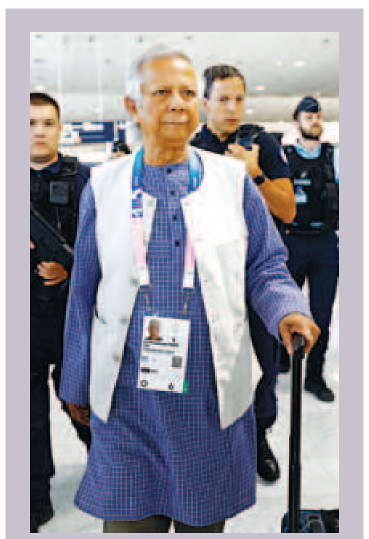
Yunus urges people, asks the youth to be ready to build nation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday urged the youth to stay calm and get ready to build the nation.

In a statement issued by the Yunus Centre, the Nobel peace laureate also said, "I fervently appeal to everybody to stay calm. Please refrain from all kinds of violence. I appeal to all students, members of all political parties and non-political people to stay calm. This is our beautiful country with lots of exciting possibilities. We must protect and make it a wonderful country for us and for our future generations."

He added, "Our youth is ready to give this leadership in creating a new world. Let us not miss the chance by going into any senseless violence. Violence is our enemy. Please don't create more enemies. Be calm and get ready to build the country.

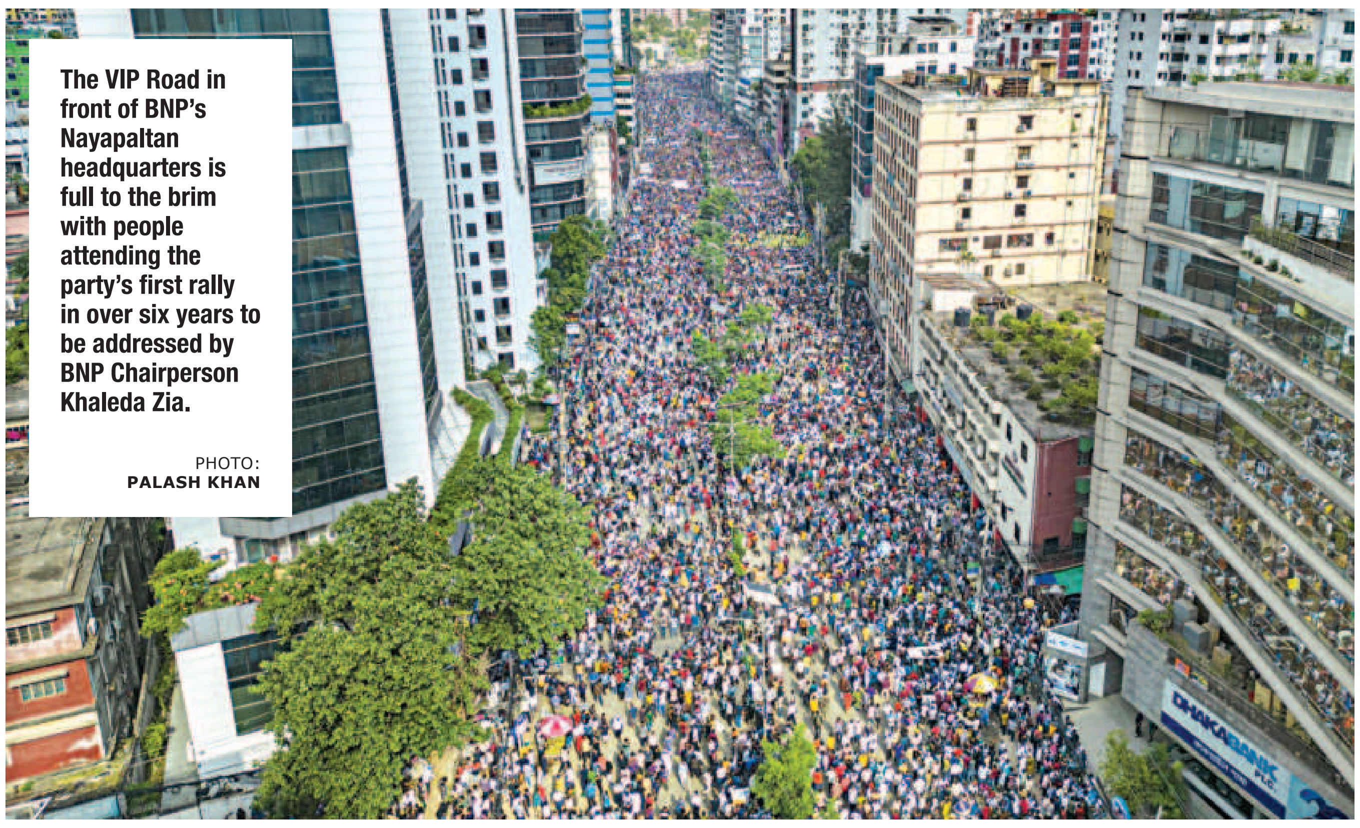


> **"Let us not let this victory slip away because of our mistakes."**

"If we take the path of violence everything will be destroyed. Please stay calm. Help those around you to stay calm."

In the statement, he congratulated the students who made the "second victory day" possible.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



The VIP Road in front of BNP's Nayapaltan headquarters is full to the brim with people attending the party's first rally in over six years to be addressed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

INTERIM GOVT

Swearing-in tonight

Army chief says armed forces to help Yunus in all possible ways; new govt may have 15 members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the interim government led by Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus will take oath tonight, three days after the cabinet was dissolved following the resignation of Sheikh Hasina.

After sharing the information with journalists, army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman yesterday said the oath-taking ceremony is likely to be held at 8:00pm in presence of some 400 dignitaries.

He hinted that the interim government may have 15 members for now. He, however, did not disclose their names and the possible tenure of the government.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BB, NBR grapple with staff anger

Six central bank officials, including four deputy governors, depart

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was not a usual day at Bangladesh Bank and the tax authority. For hundreds of employees, it was a day to air frustration and collective rage.

At the central bank, mid-level employees erupted into wild protests yesterday, demanding the resignations of six senior officials, including Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder and four deputy governors. A video taken by a reporter showed soldiers trying to calm protesters, a rare scene in the banking sector.

As the chaos unfolded at Bangladesh Bank, the governor was nowhere to be seen. He stayed away from work for the second day.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BNP calls for unity, polls at the soonest

Khaleda, Tarique address huge rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday called for calm and unity and ensuring the safety of all irrespective of religion, race and identity as well as immediate election.

"Let's not indulge in destruction, revenge, vengeance -- let us build a society based on love, peace, and knowledge," BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said in a three-minute-long video message played out at a mammoth rally at the capital's Nayapaltan.

Tens of thousands of leaders, activists and supporters, who began convening at the party's Nayapaltan headquarters in the morning, burst into loud cheers when Khaleda's video message played out, her first speech in six and a half years.

She thanked the youth for getting rid of the "fascist illegal government" through an extended movement centring on quota reforms for government jobs.

"I want to sincerely thank our brave children who made this possible through their desperate struggle. I pay respect to the hundreds of martyrs. This victory has brought a new possibility for the nation."

Khaleda, a three-time prime minister, called for building a "knowledge-based, democratic Bangladesh with merit and competence" and "free from exploitation".

"We have to build a prosperous Bangladesh from unprecedented corruption and ruins of destroyed democracy. The dream for which the youth have shed their blood must be realised. Students and youth are our future. Let's strengthen the hands of our youth to build tomorrow's Bangladesh based on peace, progress and equality."

The rights of all religions and communities must be ensured, said

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

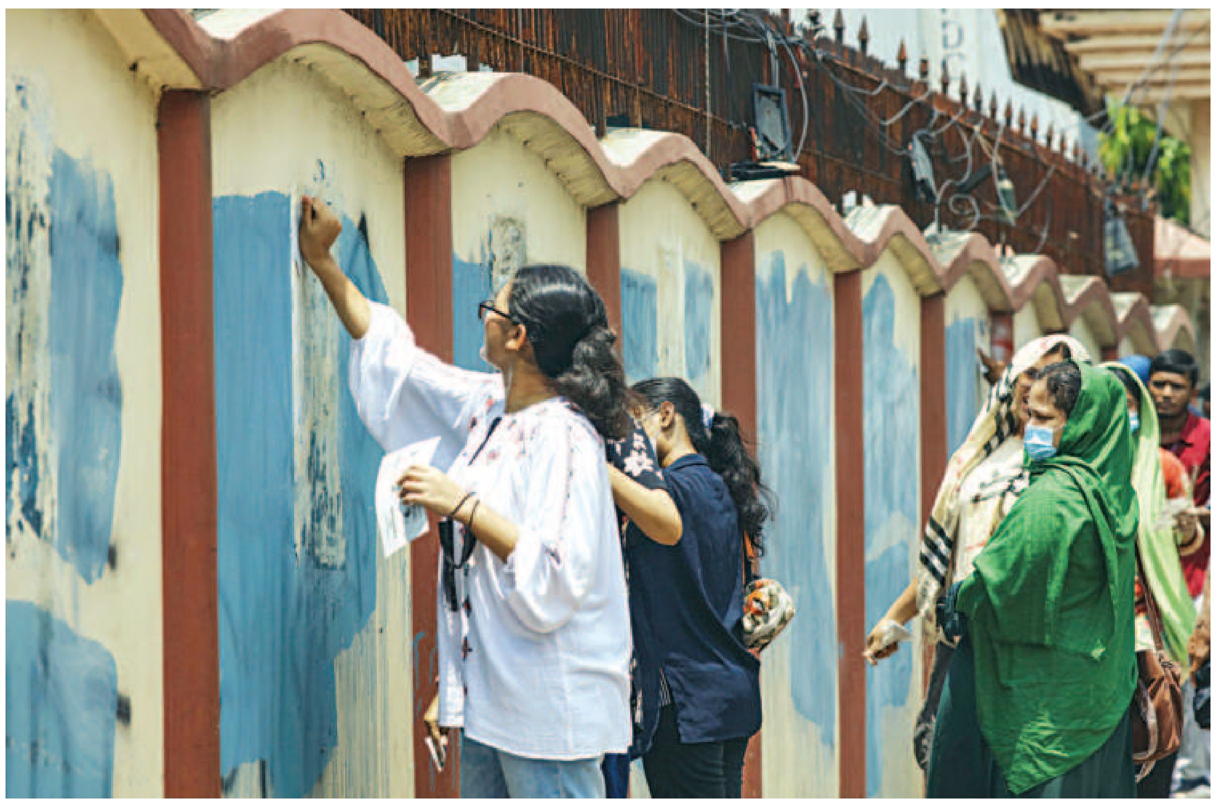


PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

Students wiping off the anti-government slogans and pictures drawn during the protests on a wall of the Government College of Physical Education in the capital's Mohammadpur yesterday while their parents watch.

'Whom do we turn to for help?'

Robberies rampant in Mohammadpur, other neighbourhoods in city; locals and students keep vigil in absence of law enforcers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents in the capital's Mohammadpur and several other areas are in a state of panic as gangs of criminals have been looting and robbing homes in the absence of law enforcers over the last two days.

The same is happening in several other parts of the country,

From Tuesday night to early yesterday, many families in Mohammadpur had been sleepless from fear of robberies.

Locals made loudspeaker announcements from mosques and took to the streets around midnight to confront the criminals.

Some residents had also turned to social media to seek help, which prompted many people, including students, to stand guard at various intersections and keep vigil.

The fear of robberies spread through Naboday Housing, Mohammadia Housing, Chan Mia Housing, Chand Udyan, Dhaka Udyan and Chandrima Housing areas – all in Mohammadpur.

Upon information, an army team patrolled the Naboday Housing and Bashbari areas.

It also detained a group of men on a truck in Bashbari. The men, however, claimed to be sand workers and were later released.

A resident of Naboday Housing area said, "Last night, a group of people carrying local weapons came and attacked a neighbouring house. They forcefully opened the main gate and looted cash and jewelry."

FOR HELP

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6

STUDENTS STEP UP TO FILL THE VACUUM -- PAGE 3

Take stern actions to stop anarchy, looting

President asks cops; IGP tells them to return to post in 24hr

STAR REPORT

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday asked the police force to take stringent action to control looting and the anarchic situation in the country.

He gave the directive to the police when newly appointed Inspector General of Police Md Mainul Islam called on him at the Bangabhaban, reports UNB.

Congratulating the new IGP, the president said the role of police is very important in maintaining law and order and ensuring

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Today with great admiration we observe the 6th death anniversary of
Late Afzalur Rahman Sinha

A charismatic personality, successful entrepreneur, great freedom fighter and a devoted philanthropist.

Late Afzalur Rahman Sinha was the Chairman of The ACME Laboratories Ltd. and President of Dhaka Club Limited. Moreover, he was one of the key sports personalities and apprehended respectable positions in the country's sports arena namely, Director, Bangladesh Cricket Board; Chairman, Bangladesh Premier League; Director, Abahani Ltd.; and Vice President, Bangladesh Hockey Federation. As a result of his outstanding and extraordinary contribution towards Sports in Bangladesh, he has been awarded the prestigious National Sports Award (posthumous), 2020 from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. We the ACME family remember him with utmost admiration and profound honor on his 6th death anniversary.

Afzalur Rahman Sinha
(21 April 1950 – 08 August 2018)

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AUGUST 5 VIOLENCE

Death toll in Savar rises to 36

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Savar*

The death toll centring the violence on August 5, the day Sheikh Hasina resigned from office, rose to 36, according to hospital sources.

On that day, violent clashes between police-backed Awami League activists and protesters broke out.

Most of the deaths were caused by gunshot wounds, they said.

Yusuf, duty manager of Enam Medical College Hospital, said that 27-year-old Sadek succumbed to his bullet injuries while undergoing treatment yesterday.

With this, the authorities reported 16 deaths, including those brought dead there and who died in the hospital.

Gonoshasthaya Samaj Vittik Medical College Hospital in Ashulia reported 10 bullet-riddled bodies, including one unknown victim.

Earlier, Ashulia Women and Children Hospital confirmed the death of three people while another victim died in Habib Clinic in Ashulia.

The house of Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, was ransacked and set on fire in the capital's upscale neighbourhood of Gulshan. Locals said the house was torched on Monday, the day Hasina resigned and fled the country.

PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

Over 300 inmates flee Kashimpur, Kushtia jails

STAR REPORT

At least six bodies of prisoners were recovered from Kashimpur High Security Central Jail in Gazipur early yesterday, hours after a group of prisoners escaped following demonstrations by some inmates and attack from outside by their "relatives".

Gazipur Deputy Commissioner Abul Fateh Mohammad Safiqul Islam yesterday said, "We are yet to ascertain how many prisoners fled."

The bodies were taken to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital around 4:00am, said Abul Fazal, officer at the hospital's emergency department.

This newspaper could not confirm how the six prisoners died as the jail's senior superintendent, Subrata Kumar Pal, could not be reached over the phone despite repeated attempts.

Quoting jail officials, Bangla daily Prothom Alo reported that at least 209 prisoners fled.

A group of prisoners started demonstrating around noon on Tuesday demanding release. They tried to flee by breaking a wall and scaling it using a ladder. Jail guards tried to quell the trouble. At

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Stay calm, refrain from violence

FROM PAGE 1

"I congratulate the brave students who took the lead in making our 'Second Victory Day' possible and to the people for giving your total support to them. Let us make the best use of our new victory. Let us not let this slip away because of our mistakes."

THE ACQUITTAL

Later in the day, a Dhaka tribunal acquitted Prof Yunus in a labour law violation case.

Three other top officials of Grameen Telecom were also acquitted.

MA Awal, chairman (in-charge) of the Labour Appellate Tribunal, delivered the verdict, Khaja Tanvir Ahmed, a lawyer for Yunus, told The Daily Star.

On January 1, the Labour Court-3 of Dhaka sentenced Yunus, also chairman of Grameen Telecom, and its directors Ashraful Hassan, M Shahjahan and Nurjahan Begum to six months' imprisonment each for violating labour laws.

The four were also fined Tk 30,000 each, in default of which they would have to serve 25 more days in prison.

On January 28, Prof Yunus and his colleagues filed appeals with the Labour Appellate Tribunal against the sentence.

On September 9, 2021, Labour Inspector (General) SM Arifuzzaman filed the case with the labour court against the four.

The court framed the charges in the case on June 6 last year. It also recorded four prosecution witnesses' statements.

The sections of the labour law under which the case was filed carry a maximum of six months' imprisonment.

According to the case documents, Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments officials inspected the Grameen Telecom office in the capital's Mirpur on August 16, 2021, and found several violations of labour laws.

BB, NBR grapple with staff anger

FROM PAGE 1

Employees started agitating at the central bank in the commercial district of Motijheel right after they arrived at work in the morning, demanding the resignation of officials who are serving contractually. The governor, deputy governors, and the banking adviser are hired contractually.

In the face of protests, Deputy Governor Kazi Sayedur Rahman resigned, while two deputy governors -- Habibur Rahman and Md Khurshid Alam -- decided to step down. Banking adviser Md Abu Farah Naser also decided to go, according to officials. Meanwhile, Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit chief Masud Biswas was forced to leave his office. He then decided to quit.

At a hurried press briefing, BB spokesperson Mezbaul Haque said some deputy governors decided to resign amid protests and some were forced to step down.

Widespread protests came two days after Sheikh Hasina's sudden exit from Bangladesh amid a popular uprising. The collapse of her government created a power vacuum that led to further violence, alongside the joy and relief on the streets of Dhaka.

Partisan decisions and corruption weakened the financial system, once controlled by Awami League loyalists, during the party's 15-year iron grip on power.

A similar scene of anger played out at the National Board of Revenue, as officials called for the resignation of its chairman, Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem.

Economists say unruly protests are not the way to reform the regulatory bodies and can upend the financial sector.

Another powerful regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission, passed two days without its boss -- Shibli Rubayat-Ul Islam. The chairman stayed away from work fearing reprisals from colleagues, an official said, asking not to be named.

These activities are not very uncommon during a mass uprising as people vent anger on the high-ups, according to Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute.

"There should be a planned process of streamlining the financial institutions and regulatory bodies. The officials involved in malpractices will face consequences. No one should take the law into their own hands," he said.

"What we saw at the central bank was very disturbing. The central bank's top officials are now completely inactive, which will make the institution inactive," Ahsan Mansur said.

The interim government, which is being installed with Professor Muhammad Yunus as its head, will now decide on the resignations of the deputy governors.

The new government should be formed without delay because it needs time to find eligible people to run institutions, according to Ahsan Mansur.

On top of these protests, a gloomy report came from S&P Global Ratings. It said Bangladesh's political crisis has further undermined sovereign credit support since it lowered its long-term sovereign credit rating on July 30 this year. However, credit metrics may still support the ratings at the current level if the situation stabilises soon.

The protests that led to the abrupt resignation of Hasina on August 5 have exacerbated downside risks to economic growth, fiscal performance, and external metrics, S&P said.

The week was rife with commotions in the corporate world. On Tuesday, employees of Islami Bank Bangladesh staged a demonstration against alleged plundering from the bank by S Alam Group, a corporate giant with ties to Hasina. They also briefly barred some officials from the bank's head office in Motijheel.

The demonstrators alleged that they were deprived of various benefits for over a decade, following changes in the bank's ownership and board. Some employees also demonstrated at the bank's headquarters, demanding the resignation of deputy managing directors and other officials appointed by S Alam Group.

A group of officials at Sonali Bank yesterday called for the state-run lender's managing director to provide incentives and promotions to the officials who were "deprived" of benefits in the past several years.

BNP calls for unity, polls at the soonest

FROM PAGE 1

Khaleda, who landed in jail in a corruption case in February 2018.

At the beginning of her speech, Khaleda, who was released from house arrest on Monday, said she was grateful to the Almighty for being able to speak after being ill for a long time.

"During my imprisonment, you struggled and prayed for my release and recovery. For that, I thank you all," she added.

Her son Tarique Rahman, the acting chairman of BNP, addressed the rally virtually to a thunderous applause too.

He urged everyone not to take the law into their own hands and not to engage in revenge.

He called upon his party's leaders and activists and other democratic political parties to ensure the security of every person irrespective of religious identity and not indulge in violence.

"Stop attacking the police or religious minority communities from today. Even if someone tries to commit a crime using the name of BNP, hand them over to the law. Stand as a shield and set an example by ensuring the safety of everyone, regardless of their religion, race or identity."

Stressing the significance of the role of police, he said: "In a civilised and democratic state, the police are indispensable. The police are not the enemies of the people."

Democratic parties, including BNP, believe that except for a certain clique within the police, most officers are trying to perform their duties by adhering to job regulations and laws, he said.

"After Hasina fled the country, a clique is now conspiring to demoralise police. If the police can be rendered ineffective, it will become easy to destabilise the country. It will be easy to create insecurity among religious minorities."

Speaking about the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, he said the day was akin to a second independence for Bangladesh.

"Bangladesh has been imprisoned for the past 15 years. On August 5, Bangladesh witnessed another victory through the united revolution of students and the people. Today, the door to democracy has opened. Today, our beloved Bangladesh is free and independent."

No evil force can suppress Bangladesh if the pro-Bangladesh forces stay united, he said.

"In the Liberation War of 1971 and the Liberation War of 2024, the people's message was only one: independence cannot be conditional."

Tarique emphasised making the administration competent, with highest priority given to merit recruitment and promotion.

The BNP has proposed establishing an upper house in the national parliament to include knowledgeable and distinguished people residing abroad in state administration and policymaking, said Tarique, who has been living in London since 2008.

"The national election must be held immediately and power must be handed over to the elected representatives," he added.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir urged the president to form an interim government without any delay.

"This government will arrange national elections within three months. The people will fully support them in this process," he said.

Before the speakers commenced their speeches, the gathering observed a minute's silence in memory of those who lost their lives in the quota reform movement.

Six members of the party's standing committee addressed the crowd, expressing their gratitude to the students for their contributions.

Swearing-in tonight

FROM PAGE 1

General Waker-Uz-Zaman hoped that normalcy would return within three to four days as the situation across the country is improving significantly.

Those involved in the crimes committed over the past few days will not be spared and legal action will be taken against them, he said.

The army chief briefed the media at the Army Headquarters yesterday, two days after Hasina resigned and fled the country amid an upspring.

On Tuesday night, President Mohammed Shahabuddin gave his consent to the proposal of the key student protest organisers for making Prof Yunus the interim government chief.

Since then, the people waited to know when the government would take charge and bring the prevailing situation under its control.

Yesterday, General Waker-Uz-Zaman said he had talked to Prof Yunus.

"I felt very good talking to him. It seemed to me that he is very eager to take up the responsibility. I'm certain that he will be successful in taking us to a democratic process, and that we will benefit from it."

General Waker-Uz-Zaman said they have discussed with political parties and protest organisers about making Prof Yunus the interim government chief.

He said they talked to the president about it and made the proposal.

He added that Prof Yunus will reach Bangladesh today.

General Waker-Uz-Zaman hoped that Prof Yunus would get support from all political parties and students, and he would be successful in discharging his duties.

"The navy chief, the air force chief and I ... We all will support him," he said.

He praised students and volunteers working to maintain traffic on the city streets in the absence of traffic police and to clean different vandalised sites and requested them to continue the good work.

He said students, following his request, also worked to prevent looting and other criminal activities committed outside Dhaka.

The army chief said he talked to commanders and general officers commanding (GOC) yesterday and came to know that the situation was improving significantly.

He urged people not to believe any rumors involving the army.

General Waker-Uz-Zaman said work is on to revamp the police force as a new inspector general of police has already been appointed and hoped that police personnel would start performing their duties soon.

"I want to assure that the army, navy, and air force were with the people and will be with them," he said.

Responding to a query of a reporter when the interim government members can take the oath, the army chief said they were trying their best to hold the event today.

He said there was a proposal to hold the programme in the evening, but it would be tight given that Prof Yunus will reach Dhaka around 2:10pm.

"In that case, we may hold the programme at 8:00pm."

When his comment was sought about the people's concern over the recent incidents of looting and vandalism, General Waker-Uz-Zaman said he has taken responsibility of all people and sought cooperation from political leaders in this regard as there were possibilities of such incidents during the transition of power.

"They [political leaders] assured me of their best possible cooperation. Even though some incidents took place and there are some reasons behind it. The situation, however, is getting normal."

He said police personnel were not on the ground and it was not possible to fill the void with the army personnel.

However, the army personnel have been trying their best and they rescued thousands of people, police personnel and are guarding different important establishments like the airport, and the secretariat, said General Waker-Uz-Zaman.

"I'm very sorry and embarrassed for what has taken place in the first one or two days."

Apart from army personnel, navy and air force personnel are working, he said.

"We have tried our best. But still some incidents happened. It is simply because we did not have enough strength. But I'm sure when the police force gets revamped, the void will easily be filled," he said.

"But I want to say that we will try our best to bring those involved in such [criminal] activities to book," he added.

Asked whether he had any plan to increase the number of the force on the ground, the army chief said, "All the personnel we have in the military have already been deployed and they are working."

Responding to another question, he said, "Politicians asked me to take the responsibility [of people's safety].

"Somebody has to take it [responsibility]. There was no one to take it and thus I shouldered the responsibility. I have to take the responsibility if there is any failure here. I have tried my best and normalcy will return within a very short time," he said.

"But we have a lot to do. Give me some more time."

Gaza City braces for fresh offensive

Israel orders residents to evacuate Beit Hanoon, Beit Lahiya areas

AGENCIES

Israel ordered residents and displaced Palestinians to evacuate the Beit Hanoon and Beit Lahiya areas of Gaza City yesterday, as reports said a "large scale" Israeli army operation is expected to begin there soon.

"For your own safety, evacuate immediately to the known shelters in the centre of Gaza City," Israeli army spokesman Avichay Adraee said.

In a nearby Gaza City neighbourhood, Al-Tuffah, an Israeli airstrike on a house killed three Palestinians, medics said.

Later yesterday, 10 Palestinians were killed in two separate Israeli strikes in Khan Younis in southern Gaza. Medics said one strike killed three people on a motorcycle west of Khan Younis, while seven others were killed in tank shelling that hit a tent encampment in Abassan town, east of the city.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said that at least 39,677 people have been killed in the offensive, which entered its 11th month yesterday. The toll includes 24 deaths in the past 24 hours, according to ministry figures.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Tuesday evening that both Iran and Israel should avoid escalating conflict, in his most direct wording towards US ally Israel on the Middle East's spiralling tensions.

"No one should escalate this conflict. We've been engaged in intense diplomacy with allies and partners, communicating that message directly to Iran. We communicated that message directly to Israel," Blinken told reporters.

Take stern actions to stop anarchy, looting

FROM PAGE 1

the safety of people's lives and property.

Restoring law and order in the country is the most important thing, Shahabuddin said, adding that the police should focus on improving the current situation.

He also asked the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to ensure that every member of the police force can perform their duties with high morale and courage maintaining the chain of command.

'JOIN WORK WITHIN 24 HOURS'

IGP Mainul yesterday instructed all police personnel to return to their respective police lines, offices, and barracks to secure public order.

"We want to start anew to ensure the safety of people's lives. Therefore, all are instructed to return to their respective workplaces within the next 24 hours ... by Thursday evening [August 8]," he said at his first briefing at the Police Headquarters.

Mainul said officers and staffers of all metropolitan, district, river police, railway, and highway police stations have been asked to join work within 24 hours.

A directive has been sent to all police units in this regard, he added.

"The metropolitan police commissioners and the superintendents of police will form citizen security committees for each police station's jurisdiction area, comprising senior citizens, professionals, student representatives, political figures, and media personnel.

"The committees will play an emergency role in ensuring the security of police stations and police station areas and its final outline will be determined later," he said.

He directed his colleagues at all levels to refrain from making any demand, comment or reply through social media personally or under the banner of any batch or association in the interest of maintaining discipline in the police force.

Mainul replaced Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun as IGP. A circular was issued in this regard on Tuesday night by the Public Security Division of the home ministry.

Mamun's removal came in the wake of a breakdown of law and order across the country after the fall of the Awami League government on Monday.

At least 142 people have died across the country in mob violence and rioting since then.

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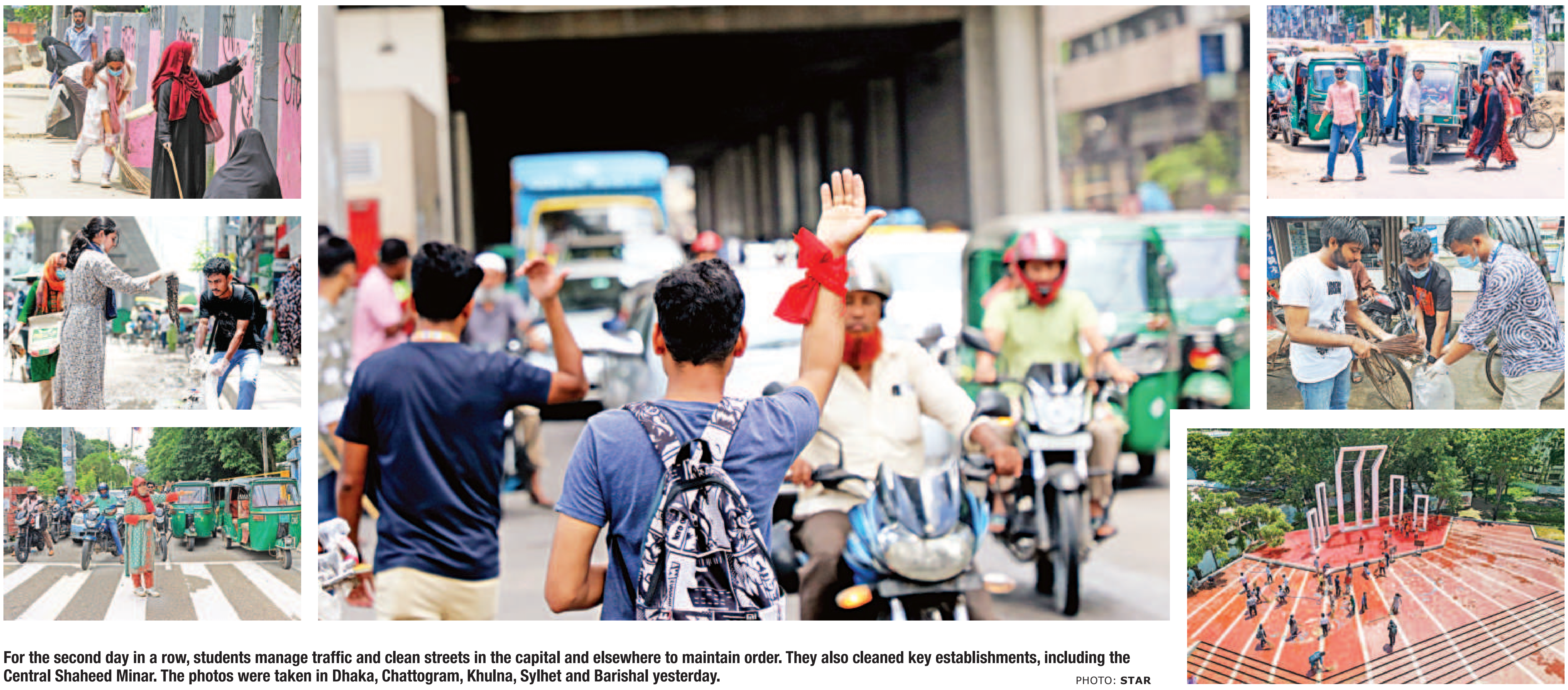


For the second day in a row, students manage traffic and clean streets in the capital and elsewhere to maintain order. They also cleaned key establishments, including the Central Shaheed Minar. The photos were taken in Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, Sylhet and Barishal yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Students step up to fill the vacuum

Remain vigilant to restore order in Dhaka, Ctg and beyond

ARAFAT RAHAMAN *and* **MASHFIQ MIZAN**

"Is this a place to ply a rickshaw?"

A student was seen telling a rickshaw puller at Hatirjheel intersection.

"Please turn the rickshaw around," he added.

This scene was just a snapshot of the measures taken by students to maintain order during an unprecedented power vacuum in the country.

Across the city at Panthapath intersection, a group of college-goers was seen stopping another rickshaw for moving in the wrong direction.

The rickshaw passenger, a middle-aged man, was taken aback for a moment. But instead of irritation, his face broke into a warm smile.

He stepped out of the rickshaw, extending a hand to the young men and women.

"Thank you," he said, "You're doing a great job. Carry on."

Then, he bought water bottles for the students.

For over 48 hours, with no police presence and absence of an existing government, students have taken it upon themselves to prevent chaos and untoward incidents.

Armed with sticks and proudly displaying the national flag on their foreheads, they have stood guard in the capital and other parts of the country. The sight brings back memories of the 2018 road safety movement, which coincidentally also took place in August.

These students, with their ID cards hanging around their necks, have created separate lanes for emergency vehicles, and have also made sure everyone follows traffic rules. They are also cleaning the city streets as wastes piled up in absence of city corporation workers.

> **This is our country. Our brothers gave lives for this country. We won't let Bangladesh descend into chaos as long as we have life in our body.**
>
> **ALI WASIF,** a college student

There are reports of students guarding homes, establishments, and businesses of minority communities in different parts of the country.

Meanwhile, they have stood guard and cleaned various state establishments following the vandalism on August 5.

Students have been actively managing traffic at major intersections in Dhaka, including Gono Bhaban, TSC, Agargaon, Mirpur 10, and ECB intersection. They are also present in heavily congested areas like Dhanmondi, Kalabagan, Mirpur Road, Bijoy Sarani, Farmgate, Karwan Bazar, and Rampura, ensuring smooth vehicle flow.

Ali Wasif, a college student, said, "This is our country. Our brothers gave lives for this country. We won't let this country descend into chaos as long as we have life in our body." He was managing traffic at Panthapath intersection.

Commuters were gladly following their directions. Nahidul Islam, a private job holder, said, "It's heartwarming that these young people took the duty into their hands in the absence of traffic personnel. They proved themselves; they are the guardians of this country."

In Agargaon, students stood with placards reading, "Ajker Shikkha Hok Protidiner Obbhash" (Let today's learning be a daily habit).

Sabbir, a student of Sher-e-Bangla

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

JP ready to support Dr Yunus

Says GM Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyo Party has expressed joy and relief as Noble Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus has been named as chief adviser of the interim government.

The party chairman, GM Quader, also congratulated Prof Yunus and wished him success in a statement yesterday.

The JP chief thanked the leaders of the anti-discrimination student movement for suggesting Yunus' name as head of the interim government.

"Prof Yunus is our pride. He introduced the concept of microcredit and social business to alleviate hunger and poverty as a unique model for the whole world. All of his activities are for the welfare of the people," said GM Quader.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Torching of Dhanmondi-32 a blot on our history

Says Kader Siddique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Kader Siddique, chief of Krishak Sramik Janata League, has lamented the arson attack on Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, saying it would have been better had he died before witnessing the gutted house of the independence hero at Dhanmondi 32 in Dhaka.

Kader, decorated with the Bir Uttom title and called Bangabir for his valiant role in the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

What's the point in destroying history?

Asks Sohel Taj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former state minister for home Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj, in a video message, yesterday protested the countrywide destruction, including the attack on the historic Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32.

"I am in pain witnessing the countrywide destruction caused by opportunists. Did students

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

HSC exams postponed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The education ministry has once again postponed the HSC and equivalent examinations that were scheduled to start on August 11, citing "unavoidable reasons".

In a press release issued yesterday, the Inter-Education Board Coordination Committee announced that the exams, which were to resume on August 11, have been postponed. The revised schedule for the exams will be announced later, according to the release.

Earlier, on August 1, the chairman of the committee, Prof Tapan Kumar Sarkar, stated that the exams would take place from August 11 according to a new schedule.

According to multiple officials from the Secondary and Higher

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Cultural heritage under attack

Sculptures, memorials vandalised across country; aviary, eco-park destroyed in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Within two and a half days since the fall of Sheikh Hasina, the country has witnessed widespread violence, ransacking, and the vandalism of archaeological sculptures, statues, and murals of Hasina and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

On Monday, a mob vandalised and set fire to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Mural and Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, the structure of Themis at the Supreme Court premises, Shadhinata Sangram Bhashkarjo at Fuller Road, the sculpture of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin in Mymensingh, and the Mujibnagar Liberation War Memorial Complex in Meherpur.

On Wednesday night, miscreants vandalised part of the "Madhusudan De Smriti Sculpture" in front of Madhu's Canteen on the Dhaka University premises.

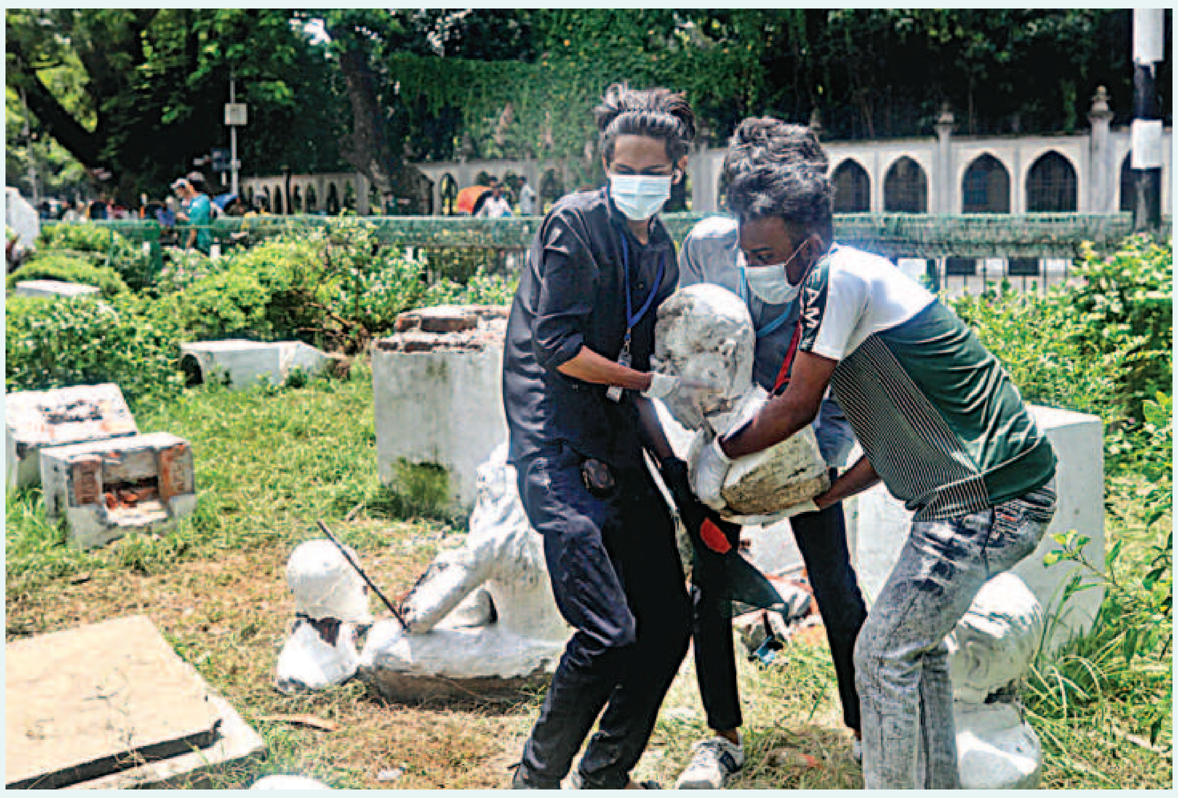
In Mymensingh's Zainul Park area, the sculpture of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin in front of the Zainul Abedin Sangrahashala (art gallery) was damaged by a mob on Monday afternoon.

Additionally, miscreants also broke down the 144-year-old Venus sculpture in front of Shashi Lodge the same day.

Md Saiful Islam, an employee of the lodge, said the mob broke down the gate in the afternoon and later destroyed the sculpture.

Maharaja Suryakanta Acharya Chowdhury, one of the Muktagacha zaminders, built the lodge in 1880 after his adopted son Maharaja Shashikanta Acharya Chowdhury, at a cost of Tk 11 lakh.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



Three students carry a bust for preservation after the Shadhinata Sangram Bhashkarjo on Fuller Road was vandalised on Monday. The photo was taken at Dhaka University yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

He never came back

FROM PAGE 5

Biplob's story is one of hope and hardship. A student at Mozaffar Ali Fakir High School and College, he had appeared for his SSC exams earlier this year but had failed in Bangla. Determined to succeed, he was preparing to retake the exams next year.

But Biplob wasn't just a student; he was the backbone of his family.

With his father, Babul Mia, unable to work due to an orthopedic issue, Biplob took on the responsibility of supporting his family and helped his two younger sisters, Farjana Akter Babli and Jannatul Ferdous, continue their education.

He started working at a local oil mill while preparing for the exams.

His mother, Bilkis Akter, said on July 20, Biplob left the house in the morning after getting a phone call. He told his mother that he would join a protest rally and then come back home for lunch.

"I was cooking lunch when I heard the commotion from nearby Kaltapara Bazar," Bilkis said. "I cooked Pangas fish, his favourite. He was supposed to come back for lunch before heading to work."

As Biplob did not return, Bilkis started to panic.

"My heart kept telling me something was wrong. As I went outside, I saw a human haulier carrying the injured, and then I saw his legs. I knew it was Biplob. I screamed and lost consciousness."

Biplob's father, Babul Mia, was away in Sylhet for work when the incident occurred. "We have no land, just our home on two decimals of land," Babul said. "We lost our son, our support, and now the future of my daughters is in jeopardy."

Babul said his wife is now bedridden and has lost the ability to communicate properly. Biplob's grandmother, Rokeya Begum, said, "Biplob earned about Tk 8,000 a month and supported all of us."

BGB on alert

FROM PAGE 5

to India through Benapole around 2:00pm.

He was the president of Dhaka Nawabganj Bandar union Chhatra League unit.

BGB's Jashore 49 and Khulna 21 battalions have strengthened the security system to prevent infiltration on various border routes of Benapole. The border troops also increased surveillance at key border points along with ports, land and railways.

The bordering routes include Benapole's Putkhali, Goga, Kayba, Agrabhulot, Rudrapur, Daulatpur, Gatipara, Ghiba, Sadipur, Bara Achhra, Kashipur Dhanyakhola, Raghunathpur, Shikarpur and Harishchandrapur.

Benapole Checkpost Immigration Police Officer-in-Charge Azaharul Islam said passengers' traveling through the land port has decreased.

JP ready to support

FROM PAGE 3

In the current reality of the country, there is no alternative to Prof Yunus, he said, adding that JP is ready to support Yunus' leadership.

He expressed hope that Dr Yunus will be able to restore the country's peace, prosperity, and stability while establishing a society based on justice.

In the statement, the JP chairman also said the country's law and order situation has become very fragile.

Reports of murders, thefts, robberies, and hijacks are coming from different parts of the country, he said.

"The people of the country are scared. Why fear still persists in the country after freeing it from the grip of dictatorship?" he questioned.

He drew the attention of those concerned about controlling the law and order situation in the country.

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Students along with Ansar members stand guard in front of the Jatrabari Police Station after a mob set it on fire. Several vehicles, furniture and valuables were burnt in the arson attack on Monday. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

He went outside

FROM PAGE 5

Rakib was 21 and got married seven months ago.

His wife, Sadia Akter, 18, is beyond consolation. "After losing her husband, Sadia is unable to mourn; she only gazes blankly at those who come to console her," said Rakib's father Abdul Halim.

He said she is now living with her parents in the adjacent Ishwarganj upazila.

"Recounting the events of that day, Halim said he, along with his wife Nurunnahar Begum and their eldest daughter Mastura Akter, had left their home to attend a relative's wedding in the Kandulia area of Gouripur on July 19.

Rakib and Sadia remained at home.

Around 10:00am the next day, Rakib left the house to buy medicine and never returned, he said.

Rakib's grief-stricken mother said, "We relied heavily on Rakib; he was a sincere and honest boy, our hope in every sense. But now, who will take care of us?"

"He used to encourage us to strive for the betterment of our family. He often motivated his sister Mastura to focus on her studies to secure a better future. But now, who will guide us? My only son is gone," Nurunnahar added.

His father added, "My son's lifeless body was brought home in the afternoon, and the local union parishad chairman urged us to bury him quickly to prevent further violence. Following his advice, we laid him to rest, but my wife, Nurunnahar, never got to see her beloved son's face one last time."

The family demanded proper investigation into the killing to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

How will we survive

FROM PAGE 5

daughter, as well as my in-laws."

Atiqul's body was taken to their village home Panpatti village of Patuakhali's Galachipa upazila that night. He was buried in their family graveyard the next day at noon.

Visiting the village home last week, this correspondent saw Atiqul's mother Mumtaz Begum wailing on the floor.

Shah Alam Howladar, his father, said, "Atiqul was my youngest son. He worked hard and continued his education, funding it with the money he earned from tuitions. Who will care for us now? How will we survive without him? I want a fair trial to bring his murderers to justice."

Don't believe

FROM PAGE 5

Cantonment reached near Ashulia Police Station on that day, the release said.

When the patrol team left for the cantonment with the injured, the policemen stationed in and around the police station started firing in the opposite direction with a hope to get assistance from the army patrol team.

The policemen were quickly identified and disarmed, said the ISPR release.

On information that some policemen had taken shelter in the cantonment, a mob gathered in front of the Dendabar Military Police Check Post in Savar Cantonment and demanded that the police personnel be handed over to them, the press release said.

When the crowd was assured of police personnel's disarmament, their identities and legal actions against them, the mob left the place, the ISPR said.

Students step up to fill the vacuum

FROM PAGE 3

Agriculture University, said, "We want our countrymen to abide by the law and order. Not only general citizens but all those in government positions must follow the law. This is what we fought for."

Beyond traffic management, students have taken on cleaning tasks, sweeping roads and removing debris. They are painting over the graffities on the walls of the city, in an attempt to restore Dhaka's pre-turmoil appearance.

Sharif Md Rafi from Daffodil International University shared that 40 students from his university have been working tirelessly, managing traffic and cleaning the city.

Students were also seen cleaning the Central Shaheed Minar, where recent anti-government movements had left significant waste.

Student volunteers of Red Crescent and Bangladesh Scouts were also present in the streets, assuming the role of police.

Similar scenes were also observed across the country in Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram and Sylhet.

In Chattogram, students took position at key intersections like Wasa, Agrabad, and Tigerpass, among others. They held posters which read, "Follow the traffic rules".

While some managed traffic, others collected waste, diligently cleaning their city.

The iconic tiger sculpture at Tigerpass was also cleaned. Local residents have expressed their appreciation for the students' efforts and responsibility.

In Barishal, students with sticks in hand and ID cards displayed on their necks maintained traffic flow and collected waste to clean the city. With brooms and bags, they worked to ensure Barishal remained orderly and clean.

In Khulna, students managed traffic at Shibbari Intersection, stopping bikers who were not wearing helmets.

In Sylhet, at Chouhatta, students managed traffic, instructing people to use crosswalks for their safety. A platform of students called Save Sylhet was seen collecting waste in the Rikabi Bazar area.

Meanwhile, Md Mainul Islam, newly-appointed inspector general of police (IGP), during a briefing at the police headquarters yesterday expressed his gratitude to the students for cleaning the city streets and controlling traffic system.

HSC exams

FROM PAGE 3

Secondary Education Board, confidential exam materials, including question papers, were stored in various police stations and other facilities for safekeeping.

Several of these locations were attacked on Monday following the resignation and departure of the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina. During the attacks, question papers in many areas were burned or destroyed, sources said.

The Higher Secondary Certificate and its equivalent exams began on June 30.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 8

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Torching of

FROM PAGE 3

Liberation War, spoke to reporters after visiting the museum yesterday, two days after the attack following the ouster of Sheikh Hasina.

"Bangabandhu and Sheikh Hasina are not the same thing. Bangabandhu is the Father of the Nation and the great hero of independence. Today, I saw the charred house of Dhanmondi 32. It would have been better if I had died before that," Kader remarked.

He blamed the Awami League for many wrongdoings. "But Sheikh Mujibur Rahman did nothing wrong. He has brought honour to the Bengali nation. The destruction will remain as a blot on the history of the Bengali nation in future. Bangabandhu will live for ages. His honour will remain intact for ages. Those who committed this crime will be brought to book one day."

He also urged the student leaders to establish and maintain peace instead of seeking revenge. "There is nothing wrong if anyone supports the Awami League, do not assault them."

Besides the students, the administration and the army need to take steps to protect the Hindus and other minority groups, he said.

Asked what would happen to the leaders and activists of the AL as Hasina left the country, he said, "This disaster is not bigger than the catastrophe that came through the assassination of Bangabandhu. Yes, for some time, they will be afraid, and they will suffer. But the party is not completely doomed."

What's the point

FROM PAGE 3

and people take to the streets for such killings and destruction? What message are we sending to our young generation by damaging these assets and our history? As a concerned citizen, I strongly condemn these," Sohel Taj, also a son of former prime minister Taj Uddin Ahmad, said.

"What benefit did they gain from burning the Dhanmondi-32 house and damaging Bangabandhu's sculptures?" he asked.

"We all want an impartial investigation on those cops who were involved in unjust activities. But why are we putting everyone against us? We need to remember that it is impossible to run a country without law enforcement agencies," he said.

He also made several demands regarding the upcoming interim government.

They include protecting lives and properties from ongoing destruction, holding accountable the Awami League leaders and activists involved in wrongdoings and ensuring the safety of innocent leaders and activists, giving space to dissent, restoring the right to vote, establishing good governance and the rule of law, freeing the judicial system, administration, and police forces from political influence, and ensuring communal harmony and fundamental rights.

Cultural heritage

FROM PAGE 3

The white stone statue was in the middle of a fountain in front of the lodge.

In Chattogram, the Sheikh Russel Aviary and Eco-Park at Rangunia upazila was vandalised and looted for two consecutive days by miscreants following Hasina's resignation.

"Around 500 miscreants entered the park on Monday evening and vandalised everything in several phases till Tuesday night," said Nahid Hasan, in charge of the park and a forester of Chattogram South Forest Division.

They took away around 350 birds and two deer. Hasan said the miscreants also beat up six employees of the park and looted cable cars, tables, chairs, computers, electronic items, and documents. They set fire to various structures within the park.

Videos and photos showed some looters taking away a deer tied with ropes.

They vandalised the control box of the cable car and set fire to the office room of the park.

"We returned to the park on Wednesday with Army shelter. Currently, we have closed the park as per higher official directive," Hasan said. The park was opened for tourists in 2013.

Abdullah Al Mamun, divisional forest officer of the Chattogram South Forest Division, told this newspaper that they are yet to estimate the amount of damage.

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সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ঠিকাদার তালিকাভূক্তি/লাইসেন্স নবায়ন বিজ্ঞপ্তি (সংশোধনী-১)

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সড়ক বিভাগ, নাটোর কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের পরিচালন (রাজস্ব) বাজেটের আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের মাধ্যমে অভ্যন্তরীন ক্রয়কার্য (NCT-Works) সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরের জন্য ঠিকাদার তালিকাভূক্তি/নবায়ন করা হবে। সিপিটিইউ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সড়ক বিভাগ, নাটোর অথবা উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ-১/২, নাটোর হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরবরাহ করা হবে। ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/চালান নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, নাটোর এর অনুকূলে জমা প্রদান করে অথবা মানি রিসিটের মাধ্যমে ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা পরিশোধ করত: আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন। নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সঠিকভাবে পূরণ পূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ নিম্নে বর্ণিত (ছক-০১) সময়ের মধ্যে নাটোর সড়ক বিভাগে জমা প্রদান করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর বিধি-৬৩ ও ৬৪ অনুসরণযোগ্য এবং এই তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ দরপত্র আহবান/কাজ প্রদানের নিশ্চয়তা বিধান করে না।

উল্লেখ্য যে, ইতিপূর্বে অত্র দপ্তরের তালিকাভূক্ত ঠিকাদারগণ ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের লাইসেন্স নবায়ন (Renewal) ফি বাবদ টাকা-২,০০০.০০ (দুই হাজার) মাত্র + ১৫% ভ্যাটসহ নিম্ন বর্ণিত (ছক-০২) তারিখের মধ্যে অত্র দপ্তরে জমা পূর্বক লাইসেন্স নবায়ন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

ছক-০১ (সংশোধিত)

বিবরণ	তালিকাভুক্তির ফরমের মূল্য	তালিকাভুক্তির ফরম সংগ্রহের সময়সীমা	তালিকাভুক্তির ফরম জমা প্রদানের সময়সীমা
ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি	১০০০/-	০৭/০৭/২০২৪ হতে ১৩/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	০৭/০৭/২০২৪ হতে ১৪/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত

ছক-০২

বিবরণ	নবায়ন ফি	বিনা জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা	৫০% জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা	১০০% জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা
ঠিকাদার লাইসেন্স নবায়ন	২০০০/- টাকা + ১৫% ভ্যাট	০৭/০৭/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ হতে ১৪/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত	১৬/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ হতে ১৫/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত	১৬/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ হতে ১৫/১০/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত

০৭.০৮.২৪
(মোঃ কামরুল হাসান সরকার)
পরিচিতি নং- ৬০২৩১২
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (চঃদাঃ), সওজ
সড়ক বিভাগ, নাটোর।

GD- 126

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Munshiganj.Road Division
Dashkani, Panchasar (Mukterpur), Munshiganj.
Phone & Fax 02-998847019
E-mail: eemunrhd@gmail.com

Memo No-35.01.5900.447.04.008.23-1932 **Date. 06/08/2024**

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

It is notified for all concerned that the following amendments are hereby made against Tender Package-01-LTM/e-GP/Mundiv/2024-2025,TID No-1005262, 02-LTM/e-GP/Mundiv/2024-20254,TID No-1005263 notice published vide memo 35.01.5900.447.04.008.23-1886 dt. 29/07/2024.

Field Name	Old Value	New Value
Last Selling date & Time	11-08-2024 16:00	25.08.2024 16:00
Closing Date & Time	12-08-2024 09:00	26.08.2024 09:00
Opening Date & Time	12-08-2024 09:00	26.08.2024 09:00
Brief Description of Goods, Works of Service		
1005262, 01-LTM/e-GP/Mundiv/2024-2025	Emergency Repair by Base Type-II, DBS-Wearing Course, Clearing and Grubbing, Sand Filling, Banner Placing at " Jatir Pita Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Mohasarak" (N-8) (Mawa End Service Road) for VVIP Movement under Munshiganj Road Division, Munshiganj During the year of 2024-2025.	
Last Selling date & Time	11-08-2024 16:00	25.08.2024 16:00
Closing Date & Time	12-08-2024 09:05	26.08.2024 09:05
Opening Date & Time	12-08-2024 09:05	26.08.2024 09:05
Brief Description of Goods, Works of Service		
1005263, 02-LTM/e-GP/Mundiv/2024-2025	Earth Filling for Munshiganj Division Office Compound under Munshiganj Road Division, Munshiganj During the year of 2024-2025.	

Others terms and conditions of the tender notice will remain unchanged. This amendment will be treated as part of the tender documents.

০৬-০৮-২০২৪
(Dewan Abul Kashem Mohammad Nahin Reza)
ID No-602143
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Munshiganj.

GD-124

CCC at a standstill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

With the mayor remaining absent from his office, the activities of Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) have come to a standstill.

CCC officials also haven't been very active, with many being absent from work. Those who came to the office declined to talk to the media.

"Amid the current situation, we are feeling very insecure," said a CCC official, preferring anonymity.

According to sources, miscreants vandalised the offices of at least 12 ward councillors of CCC in different areas of the port city on Monday.

Several vehicles under the CCC conservancy department were also set on fire.

Since then, most CCC ward councillors have gone to hideouts, and CCC conservancy workers have not been going to localities for waste removal, fearing attacks.

Residents of the port city are suffering due to the waste removal activities being stopped for three days.

Waste was found to be piled up while visiting different areas of the city, including Katalganj, Askar Dighir Par, Chatteshwari Road, and Chawk Bazar.

"We cannot walk through the road due to the stink from the garbage piled up by the side of the road," said Masud Haider, a resident of Katalganj area.

CCC chief conservancy officer Commander Latiful Haque Kazmi could not be contacted, as his cell phone was found switched off.

Contacted, CCC Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Md Tauhidul Islam said all the officials and staffers were feeling insecure.

"We have taken some security measures on our own, as we are not getting any support from police," he said.

"A total of 12 ward councillors' offices have been vandalised on Monday, while miscreants destroyed all equipment for waste management kept in those offices," he said, adding that valuables worth Tk 1.57 crore have been destroyed in CCC ward 41.

They also vandalised some 12 vehicles of the CCC, of which, four were of the conservancy department, he said.

Asked why the mayor has been absent from office, Tauhidul said as police are providing no security, the mayor is not coming to office.

"I hope the situation will return to normalcy within the next week," he added.

A group of students not only cleaned the graffiti drawn on the sculpture of a tiger in the port city but also painted it anew. The photo was taken in the Tigerpass area yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

'Don't believe in misleading information'

ISPR on Ashulia incident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) has requested all not to believe the "misleading and false information" spread through social media.

A deputy commander of an army patrol team, and an unidentified person were shot by police in Ashulia on August 5 "due to misunderstanding", ISPR cited in the release today.

"It is to be noted that the incident was exaggerated through social media, which created confusion among people," the ISPR said in a press release yesterday.

Some army personnel were also injured by rubber bullets during the incident that took place when a patrol team from Savar

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Indian visa centres closed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indian Visa Application Centers in Bangladesh will remain closed till further notice. The next application date will be informed through SMS and people are asked to pick up their passports the next working day, said a press release.

Meanwhile, non-essential staffers at the Indian High Commission and their family members returned to India on commercial flights, PTI reported yesterday.

All Indian diplomats continue to operate from Dhaka, and the mission remains functional.

BENAPOLE BORDER

BGB on alert to prevent AL men from fleeing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Benapole*

Bangladesh Border Guard imposed a high alert so that former ministers, lawmakers and leaders of Awami League cannot go to India illegally through the Benapole border.

Security has been strengthened at the border, said Lt Col Saifullah Siddiqui, commanding officer of BGB's Jashore 49 Battalion.

The instruction has been given from the Dhaka headquarters so that no one can escape through the border, he said.

According to BGB, a Chhatra League leader Sajib Halder, 25, was arrested while he was going

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

AG Amin Uddin resigns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AM Amin Uddin, who was appointed attorney general by Sheikh Hasina-led government, resigned from his post citing personal difficulties yesterday.

"I have sent my resignation letter to the president. I mentioned personal difficulties as the reason for resignation in the letter," he said.

He refused to give any further details. He was appointed on October 8, 2020 after the death of the then AG Mahbubey Alam.

On Tuesday, additional attorney general Sk Md Morshed also resigned.

More than just NUMBERS

A textile engineer shot dead in Dhaka. A student died of bullet wounds in Gouripur. A 21-year-old fatally shot in Mymensingh. At least 204 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

How will we survive without him?

Asks father of Atiqul who died after being shot in Mirpur

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Textile engineer Atiqul Islam, 32, worked at a buying house in the capital's Mirpur. On the evening of July 19, he returned home from work around 5:00pm. After leaving his motorcycle at home, he went to the Mirpur 10 intersection to see what was happening outside.

Atiqul was observing from a distance as a clash broke out between protesters and law enforcers.

However, within a moment, he was shot. He fell to the ground and died on the spot.

Atiqul lived in Mirpur along with his wife Tamanna and their one-and-a-half-year-old daughter Farista. Along with his wife and daughter, Atiqul was also responsible for looking after his elderly parents who reside in Patuakhali.

Tamanna Akhter, Atiqul's wife, said, "My husband was not involved in any politics. He was the sole earning member in the family. With his income, he supported me and my

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

He never came back home for lunch

Family mourns loss of Biplob who was shot dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Biplob Hasan will never sit for his SSC examinations.

The 17-year-old's dreams of changing his family's fortune were shattered on July 20 when he got shot during a clash between protesters and law enforcers at Kaltapara Bazar, along the Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road in Gouripur.

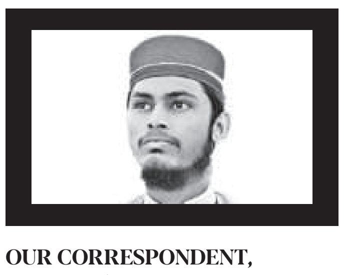
He was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where he died, leaving behind a void that no words can fill.

He now rests in his family's graveyard.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

He went outside to buy medicine for me

Says wife of Rakib who died after getting shot in chest



OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

On July 20, Noor-E-Alam Siddique Rakib went out of his home in Mymensingh to buy medicine for his four-month pregnant wife.

He was worried about his wife's health and did not realise there were clashes going on outside between protesters and law enforcers.

Rakib, son of Abdul Halim of Damgoan village in Gouripur upazila, got hit by a bullet in his chest. Locals took him to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Road Transport & Bridges
Road Transport & Highways Division
Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA)
DTCA Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
Website: www.dtca.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.02.0000.003.14.005.24-215 Date: 07/08/2024

INVITATION FOR TENDER
for
Outsourcing Staff for Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA) (Re-Tender)

1	Ministry / Division	:	Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges / Road Transport and Highways Division.
2	Agency	:	**Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA)**
3	Name of procuring entity	:	Project Director Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA) Project.
4	The procuring entity code	:	N/A
5	Procuring entity district	:	Dhaka
6	Invitation for	:	Physical Service (Outsourcing Staff)
7	Invitation Ref No.	:	35.02.0000.003.14.005.24-215
8	Invitation date	:	07 August 2024
KEY INFORMATION			
9	Procurement method	:	Open Tender Method (OTM)
FUNDING INFORMATION			
10	Budget and source of funds	:	Development Budget of GoB
11	Development partner		N/A
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
12	Project/program code		223048300
13	Project/program name	:	Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA).
14	Tender Package No.	:	NSD-1
15	Tender package name	:	Outsourcing Staff for Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA).
16	Tender publishing date	:	08 August 2024.
17	Tender last selling date	:	27 August, 2024 during office hours
18	Tender closing date & time	:	28 August, 2024 at 12:00pm
19	Tender opening date and time	:	28 August, 2024 at 12:30pm
20	**NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE OFFICE**		
	Selling of tender document	:	Office of the Project Director Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA). Room No. 511, DTCA Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
	Receiving tender document	:	Office of the Project Director Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA). Room No. 511, DTCA Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
	Opening of tender document	:	Office of the Project Director Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA). Room No. 511, DTCA Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
21	Eligibility of tenderer	:	a) Tenderer must have the experience of supplying manpower for 5 years in any Ministry/Division/Authority/Agency/Government Company/ Government Organization /Government Project/Consultant's Organization of the foreign aided project. Certificates of relevant experiences are to be attested by first class gazetted officer. b) Tenderer must have specific experience as a prime contractor of a single contract completed valued at least of Taka 14 (Fourteen) lacs in last 5 years [years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in newspaper] c) Tenderer shall have the legal capacity to enter into the contract under the applicable Law. d) Tenderer shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh. e) Tenderer shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh. f) Other eligibility criteria as mentioned in the Tender Document.
22	Brief description of the service to be provided	:	To provide staffs input for the positions of Junior Engineer, Sub-Assistant Engineer, Office Assistant Cum Computer Operator, Office Assistant (MLSS) for the office of the Project Director.
23	Price of the tender document		Tk 1000.00 (one thousand) (non-refundable)

24	Package No.	Identification of package	Tender security amount (Tk)	Completion time
	NSD-1	Outsourcing Staff for Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA).	BDT 45,000.00 (forty-five thousand only)	11 months

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
25	Name of official inviting tender	:	Mir Muhammad Kamrul Hasan
26	Designation of official inviting tender	:	Project Director
27	Address of official inviting tender	:	Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram Metropolitan Area (CMA). Room No. 511, DTCA Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
28	Contact details of official inviting tender	:	Phone: +88 01709271084 Website: www.dtca.gov.bd

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Tenders and the whole process.

07/08/24
Mir Muhammad Kamrul Hasan
Project Director
Transport Master Plan and Preliminary Feasibility Study
for Urban Metro Rail Transit Construction of Chattogram
Metropolitan Area (CMA)

GD-125

Thai court bans popular politician

Dissolves his Move Forward Party

AFP, *Bangkok*

Thailand's most popular politician was banned from politics for 10 years and his party dissolved yesterday over his attempt to reform the kingdom's archaic royal defamation laws.

The Constitutional Court in Bangkok voted "unanimously" to dissolve the Move Forward Party (MFP) and ban its executive board, which includes its former leader Pita Limjaroenrat, for 10 years, judge Punya Udchachon said.

Pita, 43, led the reformist MFP to a shock first place in a general election last year.

He struck a chord with young and urban voters with his pledge to reform Thailand's strict royal defamation law, which rights groups say has been misused to stifle pro-democracy groups.

เป็นกำลังใจ
พรรคก้าวไกล
เห็นหัว
กูบ้าง
SUS

Supporters at the Move Forward Party (MFP) headquarters react after Thailand's Constitutional Court ruled that former MFP leader Pita Limjaroenrat was to receive a decade-long ban and dissolve his party after challenging royal defamation laws, in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Harris, Walz debut White House ticket

Vow to 'fight for future' in Philadelphia rally

AFP, *Philadelphia*

Kamala Harris made her debut Tuesday evening with new White House running mate Tim Walz, who unleashed a stinging rebuke of their Republican rival Donald Trump, questioning his commitment to the country and skewering his record in office.

Hours after being announced on the Democratic ticket, the Minnesota governor took the stage with Vice President Harris in the crucial swing state of Pennsylvania, and signaled his intent to press the case aggressively against Trump.

"Donald Trump -- he sees the world differently. He doesn't know the first thing about service because he's too busy serving himself," Walz told a crowd of around 10,000 wildly cheering supporters in Philadelphia.

He accused Trump of deliberately weakening the economy for his own ends, mocking law and order, and sowing "chaos and division"

"He drove our economy into the ground, and make no mistake: violent crime was up under Donald Trump. That's not even counting the crimes he committed," Walz added, earning roars of laughter and boisterous applause.

With less than three months to go until election day, most Americans don't know who Walz is -- and he gave voters a glimpse of his personal story, describing his military service, his experiences as a public school teacher and his record in politics.

He spoke of his upbringing in the small town of Butte, Nebraska where he worked on the family farm and where community was a "way of life" with neighbors striving together "for the common good." In their first campaign appearance together, Harris and Walz offered a glimpse of how they might appeal to voters as a duo -- one a trailblazing Black and South Asian former senator from California, the other a white ex-congressman from the blue-collar US heartland. Harris, 59, described Walz as "a leader who will help unite our nation and move us forward, a fighter for the middle class, a patriot who believes, as I do, in the extraordinary promise of America."

A former attorney general of California, Harris has sought to draw a contrast between her past as a prosecutor and Trump's criminal record, which extends to 34 felonies, with over a dozen more charges pending. But she told the crowd: "This campaign -- our campaign -- is not just a fight against Donald Trump. Our campaign -- this campaign -- is a fight for the future."

Harris draws more support among Black voters

Says analysis of Reuters polling; Trump up slightly among white voters

REUTERS, *Washington*

Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris is drawing more support from Black voters than President Joe Biden did when he was in the race this year, while Republican Donald Trump's support among white voters has risen somewhat in recent months, according to an analysis of Reuters/Ipsos polling.

The analysis, which examined more than 10,000 responses from seven nationwide Reuters/Ipsos polls conducted since May, points to significant strengths and vulnerabilities for Harris, the US vice president who took over Biden's campaign when the president dropped his re-election bid on July 21.

Harris would be the first Black woman elected president, as well as the first Asian American, if she were to defeat Trump in the November 5 election.

Some 70 percent of Black voters polled in July picked Harris over Trump on a hypothetical ballot, up from 59 percent who backed Biden in May and June polls. Trump's share of the Black vote rose marginally to 12 percent in July from 9 percent in May and June.

Trump, meanwhile, is seeing increased support from white voters. Some 50% picked Trump in July polls, up from 46% in May and June. Harris had the support of 38% of white voters in July, compared to 36% in May and June.

The race remains essentially tied, with Harris and Trump each getting 43% support in an aggregate of last month's polls. Biden and Trump each had 40% in the polls conducted in the previous two months.

The analysis examined poll responses gathered throughout July on a hypothetical Harris-Trump contest and included responses from before Biden, 81, ended his bid. All responses on Harris, however, were gathered after Biden's June 27 debate against Trump, when the president's faltering performance led Democrats to call on him to end his campaign.

White voters make up the biggest racial bloc, accounting for 72% of all voters in the 2020 election, according to the Pew Research Center, though their share of the electorate has dropped sharply in recent decades.

Ukraine now opening '2nd front' in Africa: Russia

AFP, *Moscow*

Russia said yesterday that Ukraine is now opening a "second front" in Africa after Mali and Niger broke off diplomatic relations with Kyiv, accusing it of support for "terrorist groups".

"Unable to defeat Russia on the battlefield, the criminal regime of Volodymyr Zelensky has opened a second front in Africa," Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told the RIA Novosti news agency.

Zakharova accused Ukraine of "pandering to terrorist groups in countries on the continent friendly to Moscow".

Tuareg-led separatists have said they killed 84 fighters from Russia's Wagner mercenary group and 47 Malian soldiers in an attack last month in northern Mali.

Mali accused a senior Ukrainian official of having admitted Kyiv's role in the attack and broke off diplomatic relations on August 5.

AL not dead

FROM PAGE 16

period of chaos. Our Awami League leaders outside the city are being murdered. The Awami League is the largest democratic political party. It is not dead. The Awami League has liberated Bangladesh. It will not be easy to wipe it out."

"A new democratic Bangladesh is not possible without the Awami League," said Joy.

"I call upon all the leaders of Awami League to stand tall, knowing that we are with you. We will do everything needed to save the country and save the Awami League. Sheikh Hasina is not dead. We have not gone anywhere."

Hours after Hasina's departure on Monday, Joy told BBC that there will be no political comeback for her. Following that Joy gave an interview to DW Bangla, stating neither his mother, nor him nor any of their family members will enter politics.

Meanwhile, AL leaders and activists in Gopalganj yesterday vowed to bring back Hasina, who resigned following a massive uprising.

They marched through Tungipara and took the oath at the mausoleum of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Mahabub Ali Khan, president of Gopalganj Awami League, administered the oath.

Speaking at the programme, GM Sahab Uddin Azam, general secretary of Gopalganj AL, said they would fight politically and continue their movement until they could bring Hasina and her sister Sheikh Rehana back to the country.

Major shakeup

FROM PAGE 16

night and yesterday.

The new IGP is a BCS 12th batch officer. Before becoming IGP, he served as the commandant of the Traffic and Driving School. He is from Panchagarh.

Additional IGP AKM Shahidur Rahman, also a 12th BCS police cadre officer, was serving in the police headquarters. He is from Barishal. Mainul Hasan who is from Kishoreganj and is a 17th BCS Batch officer was serving in the Criminal Investigation Department.

The changes came days after Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign as the prime minister and fled the country amid an unprecedented mass upsurge following student protests that saw over 400 people (as far as this newspaper could confirm) killed in violent clashes since July 16. Many of the deaths have been blamed on the indiscriminate firing of police, Rab and BGB to quell the protest.

Since the ouster, many police establishments came under attack by angry mobs across the country that left dozens of policemen killed, leaving the force's chain of command in disarray. The attacks also forced many policemen to flee for safety leaving their routine work and police establishments unguarded.

The newly appointed IGP yesterday instructed all policemen to return to their respective police lines, offices, and barracks to manage public order in the next 24 hours.

The IGP said many police officials were killed, injured and tortured because of some unprofessional and overly ambitious officials who did not follow the accepted principles of applying force and violated human rights.

Meanwhile, lower-ranked police personnel from constables to inspectors staged separate demonstrations at Dampara Police Lines in Chattogram yesterday and Barishal Police Lines on Tuesday afternoon. They also announced work abstention until their 11-point demand including the safety of every member of the police is ensured.

They brought out processions and held rallies demanding realisation of their demands which also included bringing those involved in the killings of police members to justice, forming an independent police commission to ensure that any political party cannot use police to implement its political agenda, ensuring eight hour working hours, increasing risk allowance, and the appointment of sergeant and sub-inspector through public service commission.

During the demonstration in Barishal, the agitating policemen said that they were the victims of some corrupt police officers and wanted those officials to be removed from the force.

In a written statement, the demonstrating policemen pointed out that the chain of command of police has broken down. "Our guardians (superiors) went into hiding abandoning us, leaving us insecure. The houses of the police forces are also being attacked. Many members of the police force have been brutally killed," it reads.

During a briefing yesterday, the IGP issued a warning to policemen on using social media, "I am directing my colleagues at all levels to refrain from making any demand, comment or reply through any kind of personal, association, batch, association on social media."

Civil admin

FROM PAGE 16

orphans. Even the former IGP, who went into hiding, gave direction to the police force in a video message. But there was no such message for us, not even from the cabinet division," said the deputy commissioner of a district in Mymensingh division.

The officer added that DCs across the country were shocked that no one even asked how they were doing even after their officers were vandalised.

The residence of Mymensingh DC, and many offices of upazila nirbahi officers and assistant commissioners were vandalised in Cumilla, Bhola, Sunamganj, Narsingdi and Chuadanga, officials said.

A secretary said the void in general administration leadership was unprecedented. "These top officials only thought about their own safety, setting a bad example."

An employee of the Mymensingh DC office said, "We have never heard of the general administration falling apart like this."

Cabinet Secretary Mahbub Hossain did not pick up the phone.

Senior Secretary Mezbah said, "We talked with all the divisional commissioners and are taking information from the field officials."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Education
National Curriculum and Textbook Board
69-70, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000
www.nctb.gov.bd

Record Number: 37.06.0000.303.07.001.23.1 Date: 07 Aug 2024

Subject: Invitation for Corrigendum e-Tender (OTM)

This is to notify to all concerned tenderers that the following tenders have been published by National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) through the e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) regarding textbook Secondary Class-8 printing, binding and supplying for the Academic Year 2025.

Tender Date and Time			
Previous Date and Time		**Corrigendum Date and Time**	
Tender/Proposal Closing/Opening:	06/08/2024; 14:00pm	Tender/Proposal Closing/Opening:	12/08/2024; 14:00pm

Interested tenderers may visit www.eprocure.gov.bd website to get the details of the Tender. This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, you are requested to go through the www.eprocure.gov.bd web Portal.

07-08-2024
Moss. Nazma Akther
Secretary

GD-128

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Cumilla
E-mail: eecom@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.1933.410.07.001.24-5160 Date: 07-08-2024

e-Tender Corrigendum Notice No. 01
of
Contract No. e-GP/CRD/ADP/EMRB/WP-02/2023-2024,
Tender ID No. 1004890

invited by this Office will be as follows:

SL. No.	Field name	Old value	New value
1.	Document last selling date & time	12/08/2024 16:00	27/08/2024 16:00
2.	Opening date & time	13/08/2024 12:00	28/08/2024 12:00
3.	Last date & time for tender/proposal security submission	12/08/2024 17:00	27/08/2024 17:00
4.	Closing date & time	13/08/2024 12:00	28/08/2024 12:00

This corrigendum will be the part & parcel of the Tender Document. All other terms and conditions of the Tender Document will remain unchanged. The Corrigendum Notice-01 will be the part of the Tender Document. For further information please visit the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd.

07/08/2024
Suniti Chakma
ID No. 602147
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Cumilla
☎ : 01730-782641

GD-127

Helicopter crashes in Nepali forest

All 5 on board killed

REUTERS, *Kathmandu*

A helicopter crashed in a forest outside Nepal's capital Kathmandu shortly after takeoff yesterday, killing all five people on board, an official said, the latest of more than a dozen air crashes in the mountainous region since 2000.

The helicopter, operated by Dynasty air crashed into a Himalayan forest in Shivapuri National Park of Nuwakot district, 57 km from the capital, deputy Chief District Officer Krishna Prasad said.

Police spokesman Dan Bahadur Karki confirmed all four passengers were Chinese nationals, three men and one woman, while the pilot was a Nepali male.

Local residents saw a fire emanating from forest and alerted authorities, he said.

The helicopter lost contact with air traffic control three minutes after takeoff, the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal said.

Security force personnel search for the victims amidst the debris at the site of a helicopter crash on the outskirts of Kathmandu, Nepal yesterday. All five people aboard including the pilot and four Chinese tourists were killed in the crash. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

UK braces for more riots

Thousands of riot police on standby

AFP, *London*

Thousands of riot police stood ready yesterday as Britain remained on alert for disturbances during far-right protests across the country.

Nightly riots, during which mosques and migrant targets have been attacked, erupted after three children were murdered on July 29.

Police said they were investigating several racially-motivated hate crimes in Belfast on Tuesday, including an attack on a young boy that left him with minor facial injuries.

And far-right groups plan demonstrations yesterday in more than 30 locations, with immigration lawyers and buildings hosting asylum seekers primary targets, according to posts on messaging app Telegram leaked to the British media.

The government has said 6,000 specialist police are on standby to deal with the disorder, which has seen over 425 people arrested and at least 120 charged.

The violence broke out after girls aged nine, seven and six were killed and five more children critically injured during a knife attack at a Taylor Swift dance class in Southport.

Gaza prisoners subject to systematic abuse

Says rights group; Israeli army, prison service deny allegations, say law upheld

REUTERS, *Jerusalem*

Israel has conducted a systematic policy of prisoner abuse and torture since the start of the Gaza offensive, subjecting Palestinian detainees to acts ranging from arbitrary violence to sexual abuse, Israeli rights group B'Tselem said in a report.

It said the report, issued on Monday, was based on interviews with 55 Palestinians from Gaza, the West Bank and Israel detained in Israeli prisons since Hamas' attack on Israel that set off the offensive, most of them without being tried.

Palestinian prisoners were subjected to arbitrary beatings, humiliating treatment and sleep deprivation.

"The testimonies clearly indicate a systematic, institutional policy focused on the continual abuse and torture of all Palestinian prisoners held by Israel," the report said.

The Israeli military, which runs some detention facilities where Palestinian prisoners have been held, said that it operated according to the rule of law and any specific claims of abuse were investigated.

"The IDF categorically rejects allegations of systematic abuse, including sexual abuse, in its detention facilities," it said, adding that monitoring mechanisms were in place to ensure facilities were run in accordance with the law.

A spokesperson for the Israel Prison Service said that all prisoners were treated according to the law and all basic rights were fully applied by professionally trained guards.

"We are not aware of the claims you described and as far as we know, no such events have occurred under IPS responsibility," the spokesperson said, adding that detainees had the right to file complaints that would be fully examined and investigated.

The B'Tselem report was issued days after the Israeli military detained nine soldiers accused of severe abuse of a prisoner in a military facility in the Negev desert. Israeli press reports said the soldiers were accused of sexually abusing a member of an elite Hamas unit.

The report detailed allegations that Palestinian prisoners were subjected to arbitrary beatings, degrading and humiliating treatment and sleep deprivation, as well as "the repeated use of sexual violence, in varying degrees of severity".

"The overall picture indicates abuse and torture carried out under orders, in utter defiance of Israel's obligations both under domestic law and international law," it said.

UK TOP COURT

Former 'IS bride' loses citizenship removal appeal bid

AFP, *London*

A woman stripped of her British citizenship after leaving the country as a teenager to marry an Islamic State group fighter lost a bid yesterday to take her case to the UK's top court.

Shamima Begum, 24, had hoped to challenge an earlier ruling in which she lost an appeal against the removal of her citizenship.

But UK Supreme Court justices said she could not appeal again following her defeat at the Court of Appeal in February.

The justices found that her proposed grounds for appeal "do not raise an arguable point of law".

Begum, whose family is of Bangladeshi origin, was 15 years old when she left her east London home for Syria with two school friends in 2015.

While there, she married an IS fighter and had three children, none of whom survived. She said she was left stateless in February 2019 when Britain's then-interior minister revoked her citizenship on national security grounds after she was found in a Syrian refugee camp.

'Whom do we turn to for help?'

FROM PAGE 1

A house owner of the area told this correspondent that Alamgir, son of another resident name Siraj, banged on the main entrance.

"When I opened the gate, they [Alamgir and others] held a machete to my throat and demanded Tk 5 lakh." He said, adding that they also beat him up.

"At one point, the attackers took cash worth Tk 2 lakh, including Saudi riyals."

Alamgir and the rest fled the scene on motorbikes later, witnesses said.

Imran Hossain, a security guard of a house in Bashbari, said some young people were moving around the neighbourhood on a truck, while several others were on motorbikes.

Meanwhile, locals, mostly students, in Mohammadpur and Shyamoli areas, have formed groups to stay vigilant in their respective neighborhoods.

Last night, a group of residents was seen in Shyamoli Housing area, ready to alert others if any threats were detected, encouraging neighbours to band together and confront miscreants.

Apart from Mohammadpur, such incidents of robberies have also been reported from other areas of the capital, including Jatrabari, Demra, Badda, Rampura and Vatara.

Mahbubur Rahman, a resident on Hashem Khan Road in Rayerbazar and a trader by profession, said they usually leave for home late into the night but their house owner has demanded that everyone be back by 10:00pm due to the ongoing situation.

"Around 11:00-12:00 at night, multiple groups roam around the area to commit robbery and looting, taking advantage of the absence of law enforcers on the streets. This has been going on for the last two days. Who are we supposed to go to for help?"

People have also reported that shops were broken into and looted. They are in fear that such incidents will increase if police stations are not operational soon.

With stations unmanned and arms and ammunition looted from many, a grave sense of insecurity has been prevailing in the capital and elsewhere.

Speaking to The Daily Star last night, Indrajit Barua, a resident of Mohammadpur's Jafrabad, said a group of at least 15 teenagers armed with sharp weapons attacked his neighbouring house in Ityadi Mor around 10:00pm.

An army team later arrived and apprehended some of them, he said.

"There were so many screams we heard during the attack. We were so scared, we switched off the lights in our house and stayed inside."

Like Tuesday, locals of Mohammadpur around 11:00pm last night began alerting residents through loudspeakers from mosques to potential attacks. Similar loudspeaker alerts were reported in Dhanmondi, Uttara, Shekertek and Adabor last night.

Masum Basher, actor and resident of Dhanmondi 13/A near the the 32no bridge, said, "There is a group of around 100 civilians mobilised from the nearby Taqwa Masjid. They are stationed at different parts of Dhanmondi trying to provide security."

Mahmuda Dipa, resident of Arshinagar in the capital's Bosila, around 1:00am early today told The Daily Star that an announcement was made last evening regarding possible attacks. "Around 11:00pm, some locals reported an attack and by 12:50pm, residents of all surrounding buildings gathered and chased the miscreants away."

According to a video footage on social media, the army detained one person with sharp weapons from that area.

In Mirpur's ECB Chattar, witnesses said that around 11:45pm a group of over 100 people carrying sharp weapons and firearms came there. At that time, locals called upon the army, who detained some of the attackers. Gunshots were heard during that time.

In the wave of violent mob attacks since Sheikh Hasina's fall on Monday, many police stations have been vandalised and set ablaze.

Amid this spate of criminal activities, the army yesterday requested the citizens to contact the nearest army camps in emergency, said a press release issued by the Inter Services Public Relations Directorate.

It said the army will remain deployed to ensure the safety of the public, property and important government installations.

People were, however, requested to refrain from misleading the army with false information and rumours.

The ISPR also provided some mobile phone numbers of designate army control rooms.

Over 300 inmates flee Kashimpur, Kushtia jails

FROM PAGE 2

one stage, the guards opened fire, leading to the deaths of the six prisoners, reads the Prothom Alo report.

Contacted, the jail's Deputy Jailer Md Farhad Sarkar said multiple attacks were carried out from inside and outside the prison on Tuesday.

He said some relatives of the prisoners tried to break the jail gate to release the prisoners.

There are about 3,000 prisoners in the jail, according to jail sources.

In Kushtia, at least 104 prisoners fled from the district jail around 2:00pm yesterday, said Jailor Abu Musa.

Seeking anonymity, several jail guards said a group of BNP men were scheduled to be released on bail around noon.

When the BNP men were walking out of the jail, several hundreds prisoners created chaos at the gate to get out. At one stage, the jail guards opened fire to foil their attempt.

In Pirojpur, a group of jail guards yesterday kept Pirojpur District Jail Super Debdulal Karmakar confined to his office for about three hours from 12:15pm alleging that he was involved in irregularities and corruption.

On information, Pirojpur Additional Deputy Commissioner Md Aminur Islam went to the jail and got Debdulal and his family members out of the jail compound.

On Monday evening, an unidentified number of prisoners escaped from the Satkhira District Jail. However, at least 200 of them surrendered to the jail authorities a day later, according to jail sources.

On the same evening, a mob stormed the Sherpur District Jail, leading to the escape of 518 inmates.

On July 19, at least 826 prisoners fled the Narsingdi District Jail. During the jailbreak, around 85 arms and 9,000 bullets were looted.

However, around 598 prisoners surrendered later, and 51 arms and 1,085 bullets were recovered.

Our district correspondents from respective districts contributed to this report.

China launches air, sea patrols near flashpoint reef

US holds joint drills

AFP, *Beijing*

China carried out a combat patrol to test "strike capabilities" near a flashpoint reef in the South China Sea yesterday, as the United States and its allies held joint military drills in the same waters.

Tensions in the disputed waterway have spiked following a series of escalating confrontations between Chinese and Philippine vessels that have fanned fears of a wider conflict that could draw in the United States due to its mutual defence treaty with Manila.

Beijing claims almost the entire South China Sea, brushing off rival claims of several Southeast Asian countries, including the Philippines, and an international ruling that its assertion has no legal basis.

Its claims include the waters around Scarborough Shoal -- which Beijing seized from Manila in 2012 -- where the Chinese military's Southern Theater Command said yesterday it had held joint sea and air patrols.

The triangular chain of reefs and rocks is 240 kilometres (150 miles) west of the Philippines' main island of Luzon and nearly 900 kilometres from the nearest major Chinese land mass of Hainan.

Beijing said the manoeuvres tested "the reconnaissance and early warning, rapid mobility, and joint strike capabilities of theatre troops".

ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED
395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208

Local Press Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from Genuine Manufacturers/ Importers/ Suppliers/ Authorized dealers (engaged in related Business) for Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of following item for EDCL, Dhaka, on urgent basis :

Sl. No.	Tender No. & Date	Name of the Item	Cost of Tender Schedule	Last date of Closing & opening
01.	EDCL(Dhaka)/PUR/ LT/2024/330 Dt. 07/08/2024 Work Site: EDCL, Dhaka	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Radiator- 01 set	Tk. 750.00/set Non-refundable	Closing :19/08/2024 at 12.00PM Opening :19/08/2024 at 12.30 PM

Tender schedule will be sold from the Accounts Department of Essential Drugs Company Limited, Dhaka on Payment as stated above during office hours on all working days (except Friday, Saturday and Govt. Holidays). No tender schedule will be sold on the opening date of the tender.

The Tender will be accompanied by a amount of Earnest Money mentioned above in the form of Bank Draft/Pay order from any schedule Bank of Bangladesh in favour of "Essential Drugs Company Ltd" without which the Tender will be considered as non-responsive.

EDCL authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

General Manager
Procurement Deptt.
For: Managing Director.

(Size: 6 Inch. x 4 column)

DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 8, 2024, SRABAN 24, 1431 BS ● starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Star BUSINESS

Islami Bank rejects cheque seeking to withdraw Tk 548cr

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Islami Bank Bangladesh yesterday rejected a cheque of a little-known company seeking to withdraw Tk 548 crore.

An official of the Shariah-based bank, requesting anonymity, said their Khatunganj corporate branch in Chattogram received the cheque issued by Top Ten Trading Company.

The contact number which the company kept with the bank was found switched off yesterday.

The attempt to withdraw such a large amount amidst the countrywide turmoil raised suspicions, he said, adding, "We have rejected the bid to withdraw the money kept with us as deposits against loans."

The official also alleged that Md Akiz Uddin, deputy managing director (DMD) of Islami Bank, and his associates were behind the fund withdrawal attempt.

Md Akiz Uddin did not receive calls from this newspaper yesterday. He has not come to work since Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister and fled the country on Monday in the face of spiralling protests.

Another DMD, Miftah Uddin, has also been absent.

Md Akiz Uddin was the personal secretary of Mohammed Saiful Alam, chairman of Chattogram-based S Alam Group, which holds a majority stake in the bank.

The group has been in the public discourse in recent times for its alleged excessive borrowing from the banking system in violation of rules.

On Tuesday, Islami Bank's Agrabad corporate branch in Chattogram rejected another cheque of a company with alleged links with S Alam Group seeking to withdraw Tk 325 crore.

The Daily Star tried to reach Islami Bank's Managing Director Mohammed Monirul Moula over the phone for comment but he did not receive calls.

A group of officials and staff of the bank staged demonstrations on Tuesday alleging that they were deprived of official benefits and promotions over the last seven years.

They demanded investigations into the activities of top officials of S Alam Group and into their appointment of officials at the bank.

The demonstrators said the officials appointed since 2017, when the group bought the stakes, have to be sacked while those whose jobs were illegally terminated have to be reinstated.

A source of Islami Bank told The Daily Star that Muhammad Qaisar Ali, additional managing director of the bank, was forced to resign yesterday.

Afterwards, he left with the help of army officials, as per the source.

Employees are engaged in their work inside a garment factory at the BSCIC Hosiery Industrial Estate in Fatullah of Narayanganj. Although many factories reopened around the country yesterday, businesses continue to be apprehensive following arson attacks at production units in many areas.

PHOTO: **SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM**

Businesses worried about law and order situation

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Top businessmen and leaders of different business and trade bodies yesterday demanded the immediate restoration of law and order to ensure safety at their production units.

Numerous factories have been targeted by arson attacks in the past three days after Sheikh Hasina handed in her resignation from the position of prime minister on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising.

Business leaders urged the army chief to form an interim government soon and said immediate steps should be taken to restore law and order, protect the lives of workers, and ensure safety at industrial units.

They added that production in mills and factories is being hampered since they cannot transport goods from the port to factories.

Garment and textile mills were supposed to reopen yesterday, but many had to shut down and many others could not even reopen, particularly in Ashulia, where unidentified outsiders were preventing them from operating their units.

Across Ashulia, all garment units remained shuttered.

The International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh (ICC-B) called a press conference at the Platinum Grand Hotel in Dhaka, outlining fears of unrest and vandalism.

At the event, Tapan Chowdhury, managing director of Square Pharmaceuticals, said the biggest concern is the safety of workers and owners.

At the same time, international retailers and brands are asking for quick delivery of goods and have sought updates several times.

AK Azad, chairman and chief executive officer of Ha-Meem Group, said a group of businessmen met the president and army chief on August 6 to be briefed about the situation.

He said the businesses told the president and army chief that the main target at present is to improve the law and order situation, reopen factories, ensure safety and reactivate the police.

It will take two to three days for the chief of the interim government to be sworn in. By this time, shipments will face a challenge, Azad added.

"They will also face problems regarding payment to workers. Many factories may even be unable to pay workers on time," he lamented.

Many mills and factories of Ha-Meem and Beximco as well as the head office of Square Group were vandalised and looted alongside others, he added.

Businessmen have sought protection and the deployment of more army and police personnel to ensure safety in industrial areas like Ashulia, the main garments hub.

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Simeen Rahman, vice-president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), said restoration of law and order is paramount, not just for industries but also for everyday life.

She also requested the media to create a positive image of the country by avoiding propaganda and instead highlighting positive aspects.

Mohammad Hatem, executive president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, earlier demanded the government keep the garment sector out of the purview of curfews and other political regulations.

"If the situation improves, business will revive and the economy will run well," he said.

He added that no students, ordinary people or political entities were involved in factory vandalism. Instead, he blamed unidentified miscreants.

ICC-B President Mahbubur Rahman said if steps are not taken immediately to restore law and order, the garment sector may lose work orders to competitor countries.

The reputation of Bangladesh as an exporting country is important now, he stressed.

A Matin Chowdhury, former president of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said all textile and garment mills and factories have been severely affected over the last five months and the latest chaos has only deepened their woes.

Some international companies have cut back on work orders from big garment groups by 30 percent, seeking to de-risk their businesses.

MA Jabbar, managing director of DBL Group, said buyers were now inquiring more often about their shipments as their confidence has been dented by the spate of unrest.

Naser Ezaz Bijoy, CEO of Standard Chartered Bangladesh, said restoration of law and order is imperative alongside rebuilding the country's image.

"Reforms can be carried out gradually. The priority is restoration of law and order," he said.

Md Amin Helaly, senior vice-president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, said it was a critical time.

The current situation needs to improve for the economy's sake as the private sector accounts for around 85 percent of economic activities, he said.

Anwar-ul-Alam Chowdhury Parvez, a former president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the garment sector and remittances are the main sources of US dollars so these sectors should run smoothly.

In a statement issued yesterday, the MCCI expressed deep concern over the deteriorating law and order situation. The chamber said it knew through media reports that police have been abstaining from their duties.

Factories yet to start running in full swing for a lack of security

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Factories are yet to start running in full swing for a lack of law and order since Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister three days ago in the face of a mass uprising.

A subsequent spate of looting and vandalism, especially on establishments related to the Awami League and homes and places of worship of religious minorities, has created panic among businesses and workers.

Between July 16 and yesterday, more than 535 people have been killed in violence that had its origins in a student movement demanding reforms to a quota system in public service jobs.

"Now, law and order should be established. This should be the top priority," said a leader of a platform for businesses on condition of anonymity.

"One of the most important tasks for the nation now is to ensure that the economic activities, particularly manufacturing and service sectors, return to business as usual," said Asif Ibrahim, chairman of Chattogram Stock Exchange.

"We must give assurance to our trading partners abroad that the private sector is back in business and will fulfil all commitments to them," he said.

A senior official of a top steel manufacturer said they ran their factories on a limited scale but could not deliver any products due to security concerns.

"We will start transporting steel after normalcy returns," he said.

Kamruzzaman Kamal, marketing director at Pran-RFL Group, said both production and distribution of products were being hampered immensely due to uncertainty and a lack of security.

"We are not operating our factories fully as the workers are in panic and many were absent from work," he said.

"At the same time, our deliveries are stuck as there is no security in the absence of law enforcement agencies," he added. He said the army comes to help when they are informed of any security risk.

"But it is not sufficient," he said.

"Miscreants have attacked and vandalised outlets of our distributors and owners of the rented outlets because of their involvement with a particular political party," he said.

Besides, export activities have remained suspended for over two weeks because of impediments to deliveries and shipments from ports, he added.

M Mohibuz Zaman, managing director of ACI Healthcare, said they have started running their factory partially with a small number of workers who live close to the plant.

Most workers were absent from work due to the ongoing volatility.

"However, delivery of medicine to pharmacies has been normal," he added.

STOCKS

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COMMODITIES

Gold ▲	Oil ▲
$2,395.74 (per ounce)	$73.55 (per barrel)

ASIAN MARKETS

MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI
▲ 1.11% 79,468.01	▲ 1.19% 35,089.62	▲ 1.6% 3,249.72	▲ 0.08% 2,869.83

ATMs out of cash as money supply disrupted

Bangladesh Bank asks lenders to halt suspicious transactions

AM JAHID

Nasir Hossain, a resident of the capital's Dhanmondi area, had to urgently buy daily necessities as he had not gone to the market for the past few days in the wake of the deadly protests that forced Sheikh Hasina to resign from her post as prime minister.

He usually does not keep a lot of cash with him owing to the convenience of ATM booths.

But despite travelling all around his neighbourhood, Hossain could not withdraw money from any machine yesterday as they had all run out of cash.

"Overall, I visited almost 10 booths but failed to withdraw a single penny. Either they had run out of money or restricted the use of ATM cards issued by other banks," he said.

Speaking to The Daily Star, multiple customers of different banks shared similar experiences.

Bankers said most ATMs were out of cash and even many branches were running low on cash as money supply had been disrupted due to inadequate security over the last several days.

Security concerns gripped the country since August 6 as police observed a work abstention, citing fears for their own safety amid reports of deadly attacks on policemen the previous night.

Bangladesh has been in turmoil since July, with over 535 fatalities in clashes involving protesting students, police and ruling party members.

Reports of violence and arson also flared on Monday night after Sheikh Hasina fled the country.

Apart from the limited presence of army personnel, the streets and important establishments in the capital were left without security.

Mohammad Ali, managing director and chief executive officer of Pubali Bank, said although there is no cash crisis in the banking sector, they have been unable to deliver money to booths and branches as security companies that transport money have halted services.

"The security agencies that carry our cash told us that they will not provide services in the current situation," he said.

Hence, banks are struggling to supply money, especially to remote branches and booths, he added.

"One of our advantages is that 95 percent of our ATM booths are connected to branches. So, if necessary, we can supply money to the booths from the branches. But we can't send money to the booths which are not connected to branches," Ali said.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

An ATM booth of Pubali Bank on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue is shuttered. Many ATMs around the country have run out of cash as money supply has been disrupted by persisting unrest and violence. The photo was taken yesterday.

At the same time, banks operated on a limited scale across the country, closing outlets and booths in areas where the risk is greater.

Similar to the past couple of days, the presence of customers was very thin as no one went to banks unless they were facing an emergency.

In the Motijheel area, most branches operated through pocket gates while most booths were shuttered and the doors of several banks closed, hampering overall activities, including financial transactions.

Nahid Hasan, a private job holder, said he went to Motijheel from Farmgate yesterday to collect a bank statement from Standard Chartered Bangladesh as its branches in Karwan Bazar and Dhanmondi were closed.

"I had to enter the bank through the fire exit as the main door was shuttered," he said.

Mashrur Arefin, managing director and CEO of City Bank, said they have closed 19 out of 174 branches across the country due to security reasons.

As a pre-emptive measure, branch managers have been given the authority to operate as per their own security assessment, he said.

As a result, branch managers will be able to shut their operations without consent from the headquarters if they sense security concerns, he added.

Pubali Bank's Ali further said that the security provided by the banks with their own armed guards is insufficient given the current situation.

As a result, there is a risk of untoward incidents occurring at any time, he added.

He said money supply can be ensured if security is provided by the army, Border Guard Bangladesh or Rapid Action Battalion.

Economy faces fresh risks if stability not restored soon: S&P

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's political crisis has further undermined sovereign credit support since S&P Global Ratings lowered its long-term sovereign credit rating on July 30 this year, the American credit rating agency said yesterday.

However, credit metrics may still support the ratings at the current level if the situation stabilises soon, it said.

The protests that led to the abrupt resignation of Sheikh Hasina from the post of prime minister on August 5 have exacerbated downside risks to economic growth, fiscal performance, and external metrics, it said.

The damage to credit metrics may be contained if the socio-political situation normalises soon and Bangladesh forms a new government, the S&P said in a bulletin.

"While credit buffers have diminished, we would not expect immediate strong pressures on the credit ratings," it said.

Continued disruptions to social stability could weigh more heavily on credit metrics, dampening economic growth and government revenue, it said.

"In this scenario, exports would be materially lower than our expectations, with a more prolonged impact on Bangladesh's external balance sheet," said the S&P.

"Materially lower exports could weaken the generation of foreign exchange (forex), further diminishing the central bank's usable reserves," it said. A normal flow of remittances will also be crucial for Bangladesh to avoid a more acute forex shortage, the bulletin read.

India calls for trade deal among Bimstec nations

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *New Delhi*

India yesterday urged members of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bimstec) to consider forming a preferential trade agreement among themselves to foster intra-regional trade and investment while also enhancing regional competitiveness.

Piuysh Goyal, the commerce minister of India, said Bimstec members should re-examine their priorities with regard to trade negotiations so that the delayed free trade agreement can be finalised.

Goyal was speaking at the inaugural edition of the Bimstec Business Summit organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry, in partnership with the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi.

Bimstec consists of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.

Goyal said there is a need to reassess the reasons behind the delay in finalising the BIMSTEC free trade agreement.

He said the Bimstec needs to come up with a set of cogent recommendations that are acceptable to all seven member countries to this end.

"The trade negotiating committee and business community should consider a preferential trade agreement to begin fostering intra-regional trade and investment and enhance regional competitiveness," the Indian minister said.

Goyal called on the Bimstec members to introspect on their current trading relations, noting that trade among the Bimstec countries is small.

"There's a long way to go before we can achieve its full potential," he added.

After several days of violence and unrest, trucks and covered vans began returning to ports around the country to collect goods. However, importers and exporters are still fearful of violence and theft, so the clearance of goods has only improved slightly. The photo was taken at the Chattogram port yesterday. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Security concerns slow clearance of goods from ports

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Importers are refraining from clearing goods at the ports in Chattogram, Benapole and Mongla as well as the Kamalapur ICD due to a lack of security on major highways.

Despite port activities returning to normal, both importers and exporters highlighted the drop in clearance of goods, citing that highways are still unsafe.

The streets of Bangladesh convulsed with violence and death over the last three weeks, leaving over 535 dead, including students who were protesting for reforms.

The movement, which has been raging since July, climaxed on Monday with Sheikh Hasina handing in her resignation from the post of prime minister and fleeing the country.

However, many reports of violence and arson were reported in the aftermath.

As security concerns continue to cloud the nation, importers and exporters called for the swift formation of an interim government to stabilise the law and order situation.

"Clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents are responsible for clearing and delivering goods to factories, but fear of theft is preventing them from retrieving products," Aktar Hossain, president of the Chattogram C&F Agents Association, told The Daily Star.

He added that goods had been stolen from trucks and covered vans along the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway in recent weeks.

However, the release of goods increased since yesterday morning, according to the Chattogram Port Authority.

Around 2,238 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of containers were released as of 8am yesterday, with 2,958 TEUs shipped for export.

The number of released containers increased to 2,349 in the seven hours from 8am to 3pm yesterday.

Despite port activities returning to normal, both importers and exporters highlighted the drop in clearance of goods, citing that highways are still unsafe.

However, 42,638 TEUs were still in the port yard.

"It would be better if traders wait a few more days until the law and order improves as the situation on the road is still risky," said Syed M Tanvir, managing director of Pacific Jeans Ltd.

He hoped the situation would stabilise in a day or two as government departments, including law enforcement agencies, are undergoing massive changes and import-export activities would return to normal.

"The clearance of commercial goods has been sluggish for the past few weeks. Considering the current situation, the port authority has already waived the seven-day demurrage charge for importers," said Nahid Moin, director of the Junior Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

He demanded an extension of the waiver for another seven days to prevent unwanted delays.

"Customs officials and C&F agents did not go to the office for a few days owing to security concerns. But the situation is improving and people are working regularly today (Wednesday). So, product clearance has also increased," said Naziur Rahman, joint commissioner of the Chattogram Customs House.

AKM Mahbubur Rahman, customs commissioner of Mongla Port, and Mohammad Akbar Hossain, customs commissioner of Kamalpur ICD, echoed those sentiments.

Stocks continue to make gains riding on large investors

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Share markets in Bangladesh have continued to rise, buoyed by the ongoing movement for change, as large investors made fresh bets on blue-chip stocks yesterday, the second day of trade since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on July 5.

The DSEX, the benchmark index of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), soared for the second consecutive day by 192.37 points, or 3.54 percent, from that on the previous day and closed at 5,618.79.

Similarly, the DSES index for the Shariah-based companies, increased 42.53 points, or 3.61 percent, to 1,219.14.

Meanwhile, the DS30 index, which comprises blue-chip firms, surged 87.43 points, or 4.52 percent, to 2,022.17.

Stockbrokers are saying that institutional investors were buying stocks, for which the index was rising. They are hopeful of good governance in the market once a new government comes to office, they said.

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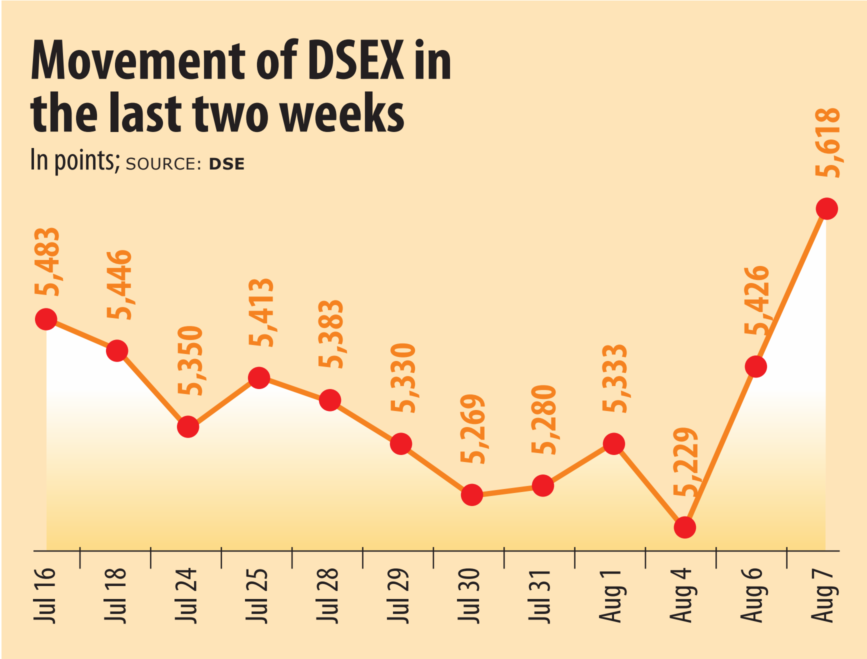
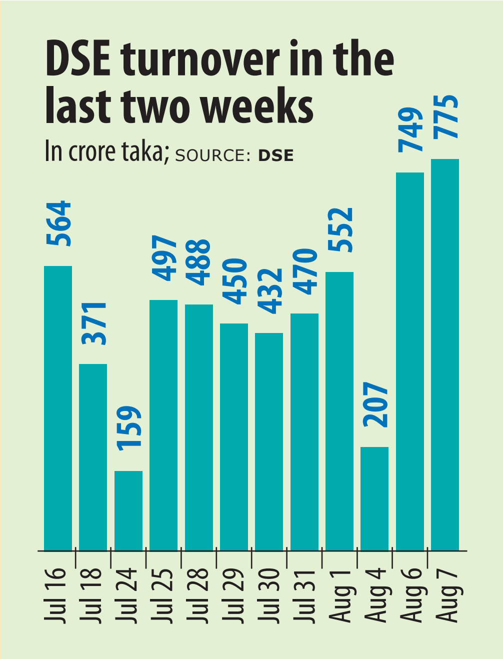


Movement of DSEX in the last two weeks

In points; SOURCE: DSE



DSE turnover in the last two weeks

In crore taka; SOURCE: DSE

Blue chip firms such as Square Pharmaceuticals, BAT Bangladesh, BRAC Bank, Islami Bank Bangladesh, Grameenphone, LafargeHolcim Bangladesh, Renata, City Bank, Olympic Industries and Robi Axiata were among those that largely attracted investors.

The first five entities posted a double-digit growth in share prices.

Square Pharmaceuticals and BAT Bangladesh contributed 29.27 percent and 19.69 percent respectively to the day's total market turnover, according to LankaBangla Finance Portal.

A top official of a leading stock brokerage firm said it had conducted an analysis on the effect of a political crisis on the capital market last year where it found that a regime change had a minimum upside of 1,000 points.

He expects many more fundamental changes to come about in the future through increased market monitoring and a drop in market manipulation.

As a result, good stocks will regain a momentum of gains while junk stocks will stop making it to the top gainers' list, which has happened for most of the days in the last couple of years, he added.

Turnover, which indicates the total value of shares changing hands on the trading floor of the country's premier bourse, increased 3.41 percent to Tk 776 crore, the highest in about one month.

Of the issues that changed hands on the DSE, 266 advanced, 114 declined and 16 did not witness any price fluctuation.

Non-bank financial institutions, telecom, and food and allied are the top three sectors that closed in the positive while jute, travel and leisure and paper and printing become the top three sectors that closed in the negative.

The pharmaceuticals sector dominated the turnover chart, accounting for 15.31 percent of the day's total turnover.

According to a market analyst, reforms were required in most of the regulatory bodies, including the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC), in order to bring good governance and transparency in the market.

Already, the BSEC's officials sat in a meeting yesterday where they planned to urge the new government to bring about the reforms.

Several BSEC sources confirmed that BSEC Chairman Prof Shibli Rubayat-Ul-Islam is planning to resign. He has not come to office in the last two days.

Chittagong Stock Exchange also made gains with its all-share price index, the prime index of the port city bourse, growing by 545.1 points, 3.54 percent, to settle at 15,938.25.

200 members call for reshuffle of BGMEA board

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

More than 200 garment exporters yesterday submitted a memorandum to the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), seeking significant reforms within the trade body.

They demanded the dissolution of the current BGMEA board and the formation of a new one as soon as possible.

The members of the BGMEA have lost confidence in the current board as they failed to provide any specific instructions to improve the industry since being elected about seven months ago, they said.

Export, import, production and banking were all affected by the unrest stemming from the student-led protests in July, which culminated in Sheikh Hasina handing in her resignation from the post of prime minister on August 5.

Additionally, the BGMEA did not express condolences for the deaths of over 535 people, including students, amid the recent protests.

Neither did the current board work to brighten the industry's image at home or abroad, they alleged.

As a result, buyers are losing confidence, the BGMEA members said in a statement.

The statement also said some influential leaders of the Sammilito Parishad, which won the BGMEA elections in February this year, were involved in rigging the result.

So, a group of general members cast a vote of no confidence in the current BGMEA board, said Faisal Samad, who led a panel called Forum in the elections.

"The current board could not improve the business situation even six months after being elected," he added.

Acting BGMEA President Khandoker Rafiqul Islam, who is also a senior vice-president of the trade body, said he received the memorandum and the issue would be discussed at a board meeting soon.

Islam said BGMEA President SM Mannan Kochi has not been very active in his duties amid the current spell of violence, leaving him to fill the role.

He informed that more than 200 general members came to the BGMEA office in the capital's Uttara at around 2:30pm and began agitating during the submission of the memorandum.

Islam hoped they could reach a solution following consultations with the board and other leaders.

The garments sector, which accounts for over 84 percent of the country's annual exports, has been going through a tough time as exporters are facing challenges in production and logistics.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Artistes are assets, should not be blindly dedicated to power: Mamo

> Everyone can have their own opinions and preferences. Positions can differ. Blind dedication towards anything leads to overall deterioration. Even in love, it ends the relationship. Artistes, poets, and writers are assets of the country. Everyone loves them. They should move forward and work accordingly.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

PHOTO: COLLECTED

National Film Award-winning actress Zakia Bari Mamo has been vocal in support of the student movement against discrimination from the very beginning. She has taken a stand in favour of the students everywhere, from posting on Facebook to even being present at Shaheed Minar and Shahbagh. She spoke to The Daily Star about the issues.

"I have always supported the students' rightful demands. I will stand by their rightful demands for my entire life. I stand against violence or division. I do not want any form of division. I urge everyone not to create any disunion."

Mamo further said, "It is our country, and as responsible citizens, we have to come forward to make the country beautiful."

The former Lux Superstar expressed her concern over the ongoing communal attacks. "What can we possibly achieve with such division? How can we accept the inhuman attack on musician Rahul Ananda's house, for instance?"

When asked what she expects from a new Bangladesh, Mamo said, "Let it be a government of the people. Corruption at all levels must be stopped and we must be concerned about the elimination of corruption at all levels."

In response to being asked what she is looking forward to from the students? She said, "They (the youth) are extremely wise and talented. I have faith in them. They will play a leading role in shaping a beautiful country."

Mamo resigned from the Actors' Equity Bangladesh. She was a member of the association for a long time. The decision stemmed from a statement that the Equity made, which directly opposed the student movement's interest and put them in the crosshairs of the brutish authoritative regime. "Stepping down from my position in the association was a personal decision. However, that doesn't mean I have severed ties with any of the artistes in the organisation. I have a good relationship with everyone, and it will remain so. My decision will not affect my friendship with them."

Regarding her opinion on some artistes, poets, and writers getting directly involved in politics, Momo remarked, "Everyone can have their own opinions and preferences. Positions can differ. Blind dedication towards anything leads to overall deterioration. Even in love, it ends the relationship. Artistes, poets, and writers are assets of the country. Everyone loves them. They should move forward together and work accordingly."

Mamo believes that upholding ethics and controlling greed is a way to organise a beautiful country. She expressed, "May wisdom lead us to the right path."

Sharing her expectations from the interim government, Mamo concluded the conversation, saying, "Millions of students have made demands. Now, there will be an interim government. I hope this government will run the country according to those needs."

> **Mamo resigned from the Actors' Equity Bangladesh. She was a member of the association for a long time. The decision stemmed from a statement that the Equity made, which directly opposed the student movement's interest and put them in the crosshairs of the brutish authoritative regime.**

Akcent holds Bangladeshi flag up high

On August 5, the nation celebrated the end of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's 15-year regime. However, this celebration was marred by incidents of vandalism and arson, as miscreants took advantage of the situation to loot innocent civilians.

As the country strives to recover and move forward, Adrian Claudiu Sina, the lead singer of the Romanian dance-pop group Akcent, expressed his support for Bangladesh by sharing old photos from a concert he held in the country. In the pictures, he proudly displayed the Bangladeshi flag.

The singer captioned the photos, "Bangladesh, stay strong! I believe in you! More power to you all."

Don't replace one fascist regime with a greater one: Parambrata

Addressing the recent state of affairs in Bangladesh, Kolkata actor Parambrata Chattopadhyay broke his silence in an article published by Anandabazar.

The actor expressed admiration for the students' demands for the former government's resignation, acknowledging the importance of such a bold stance.

Calling the day a "day of pride" for Bangladesh's citizens, Parambrata wrote, "We, too, feel the pride! It's undoubtedly a day of celebration! But do not tarnish the joy of overthrowing tyranny! Do not replace one fascist regime with a greater one! Honour this pro-democracy movement with a democratic establishment, not by force or coercion."

NEWS

Mood in Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12

on for our colleagues who are Bangladeshis and for the people of Bangladesh," Lewis said, highlighting Bangladesh's progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"Young people and people from every range of life across Bangladesh came out on the streets to celebrate," Lewis said, referencing the public response to Hasina's resignation.

She acknowledged that some celebrations turned violent, leading to destruction, attacks on police stations, and the killing of police officers deemed "aligned with the government".

Over the past weeks, more than 300 civilians have been killed and over 20,000 injured in student-led protests, marking some of the worst bloodshed in Bangladesh's history, she added.

Relative calm returned yesterday morning, but Lewis warned that the situation remains uncertain until a transitional government is fully established.

When asked how the protests led to the demands for the prime minister to be removed, she said that political frustration had been brewing since the controversial election in January, which many believed was not free and fair.

Economic issues, such as rising food and fuel prices, further exacerbated the situation, pushing marginalised Bangladeshis deeper into poverty, she added.

Young people, in particular, were affected by a court order in June on civil service job quotas favouring the elite, making employment prospects bleak for the two million young Bangladeshis entering the workforce annually, Lewis said.

Though the quota scheme was rescinded, protests evolved into broader calls for prime minister Hasina's resignation, with demonstrators from various societal sectors demanding change and transparency they felt were missing.

Lewis stressed the importance of inclusive dialogue and the formation of a responsive interim government to address the nation's challenges and aspirations.

Taiwan ex-soldier held in China returns home

AFP, TAIPEI

A former Taiwanese military officer held in China for nearly five months after he was rescued by Chinese authorities during a fishing trip finally returned home yesterday.

The angler, surnamed Hu, from Taiwan's outlying Kinmen islands was found with a friend on March 18 by the coast guard of China's Fujian province after the engine of their boat failed.

His friend was repatriated to Kinmen a few days later, while Hu -- an active member of Taiwan's military at the time -- was held as Chinese authorities accused him of intentionally concealing his identity.

Yesterday, Kinmen lawmaker Chen Yu-jen accompanied Hu's parents and daughter on the first ferry service to the Chinese city of Xiamen -- located just five kilometres (three miles) away -- to bring him back.

Chen live-streamed their return around noon on her Facebook page, showing Hu holding his daughter's hands as they disembarked from the ferry.

"I miss home, I miss home very much," he told reporters gathered at the dock.

"This was just an accident and it's good that it can be resolved smoothly."

Sacked Maj Gen Ziaul

FROM PAGE 16

was a major. He was elevated to the rank of lieutenant colonel the same year and took charge as director of Rab's intelligence wing on August 27, 2010.

He was made Rab's additional director general (operations) on December 7, 2013 after being promoted to colonel.

Allegations of enforced disappearances, killing people in contract and crossfire started piling up against Rab when Ziaul served as its intelligence chief and additional DG.

Despite various allegations, the Awami League government promoted Ziaul to the rank of Brigadier General and made him director (internal affairs) of National Security Intelligence.

In 2017, he was later made the director of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC), an intelligence agency under the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence.

The agency is responsible for monitoring, collecting and recording information and communication data as well as for the interception of electronic communication such as phone calls, emails and social media accounts.

On July 21, 2022, a new post of director general of NTMC was created when Ziaul was promoted to the rank of major general; he became the first DG of NTMC.

During the peak of the student protest on June 17, the NTMC closed down mobile internet. A day later, it instructed International Internet Gateway companies to stop supplying bandwidth to broadband service providers, leading to a complete internet blackout in the country.

Although the BTRC is tasked with regulating the internet in Bangladesh, NTMC overstepped its authority to suppress the protesters, according to sources.

The NTMC, which began its full-fledged operation on January 1, 2017, has been monitoring all telecommunication service providers around the clock.

Since 2019, it could also block and filter content of the social media and websites critical of the government.

Earlier, on June 1, 2022, the Cabinet Committee on Government Procurement approved the proposal for the 'Part Procurement of Integrated Lawful Interception System - Geo Location System and Related Services' at a cost of Tk 172 crore.

The geo-location system can perform intelligent analysis by examining data from various sources.

The platform covers the geographical boundaries of the entire country, enabling the NTMC to identify the exact location of any person by analysing past location data.

Stop violence against minorities

FROM PAGE 16

Rights Commission. It urged the law-enforcing agencies, civil society and students to play an effective role in maintaining communal harmony.

A statement by 29 eminent citizens said they received reports of attacks on Hindus in at least 35 districts, including Khulna, Jashore, Satkhira, Jhenaidah, Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Narail, Munshiganj, Noakhali, Meherpur and Dhaka.

Ahmadiyya people in Panchagarh and Rangpur, ethnic minorities in Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Naogaon, Chapainawabganj and Patuakhali, and Hijra community people in Jamalpur also came under attack, according to the statement.

They called upon the president and the army chief to deploy troops with specific directives in all districts and upazilas to prevent violence and looting.

The signatories of the statement include Sultana Kamal, Hameeda Hossain, Khushi Kabir, Rasheda K Choudhury, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, ZI Khan Panna, Saleem Samad, Shahnaz Huda, Shireen Huq, Kajal Debnath, Tabarak Hussain, Subrata Chowdhury, Sumaiya Khair, Faustina Pereira, and Shamsul Huda.

At a rally under the banner of "Pratibadi Samajik-Sangskritik Sangathan" outside the National Museum at Shahbagh in Dhaka at 4:30pm, 31 social and cultural organisations also condemned the vandalism of sculptures.

Mofizur Rahman Laltu, general secretary of Bibartan Sangskritik Kendra, called upon everyone to unite to resist the attacks, while Zakir Hossain, president of Gono Sangskritik Kendra, described the miscreants as "agents of fascism".

Harunur Rashid, a physician and leader of professionals, requested everyone not to divide people in the name of religion.

Amit Ranjan Dey, general secretary of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigoshthi, read out a declaration on behalf of the 31 cultural and social organisations, presenting their vision for the type of government they want in the country.

Dipok Suman, chief of Tirandaz Natya Dal, and poet Hasan Fakir recited poetry at the event. Charan Sangskritik Kendra, Udichi Shilpigoshthi, Democrazy Clowns, and Bibartan Sangskritik Dal performed songs.

In a press statement, Manusher Jonno Foundation, or MJF, expressed support for the change towards democracy, but added that they are "deeply concerned" over the violence.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said they were "delighted with the joy of liberation from the culture of a lack of democracy and misgovernance".

She congratulated the young generation on this victory and expressed "profound" respect for those who have been martyred.

Emphasising MJF's long-standing commitment to defending marginalised communities, Shaheen Anam "strongly" condemned the attacks on religious minorities and marginalised communities, and police stations, political offices, and statues as "completely unacceptable".

The Workers' Party of Bangladesh criticised the army chief for not playing a visible role in maintaining law and order even after promising to protect people. It called on the student leaders to take a vigilant and active role so that their victory does not go astray. It also urged all leftist, progressive, secular and anti-imperialist forces to take united action to restore peace and order in the society.

Uphold rule of law, respect democracy

FROM PAGE 16

The US embassy also issued a security alert advising the US citizens to take shelter in safe places, and urged them to strongly consider returning to the US when safe to do so. The advisory said the situation in Bangladesh is unpredictable and volatile due to lack of law enforcers' presence.

In a statement, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, meanwhile, called on all parties to de-escalate and respect universal rights.

"We urge a full, independent and impartial investigation into the events in recent weeks," she said on Tuesday, expressing deep concern over the violence and tragic loss of lives in Bangladesh. She offered deepest condolences to the families and friends of all those killed.

Australia continues to stand by the people of Bangladesh and supports their calls for an orderly and peaceful return to a democratic and inclusive government.

Australia also increased the level of security alert and advised Australians not to travel to Bangladesh.

It advised the Australians to move to a safe place and follow the advice of local authorities and avoid large gatherings.

Russian foreign ministry in a statement on Tuesday hoped the situation in Bangladesh will return to normalcy soon.

"We look forward to the internal political processes in that friendly country returning to the constitutional norms as soon as possible," it said.

According to the Russian embassy in Dhaka, no injuries of Russian citizens were reported.

No detainees

FROM PAGE 16

disappearance, had a meeting with the DGFI.

The rest of the delegation included Odhikar Secretary Adilur Rahman Khan, women's rights activist Shireen Huq and academic CR Abrar.

After the meeting, Shireen told the families of some victims, "DGFI said that there are no detainees in its Dhaka facility at the moment. They invited us to visit the facility. They also said that they will form a joint commission to arrange visits for rights activists to 23 other facilities across the country to see if the victims of enforced disappearance are there.

"We have sought an appointment with the army chief to discuss formation of an inquiry committee," she said.

Families who had gathered in front the DGFI office at Dhaka Cantonment were left disappointed by this development.

Nadira Sultana, wife of Ataur Rahman who went missing on December 8, 2011, had rushed to Dhaka from Madaripur yesterday hoping to get back her husband.

"I left Dhaka after my husband went missing. I told everyone I am going to Dhaka to bring back my daughter's father. I left Madaripur at 3:00am," she said.

Another delegation of rights activists had visited the DGFI headquarters on Tuesday but they were told that the authorities would give an update on the victims of enforced disappearance the following day.

After visiting the DGFI office, some of the protesters led by Sanjida Islam Tulee visited the DB detention cells on the seventh floor of an eight-storey building on the DB office premises. The building also houses the office of the DMP's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit.

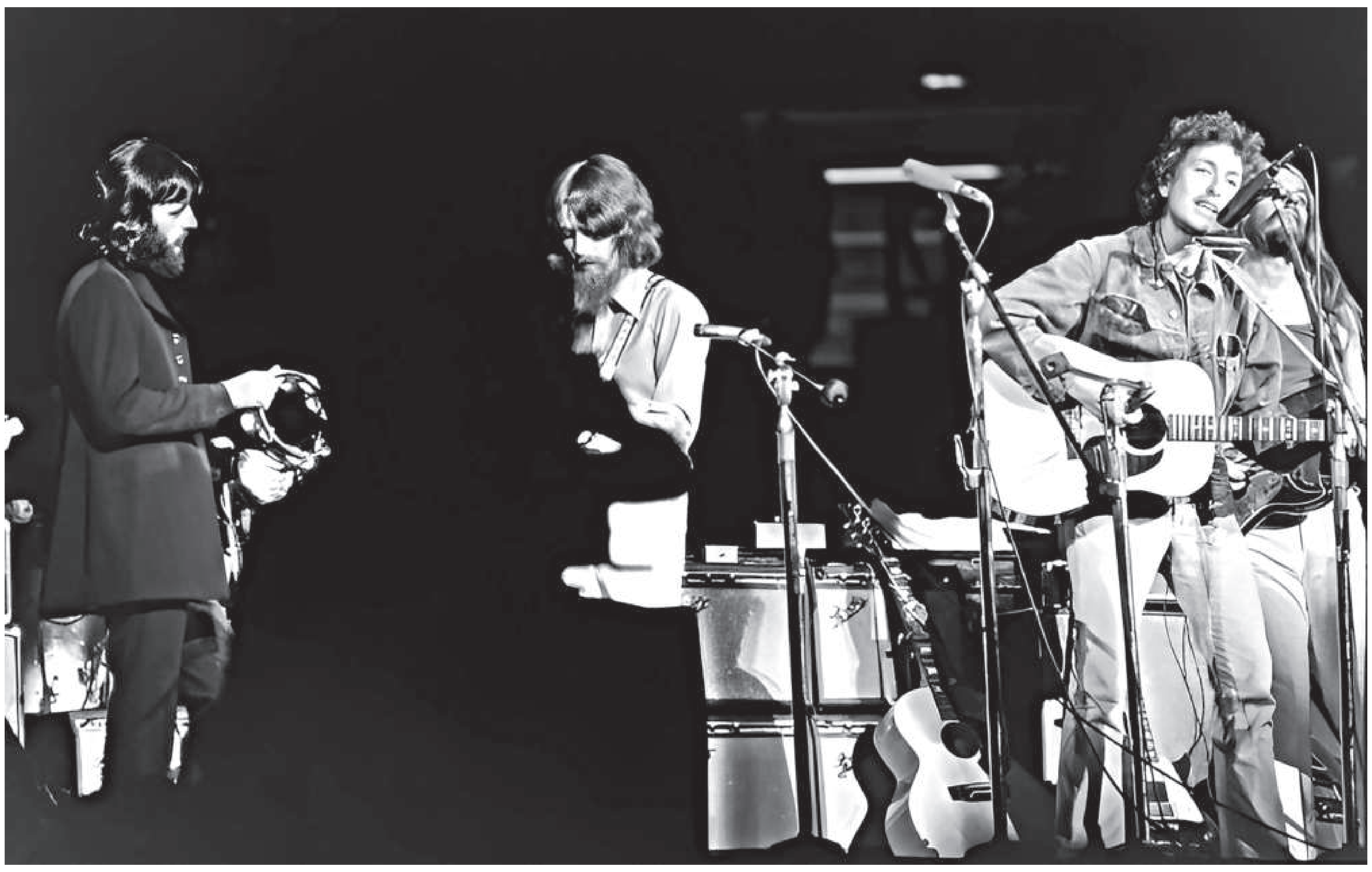
"All the cells were empty, but it was evident that those were used until recently. There were some bottles of water and bedding," said Tulee.

CONCERT FOR BANGLADESH

Madison Square Garden, New York City, August 1, 1971

> **It launched a geopolitical issue into America's collective psyche in a way that no concert ever had before. Harrison closed the show with a brand-new song. He called it "Bangla Desh." The lyrics were a simple plea to his millions of fans to help a suffering people.**

JASON MIKLIAN AND SCOTT CARNEY



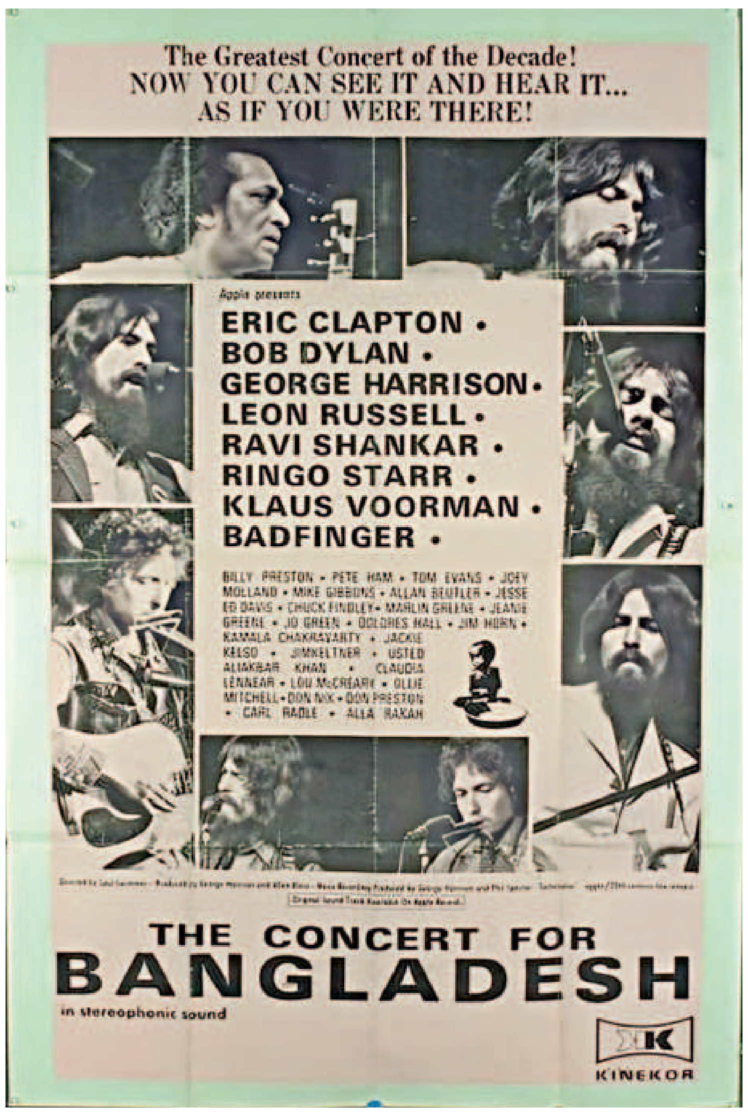
George Harrison and Bob Dylan perform at `The concert for Bangladesh` in Madison Square Garden on 1 August 1971.

Ravi Shankar methodically plucked the seven top strings on his sitar, drawing twanged melodies out of the four-footlong instrument. Surrounded by marigolds and burning incense, Shankar paired the heavy top strings with notes from the airy twelve bottom strings, making complex sounds that a guitar could never attain. Barefoot, sitting cross-legged on a large antique rug, and draped in an exquisite white kurta, he was the world's best known sitar player and a musical deity in his home of India.

Shankar paused for a moment; the packed Madison Square Garden crowd cheered wildly. He smirked like he was remembering a joke. He'd toured the United States for a few years now and gotten used to the flower-power hippie crowd trying to find God by mixing his live music with drugs.

He finished adjusting his instrument and took the microphone. "If you appreciate the tuning so much, I hope you'll enjoy the playing more."

To be fair, a sports arena was a pretty odd place to showcase an instrument best suited for intimate rooms or beneath banyan trees. Still, Shankar couldn't resist gently mocking their musical ignorance. They cheered again, their marijuana haze easily deflecting his barb. Shankar played on as his sharp, lingering notes reverberated through the cavernous steel rafters and echoed away into oblivion. Backstage, George Harrison, Eric Clapton, and Ringo Starr waited their turns to perform.


The Greatest Concert of the Decade!
NOW YOU CAN SEE IT AND HEAR IT...
AS IF YOU WERE THERE!
Apple presents
ERIC CLAPTON •
BOB DYLAN •
GEORGE HARRISON •
LEON RUSSELL •
RAVI SHANKAR •
RINGO STARR •
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BILLY PRESTON • PETE HAM • TOM EVANS • JOEY MOLLAND • MIKE GIBBINS • ALLAN BEUTLER • JESSE ED DAVIS • CHUCK FINDLEY • MARLIN GREENE • JEANIE GREENE • JO GREEN • DOLORES HALL • JIM HORN • KAMALA CHAKRAVARTY • JACKIE KELSO • JIM KELTNER • USTED ALIAKBAR KHAN • CLAUDIA LENNEAR • LOU McCREARY • OLLIE MITCHELL • DON NIX • DON PRESTON • CARL RADLE • ALLA RAKAH
THE CONCERT FOR
BANGLADESH
in stereophonic sound
KINEKOR

A poster for the Concert for Bangladesh

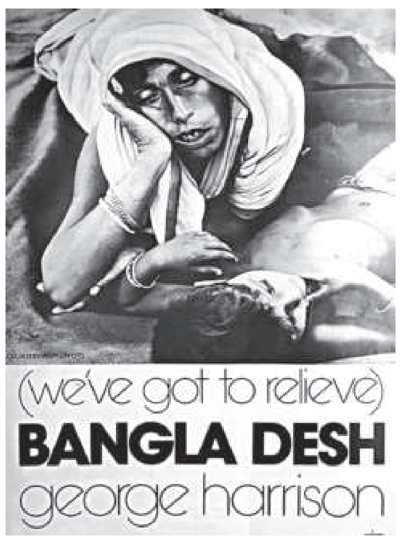
This was the birth of a new phenomenon in American music: the rock-and-roll charity benefit concert. The idea was as simple as it was unorthodox: leverage the power of celebrity musicians to draw attention to an under-recognized human rights issue and raise money for organizations working in the field.

Two months earlier, Shankar paced around his Spanish-style villa in the heart of Hollywood. He'd followed the horrors in Pakistan, like every other overseas Bengali, and felt a kinship with the Pakistani Bengalis from just across the border of his own home in Calcutta. As the most famous living Bengali in the world, friends, gurus, and countrymen all asked him to help. Could he play a benefit at the local temple? And one at a high school too? Shankar agreed time and again, but the pitiful handfuls of money, one three-hour show at a time, couldn't possibly move the needle when ten million were starving to death.

Then Shankar's friend George Harrison called. He was coming to Los Angeles to work on a film score and would love to get in a sitar lesson or two. Shankar and Harrison had been friends ever since the Beatles ventured to India in 1966. John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and Ringo Starr soaked in the subcontinent like typical tourists, hitting up spiritual hotspots to taste transcendent religious bliss, only to have it evaporate by the time their plane touched down in London. But Harrison was different. He spent the next four years diving ever deeper into Indian mysticism. He flew around the world to seek out temples and ashrams, rereading the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Autobiography of a Yogi*, and studying at the feet of gurus, babas, and swamis. With music part and parcel of his spiritual journey (not to mention copious amounts of LSD, weed, and cocaine), he'd sought out India's most famous musician.

The moment Harrison heard Shankar play, he said, "I felt I wanted to walk out of my home that day and buy a one-way ticket to Calcutta. I would even have left my wife behind." The feeling wasn't exactly mutual. Shankar had never heard a Beatles song in his life. Harrison told the Bengali musician he played sitar on their megahit "Norwegian Wood." When Shankar listened to it later, he told a Rolling Stone journalist: "To tell you the truth, I had to keep my mouth shut. I couldn't believe it. It sounded so terrible." Still, Shankar loved Harrison's earnestness. Harrison loved that Shankar was one of the only people who never asked him for anything. They became fast friends.

And when Harrison came by Shankar's house that summer day in 1971, Shankar asked his first-ever favor. "George, this is the situation, I know it doesn't concern you, I know you can't possibly identify . . . but would you help me?"



A poster for the Concert for Bangladesh

Shankar mailed Harrison newspaper clippings of the atrocities that had been written by journalists who snuck back into Dacca to document Yahya and Tikka's genocidal path, but he didn't know if Harrison cared enough to read them. Shankar hoped they could do a fund-raiser together. With luck they might get $25,000. Harrison sat back and squinted, calculating the request. Maybe I went too far, Shankar thought. Now he looked like just another hanger-on hoping to milk a Beatle. Harrison had ended friendships for less.

Harrison snapped back to attention. No, a fund-raiser was no good. They needed something bigger, another Woodstock, but one where every artist would play for free and every penny would help East Pakistan's refugees. They'd make an album and a movie. They'd raise millions.

A musical revolution was born. They called it The Concert for Bangla Desh.

Harrison rang up his friends: the world's biggest rock stars. Getting a visa for Mick Jagger would be tricky after he'd been busted for marijuana possession. Bob Dylan was Harrison's idol, but he'd stopped performing live in 1966. The Beatles broke up two years back, and they were barely on speaking terms. And Eric Clapton was a heroin junkie, madly in love with Harrison's wife, Pattie. Harrison asked them all anyway—and dozens more. He made the calls on his rotary phone, from dawn until dusk, for six straight weeks. For the show, Harrison and Shankar agreed they'd start with a traditional Bengali music set, then bring on the rock. Harrison hired an Indian astrologer, who picked out the most auspicious date: August 1, 1971. Conveniently, it was also the only open date on the Garden's calendar on such short notice.

Shankar reached a blistering crescendo under the hot amber lights. Tabla, sarod, and tamboura players matched him, beat for beat, and doubled their tempo. Joni Mitchell, Crosby, Stills & Nash, The Who, and Grand Funk Railroad swayed along in the front row. Behind them, 19,500 fans itched for Shankar's long set to wrap while they waited for the main event.

Shankar and Harrison at the press conference for the concert.

Shankar tore through the last few dozen notes at 140 beats per minute, grinning from ear to ear. The crowd broke into wild applause. Then Shankar bowed, picked up his ten-pound sitar, and strolled backstage as the audio-visual team flicked on a documentary. The movie aimed to shock. Thousands of screaming fans hushed themselves to silence while absorbing nauseating images of crows picking at rotting corpses on the outskirts of Calcutta, Bengali mothers wiping biting flies off toddlers too weak to protest, and cholera victims dying in ditches.

The film's credits rolled with a plea to give to UNICEF and Harrison took the stage. He scanned the crowd nervously, white electric guitar in hand. The cord got wrapped around his foot.16 He had no idea if the show was going to be legendary—or just a legendary debacle. He wore a white suit with a red Om embroidered on the lapel in Sanskrit, a red button-up shirt, and a full Jesus beard and hair. He shook off the cord and strummed the opening bars of one of his biggest post-Beatles hits, "Wah-Wah." Ringo delivered drums right on cue.

Emotions rose as they played a series of massive hits, one after another, including "Jumpin' Jack Flash" to honor Mick Jagger, as well as some Beatles' tunes sung live by a Beatle for the first time in several years. A mustachioed Clapton floated his way onstage, dressed in a navy blue sports coat and jeans. He accessorized the outfit with a bloodstream packed to the gills with opioids. Clapton wedged his lit cigarette into his guitar's headstock and launched into a duet with Harrison. Together, they did the first ever live performance of "While My Guitar Gently Weeps." Clapton later said he was ashamed because he was so high he could barely walk, let alone play. The crowd was too enthralled at the sight of George Harrison and Eric Clapton riffing together to care. Now they were rolling. Harrison wrapped up "Here Comes the Sun," then took a quick sip from a Coca-Cola can resting on the monitor. He glanced offstage and breathed a sigh of relief. A man with a simple guitar at his side and a harmonica strapped to his neck waited for his turn onstage. He'd just biked into the arena, appearing like a divine apparition.

"I'd like to bring out a friend to us all, Mr. Bob Dylan!"

The crowd erupted. Dylan had gone recluse at the height of his popularity five years earlier and wasn't listed on the roster. He brought tender soul to his renditions of "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" and "Blowin' in the Wind," channeling the Great Bhola Cyclone through his song selections.

The concert was just one of dozens of public outpourings in support of the Bengali cause during that summer and fall. West Pakistan imprisoned a pregnant woman from Philadelphia for illegally crossing from India to East Pakistan to deliver saris. A Dutch man stole a famous Vermeer painting and tried to fence it for millions of dollars in order to give the sum in relief aid. Children in thirty thousand schools across America fasted for a day so that they could donate their lunch money to the cause. Activists built a refugee camp out of sewer pipes in front of the UN, about a mile and a half northeast of Madison Square Garden. They tried to shock the diplomats and ate the same single daily meal of rice and lentils that refugees did, while Allen Ginsberg read poetry.

In Paris, a former French special forces officer took a pistol and a briefcase bursting with colorful wires up to the cockpit of a Pakistan International Airways plane bound for Karachi. He hijacked it, demanding twenty tons of medical supplies for the Calcutta refugee camps. During the tense standoff, the French Red Cross brought the supplies as requested. Commandos disguised as airport workers loaded the crates, then captured the skyjacker. Though he only carried a toy gun and some wires, he still got five years in jail for the stunt. Nevertheless, the French Red Cross delivered the goods to the refugee camps as promised.

Yet none of those protests captured the imagination quite like the Concert for Bangladesh. It launched a geopolitical issue into America's collective psyche in a way that no concert ever had before. Harrison closed the show with a brand-new song. He called it "Bangla Desh." The lyrics were a simple plea to his millions of fans to help a suffering people. Harrison and the rest of rock's biggest stars left the stage, pumping their fists to raucous whistles and whoops. Clapton said, "This will always be remembered as a time that we could be proud of being musicians. We just weren't thinking of ourselves for five minutes."

Shankar agreed: "It was a miracle, really."

At the after-party, Keith Moon demolished a drum set and hotel room in celebration, as they all reveled in a job well done. The live concert album sold millions of copies and won a Grammy.

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Scott Carney, *is an investigative journalist and New York Times bestselling author.*

The above-mentioned writers are the authors of the book, titled The Vortex: The True Story of History's Deadliest Storm and the Liberation of Bangladesh, HarperCollins India(2022). This article is an excerpt from the book.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Public safety is paramount

Formation of interim govt vital to resume regular police activities

We are worried about the law-and-order situation which continues to be in a fluid state after deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country on Monday. Even though there have been signs of improvement over the last three days, there is still a sense of fear and disorientation following widespread attacks on Awami League-linked establishments, minority communities, public properties and infrastructure including key symbols of power and nationhood, etc. What's at stake here is not just security, but also the functioning of regular activities and services, which cannot resume in full swing without an interim government.

That it couldn't still be formed, despite the efforts of all involved in the process, speaks to the complications related to such sensitive undertakings. The appointment of Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus as chief adviser of the interim government is reassuring. But we are yet to know about other appointees who will work alongside him, or when the government will be sworn in. Yunus will reportedly land in Bangladesh on Thursday afternoon, so things are expected to be fast-tracked after that. But as things stand, the country continues to stagger in a power vacuum.

The biggest worry in such a vacuum is the state of law and order. With the entire police force still missing from the scene, people are right to worry. Even though army and Ansar forces have stepped up in providing security, it hasn't calmed frayed nerves. According to an estimate, over 450 police stations across the country were destroyed or damaged on Monday alone. Arms and ammunition were looted from many of the stations. Over the last few days, many police officers were killed or injured in such attacks. Clearly, the morale among officers is extremely low. If the police don't feel protected themselves, how can they provide protection to others? With the non-cadre officers staging work abstention, and cadre officers largely in hiding, it may take some time to restore order among the force.

This is bad news. Students who led the movement that brought down the Awami League government are trying to do the best they can to help fill the vacuum. They are managing traffic, guarding at-risk police stations, churches and temples, helping clean up garbage, etc. This is commendable indeed. But it can hardly make up for the services provided by professionals in the police, fire service, customs, and other relevant bodies. In fact, the events of the last few days have had a disruptive effect across all government-linked institutions, leading to major reshuffles in some key institutions. Many long-suppressed issues among public employees are also coming to the fore.

While we hope these will be resolved sooner than later, ensuring the security of citizens is something that cannot wait. We understand that given how entranced corruption was in police force—and how politicised it became—overhauling the force and restoring people's faith in it will not be easy. This is something the incoming administration must work on. But right now, we urge the authorities to step up their efforts to ensure safety. That means further involvement of the military forces in law enforcement activities across the country, especially in risky areas. The police authorities also must do whatever necessary to put officers back on the field, and operationalise all police stations as soon as possible.

Time to bring back smuggled money

Those involved in stealing funds must be held accountable

With the hush-hush policy gone now that the reign of Sheikh Hasina's government is over, the true extent of our economic crisis is coming to light. According to a report by Bonik Barta, over the last 15 years of her rule, nearly $150 billion, equivalent to around Tk 17.6 lakh crore, was syphoned out of the country. That's more than double the amount of the current national budget—Tk 7.97 lakh crore—which happens to be the biggest in our history.

The report is based on the findings of US-based think tank Global Financial Integrity (GFI). Most of the stolen funds apparently came from big loans taken from banks, mostly by politically influential people and businesses. Those who stole the money included politicians, businessmen, bureaucrats, police officials, high-ups of banks, NBFIs, insurance companies, etc. Even mid-level officials of these institutions were involved. Money was also stolen from various government projects, through inflated prices and orchestrated cost overruns.

Money laundering and trade mis-invoicing were among the popular means for smuggling money, with some of the funds stored in offshore accounts in Switzerland, the UK, the US, Canada, the UAE, Southeast Asian countries like Singapore, and East European countries, among others. Some of the funds were also invested in properties in Malaysia, the UAE, Canada, and the UK. One notable example was the former Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury who amassed enough money illegally to buy 260 properties in the UK, worth Tk 1,888 crore.

This shows how those who were entrusted with the responsibility of protecting our money were often the ones to embezzle it. The massive pilfering was only possible because relevant state institutions became virtually ineffective because of rampant corruption and irregularities. Several Bangladesh Bank high-ups admitted they were forced to disregard regulations in the face of political pressure. A culture of impunity and lack of accountability let corrupt elements like former police chief Benazir Ahmed get away with amassing illegal wealth.

Awami League was not the first ruling party to facilitate money laundering, nor might it be the last. To ensure this doesn't happen again, we must overhaul and strengthen relevant institutions so that they can do their job properly. Reforms in the banking sector are also long overdue. We must not waste the opportunity for reforms created by the recent student-led mass movement. The interim government, likely to be sworn in later today, must make it a priority to hold accountable those who laundered money and recover the funds to help rebuild our economy.

'No political decision should be taken without students' input'

Zonayed Saki, *chief coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolon, talks with* **The Daily Star** *about the current political situation, the formation of the interim government, and other challenges facing the country.*

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

What are your thoughts on the new interim government proposed by the students with Dr Yunus as its head?

In the meeting on August 5 with the president and the army chief at the Bangabhaban, we have specifically mentioned that no political decision should be taken without taking the opinions and inputs from students, because it is the students who organised this movement; it is the students and the mass people who sacrificed their lives which led to the Sheikh Hasina regime's fall. The organisers of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement have already proposed the names for the interim government. Now it should be formed without further delay—by today (Wednesday).

Zonayed Saki PHOTO: **STAR**

Do you think the leaders of the political parties who were present there at the Bangabhaban on August 5 represent the students' and the mass people's aspirations for a new Bangladesh? Besides you, we saw leaders of only right-wing political parties, including Jamaat and Hefazat.

When they invited me, they didn't tell me who the other invitees were. As a political party, we thought that it was important to present our views and so we went there. Seeing the other participants in the meeting, we proposed that the other political parties who were actively involved with the movement should also be invited for discussion. They told us that the discussions were not over, that they would also invite others. I would like to make it clear that we were not there to form any political alliance. We were called in for discussion on the formation of the interim government, so were other political parties and individuals.

Student organisers have categorically said they are against any form of fascism. Can we really say that the parties that were invited for the discussion have been above this? What can people really expect from them?

If the people cannot expect anything from these political parties, they have other choices and alternatives in a democratic system. Democracy means people have the absolute power and freedom to choose their candidates. This must be ensured. We have seen how people have revolted against the fascist Hasina regime. Likewise, people can also reject any other political party who exhibited their fascist nature in the past. There are other alternatives from whom they can choose their candidates. We have been fighting for a long time to restore people's voting rights. I think after this student revolution, no party will ever dare to rule the country in the same fascist manner, people will not tolerate it. We think new political forces will emerge in the country who will eradicate all kinds discrimination among people and ensure economic freedom for our people. Our aim should be to inculcate a culture of tolerance and harmony in spite of all our differences.

It seems the BNP is already in an election mood. With Khaleda Zia and the party's other senior leaders and activists released, they already held a political programme today, at a time when the law-and-order situation in the country is still volatile and when an interim government is yet to be formed. Is this not somewhat opportunistic?

We have been saying all along that at this moment it is our responsibility to uphold the spirit of the mass uprising and ensure stability, peace, safety and security of the people and always remain vigilant to stop any attacks and violence on the minorities. Looting and destroying of public properties must stop. We have already directed all our activists to form voluntary organisations to ensure safety and security of the people, particularly the minority communities, so that the opportunists cannot tarnish the image of this student revolution through carrying out violence. After the interim government is formed, the political parties of the country should also give their opinions on how this government can carry out its mandated duties. All the political parties must also assist the new interim government to ensure that there is no lawlessness and anarchy in the country. Ensuring the safety of people should be our key priority at this moment. The political parties should play the role expected from them for transitioning into a true democracy. It would be expected that the BNP's programme will also be aimed at these goals.

What will be the major challenges for the soon-to-be-formed interim government in fulfilling the dreams and aspirations of the students? What should be the priorities for this government?

Under the Hasina regime, people were killed, tortured and arrested indiscriminately and they are still living in insecurity and fear. All these incidents must be investigated on a priority basis and those involved must face justice. In our talks with the president and the army chief, we also asked them to take responsibility for the families of the martyrs and compensate them adequately. We also demanded immediate release of those detained unlawfully during this movement.

Ensuring safety of people's lives and property should be a key priority for the interim government. They must also reconstruct the administration, particularly the police administration and the civil administration, so that they can serve the people and not become their enemies. This should be done immediately. Thirdly, we are currently facing an economic crisis and the interim government must take the necessary measures to overcome the challenges. We would urge our brothers and sisters living abroad to send us more remittance now to avoid the impending economic crisis. Finally, this government must work sincerely to establish and strengthen democracy in the country by making the necessary institutional changes and constitutional reforms. Our political parties must come to a consensus on this.

How do we clear this economic mess?

MAMUN RASHID

Mamun Rashid
is the founding managing partner of PwC Bangladesh and chairman at the Financial Excellence Ltd.

We extend our sincerest congratulations to the young students and individuals in our community who demanded for a just and more equitable social order in Bangladesh. They have achieved the seemingly unachievable. Their courageous deeds have not only converted the quota reform movement into a powerful popular revolt for political transformation, but also resonated with the aspirations of every individual in the nation. Their resonant voices have deeply moved and inspired the entire nation, paving the path towards aspired progress. Credit also goes to whatever little is left in our civil society, including some important stakeholders of change in the media.

For the last 15 years, individuals as well as institutions have been denied economic advantages as a result of persistent corruption and prejudice. The government's exclusive preoccupation was with infrastructural development in the name of GDP growth, which failed to significantly impact the lives of broader segments of the populace, putting the inclusion agenda in the backyard with very little investment in social infrastructure building. Hence, it only favoured dishonest politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen.

The regime has methodically destroyed institutions. The scarcity of employment prospects and the practice of preferential treatment via the quota system are indicative of the marginalisation experienced by the youth in the country. More so, the scenario in education, from the primary level to tertiary educational institutions, has become very pathetic and dismal. The lower level of the judiciary, and education and health systems have been politicised, resulting in poor service delivery. Despite loud discussions over it, the revenue expansion agenda was not acted upon due to individual officials prioritising personal gain. The overall size of the possible inward remittance is estimated to be more than $40 billion annually, but actual remittance has never exceeded $24 billion in a year because of an ever engulfing hundi business. Even our regulator lent a blind eye towards what was being done by some exchange houses owned by interest groups in the gulf, resulting in rampant rise in trade-based money laundering. The six and nine percent caps on interest rates only favoured a rogue few, not the honest and small entrepreneurs. An almost fixed exchange rate regime discouraged exporters and remitters. It neither helped foreign investors, nor the local ones. Favouritism in identifying the public interest projects as well as selection of project drivers also remained a big question for the development partners.

There is no doubt that the state and its dysfunctional systems must be rebuilt. The economy must be salvaged from the turmoil caused by the despotic administration and its supporters. Rectifying the chaos caused by the political regime over the last 15 years would need extensive effort and resolute decision-making. Over the last 15 years, we have seen the growth of many monsters, trying to swallow everything around, occupying large banks. High amount of cash transactions in banks during odd hours and the significant rise of impaired loans favoured only a few cronies, and depriving the honest entrepreneurs.

Individuals are experiencing the adverse effects of significant inflationary pressure and insufficient money in the ecosystem. The economic foundations have been severely compromised. Consequently, all economic indices are under strain. Every institution has been methodically dismantled to enable corruption and maintain an undemocratic grip on power as well as simple decision making.

Individuals are experiencing the adverse effects of significant inflationary pressure and insufficient money in the ecosystem. The economic foundations have been severely compromised. Consequently, all economic indices are under strain. Every institution has been methodically dismantled to enable corruption and maintain an undemocratic grip on power as well as simple decision making.

The heads of regulatory agencies responsible for governing the economy exhibited complete susceptibility to a single "decision maker" and made erroneous and detrimental choices in order to appease political seniors and those with connections to those in power. Some examples are Bangladesh Bank, National Board of Revenue, and the capital market watchdog. Consequently, these entities have implemented various discriminatory and erroneous policies. Some of these actions involve amending the Banking Company Act to benefit the few board directors, refraining from taking any measures against willful bank loan defaulters, altering the definition of classified loans, maintaining fixed interest rate caps and exchange rate for an extended period, and neglecting to make autonomous decisions to manage inflation.

Hence the desired laundry list to reboot the economy is quite extensive. Significant exertion and unwavering commitment will be required to effectively guide the trajectory. Decision makers need to be very cautious regarding who they put up to dispassionately clear the mess. Relevant credentials and the ability to remain above any controversy should be the minimum threshold. Along with these, implementation with precision can never be underestimated.

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Regime change in Bangladesh: The fallout for India

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SALIMULLAH KHAN

Vladimir Lenin, after all, was right. Sometimes, there are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen. Glory to the martyrs and vanguards of Bangladesh who made it to a possible democracy once more!

In Bangladesh, August is apparently a month when decades happen. Karl Marx famously said, "History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce." If the fall of the BAKSAL (Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League) regime in August 1975 was a tragedy, the boisterous exit of the regime this August is a repetition, this time as a farce.The free fall of the regime is a relief for many; however, there are also darker clouds around in the horizon.

The odds are no less apparent. One of these concerns India, the nation-state's largest neighbour. The facts around the number one superpower, the US, are another concern. But I can't deal with the second topic in this space. Let me rather stay with only India today.

To some, the events of July-August, for all their valour and glory may tell the same old story. But it is not exactly a void in which they disgorge.

The coup d'état of 1975 was organised clandestinely. It was a civilian-military combined effort. There is good evidence that it was sustained by a Western power. The current conjuncture seems to involve a broad coalition of radical forces led by university students, sustained by the support of a cross-section of civil society, political parties and the so-called international community. The fallout now is more uncertain than ever, at least compared to what it was a half century earlier.

The Awami League regime in 1975 under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had gone berserk with its one nation one leader "mantra". In 2024, the daughter's regime only went wilder with its sheer ruthlessness. History repeated itself.

It is perhaps too early to say what awaits us even in the not-too-distant future. A doubt pops up, nevertheless. What is the nature of the August 5 revolution? Is it a popular revolution like the French Revolution flying the banner of equality, human dignity and social justice? Or is it to prove a coup d'etat of sorts, an 18th Brumaire of civil society, midwifed by the "international community", tailored by the armed forces? How different is it going to be from the events of January 11, 2007, events welcomed by the country's biggest neighbour, India? We hardly learn from history. That seems to be the only takeaway from history's department stores.

Did Bangladesh's inevitable neighbour follow even a rule of its own best interest in underscoring the dynastic autocracy in Bangladesh?
PHOTO: **PID**

One does not choose from an empty set. Not a neighbour, at any rate. Nations act, as everyone knows, not as philanthropists or cynics but in their own best interest. Did Bangladesh's inevitable neighbour follow even a rule of its own best interest in underscoring the dynastic autocracy in Bangladesh? Was that the best option it had had? Will it learn a lesson, in all candour, this turnaround? These are questions best left to political pundits in India and beyond.

For us, citizens and denizens of Bangladesh, it is more of a single-payer option. India's unabashed selfishness in promoting a regime that clearly violated all rules of liberal democracy proves highly short-sighted, more now than ever.

What alternatives did India have to choose from is not apparent, or not well-known in any case. But it may even be non-transparent. In 1975, India blatantly ignored its lower riparian neighbour in claiming the Ganga-Padma as a virtually all-India domestic watercourse. That it is an international river, it apparently forgot then. India's stance on other watercourses changed little since then. The waters of the Teesta and many other common international rivers don't flow quietly anymore.

Border killings on a rhythmic scale are not simply a mystic symbol of India's political muscle but of its myopic nature. It is a bizarre thing: "India's Bangladesh Problem," as one pundit called it. Termites, they call their unhandsome neighbours.

India's China obsession, at least ever since her war with China in 1962, could have misled it to its Bangladesh policy. But a people who didn't put up with Pakistan's proto-colonial repressive regime of two and a half decades can hardly be expected (let alone taken for granted) to welcome such a proverbial "subsidiary alliance" as India desires to perpetrate on Bangladesh.

The latest regime change in the wake of a popular mass uprising should provide an occasion to rethink future relations between the two sovereign neighbours in South Asia, adorned by the common historical legacy of many centuries.

The immiseration of one neighbour for the benefit of the other can only be sustained by such regimes as the just fallen one in Bangladesh. India is a habitat, nay a breeding ground, of proverbial wise men. I am sure they will not be deluded by dreams of "Akhand Hindustan". That simply will not work.

The regime change of August 2024 may also provide an occasion to reflect on the question of national identity, a question the think tanks of national security (or regional imperialism if you like) can only ignore at their own peril.

Let history not repeat a second tragedy. The regime change in Dhaka, apparently, will enjoy the blessings of the "international community." But it is unlikely to work well if India does not consider the forces of the current circumstances today. Tomorrow the same forces will force India to think.

India's best interest may perhaps lie in strengthening a new democracy in Bangladesh. At any rate, not obstructing democratic aspirations of a new generation in its eastward neighbourhood is the key point.

How to not fall for another dictator

Lessons from the Arab Spring

Ramisa Rob
is in-charge of Geopolitical Insights at The Daily Star.

RAMISA ROB

The quick-fire collapse of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League regime seemed unbelievable till it happened on August 5, 2024. The historic fall of the longest serving female head of state in the world mirrors the Arab Spring in the Middle East, which began in 2010 when anti-authoritarian uprisings toppled one notorious dictator after another in the region. Before her resignation, Bangladesh's former Prime Minister's response to the student quota reform movement with crushing lethality that killed at least 450 people, had begun resembling the obsessive autocratic tendencies and brutal methods of ousted Arab leaders such as Tunisia's Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi—to name a few.

The "one-point" step down slogan—Ek Dafa, Ek Dabi—reverberating in the nationwide protests on Saturday, August 3, was reminiscent of the slogan of the Arab Spring, "The people want to bring down the regime," as were the images of hope and euphoria of mass gatherings of people from all walks of life striving for democratic change. But beyond the optics, the most significant parallel between Bangladesh's historic movement and the Arab Spring is their driving force: pent-up frustration and socio-economic grievances of the mass people, the youth, the middle and lower class, towards grave inequality and injustice fostered by corrupt, fear-mongering dictatorships.

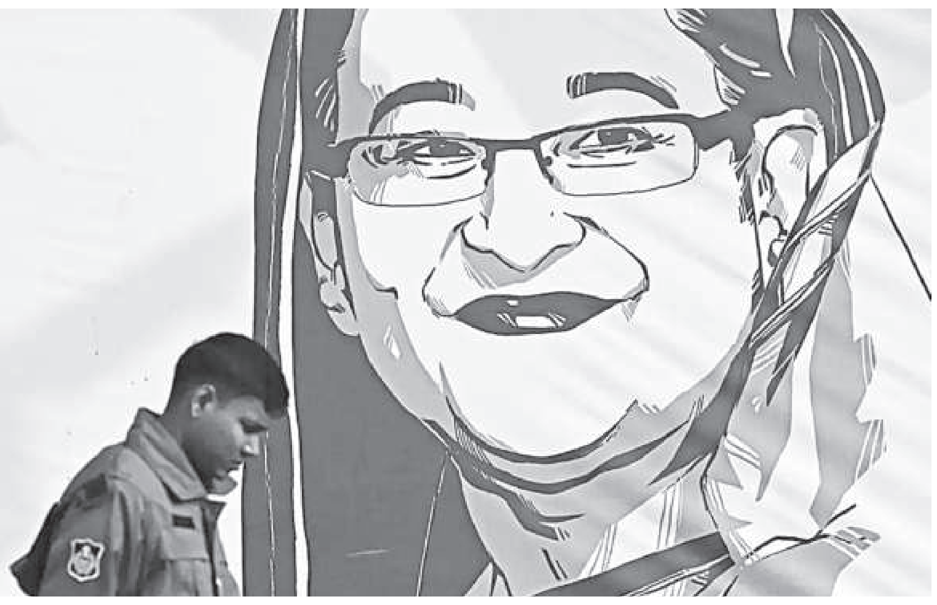
Though the Arab Spring led to the fall of seemingly invincible leaders, the victory was short-lived in most countries, as the downfall of the reviled regimes instead led to further turmoil. Only Tunisia, came out of the revolution as a success story and began backsliding last year. Libya and Syria collapsed into civil war, and foreign powers' heavy investment in Yemen's democratic transition led the country to a disastrous civil war. Egypt, on the other hand, witnessed a military coup followed by the rise of a leader even worse than the one they got rid of. Understanding the underlying reasons for the failure of the nations' to transition to democratic regimes is crucial as Bangladesh navigates uncharted waters of a seismic regime change, unlike any before.

In an article published in the Catalyst, writer Anand Gopal attributed the Arab Spring's failure to neoliberal economic policies which were not challenged after the oppressive governments were toppled. "Because the poor and working class didn't have the structural leverage to organise collectively and as a class, they instead conceived of them differently—say, as Muslims against the more elite figures who don't represent Islam. That's where fundamental Islamists came in," writes Gopal. The role of the political economy cannot be understated for a constructive change in the system of governance in Bangladesh.

The disparity between long standing elites in Bangladesh—many of whom silently adhered to Sheikh Hasina's regime for their own gains—and the working class or unemployed—who were denied basic economic and human rights—need to be addressed as we shift towards a system where an all-powerful regime can never rise again. There is anger, there is hate—and that was always going to be the case. The fragmented society has to establish a unified dialogue to solve it. Democracy as an umbrella idea for "free speech" and "free and fair elections," without addressing deeply unequal systems—that triggered Hasina's fall—will lead us down the same path as the Arab nations that went backwards despite a world-changing moment.

Since Sheikh Hasina fled, attacks on Hindu minorities have escalated, and vandalism, looting, burning and violence has engulfed the nation. Bangladesh is predominantly a secular country, and its very strength lies in that fact. The student coordinators have insofar stepped into protecting minorities, and minority places of worship. To retain and expand unity of all communities in Bangladesh, the interim government and the Bangladeshi community as a whole, have to work towards changing the existing social contracts which disproportionately affect marginalised people of all religions. During Egypt's uprisings against three-decade ruler Mubarak, minority Orthodox Coptic Christians thought the discrimination would end after the revolution, but it escalated instead. Five years later, as current President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi took office overthrowing an Islamist regime, the violence and divisions between Muslims and Christians have continued to intensify, along with socioeconomic disparity.

A burst of democratic spirit and national unity, similar to what we witnessed last week, brought down the oppressive regimes of the Arab countries a decade ago, but the movements lacked structure or plans for the future. When such a formidable dictatorship falls, there's a blitzkrieg of non-violent actions needed to create a new form of governance from scratch. In that regard, the students' dialogue with the army, and the appointment of Dr Yunus as Chief Advisor, aligned with the students' requests, is a start. But due to the fact that the Awami League regime denied citizens free elections, and a breeding ground for new political parties to emerge, the interim government will have to stay intact for longer than previous ones, in order to start rebuilding the cracked pillars of the country before groups with vested interests take advantage of the political vacuum.



Students coordinators of the movement have voiced that they want a change in the overall system of Bangladesh, in which fascism or 'any leader like Sheikh Hasina' can never emerge again.
PHOTO: **AFP**

Egypt's swift return to autocracy, after ousting Mubarak, is a cautionary tale for Bangladesh. In 2012, Egypt elected Islamist Mohammed Morsi, with fierce opposition from the protesters who ousted Mubarak—paving the way for a military coup by Defence Minister Abdel Fattah-Al Sisi, whose dictatorial regime is more autocratic and harmful to Egypt's middle and lower class, than Mubarak's was. The economic woes which drove people to protest and demand for social justice, dignity and democracy, in the streets of Cairo in 2011, continue to persist today.

For all but 12 years since 1971, the political landscape of Bangladesh has always been caught in a tussle between BNP, the political dynasty of former president Ziaur Rahman, and Awami League, the political dynasty of the Father of the Nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Recently, BNP General Secretary Mirza Fakhrul Islam has announced that Tarek Rahman, the son of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will return to Bangladesh from exile in the United Kingdom. Students coordinators who have led the monumental movement have voiced that they want a change in the overall system of Bangladesh, in which fascism, authoritarianism, or "any leader like Sheikh Hasina" can never emerge again. Tarek Rahman's ascendancy to politics was based on nepotism—which the quota reform movement sought to fight. His political career has long been under a cloud; though he denies certain charges, a leaked US embassy cable from 2008 called him a "notorious and widely feared... symbol of kleptocratic government," who had "flagrantly" demanded bribes in return for procurement decisions and political appointments. The prospect of BNP or other existing parties returning with the same political dynamics will inarguably perpetuate the same cycle of corruption and mass sufferings.

Breaking free of authoritarianism is a long, difficult road. In 15 years, the Awami League has ruled the country with a fortress of fear, normalising inequality of the classes, thuggery of those in power, wealth appropriation by government authorities, corruption within the elites and government officials, cronyism and lawlessness in every corner of the society. While we could not write any of this before, it must be said now that the legal system was also robbed of its independence. The student wing of Awami League, BCL, which has long terrorised the youth and dissenters with brute force, have also been left behind; the brainwashing of violent ideologies too, needs to be addressed constructively.

Tunisia, which was long known to be the only success story coming out of the Arab Spring—holding two democratic free and fair elections in 2014 and 2019–is now facing the exact issues they fought against in 2011. The civil society in Tunisia won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015, for mediating the National Dialogue in 2013. Yet its drive for consensus to keep both labour and business parties content without concrete steps to address the economic issues since 2011 led to a stagnating economy, affecting the youth, causing widespread disillusionment and polarisation. The current populist President Kais Saed, as such, has been cracking down on dissenters and, according to critics, suppressing challengers ahead of October elections after the Tunisia court jailed potential presidential candidates on August 5. Tunisia's unfortunate relapse only affirms that sustained recovery from autocratic governments requires far more innovation and a renewed effort to connect political citizenship with socioeconomic rights. Change never happens overnight, but positive change warrants learning from other nations, like the Arab states. Despite leading an exhilarating revolution, the citizens continue to live through the same oppression—uprisings continue to rock the region since 2018.

Marwan Muasher, a former Jordanian diplomat who authored The Second Arab Awakening, told the Middle East Eye, "Arab Spring 1.0 could have resulted in social peace if Arab governments understood the need for new social contracts and the need for more open political systems, and the need to fight corruption institutionally."

THE SHELF

6 Essential Rabindranaths you should read

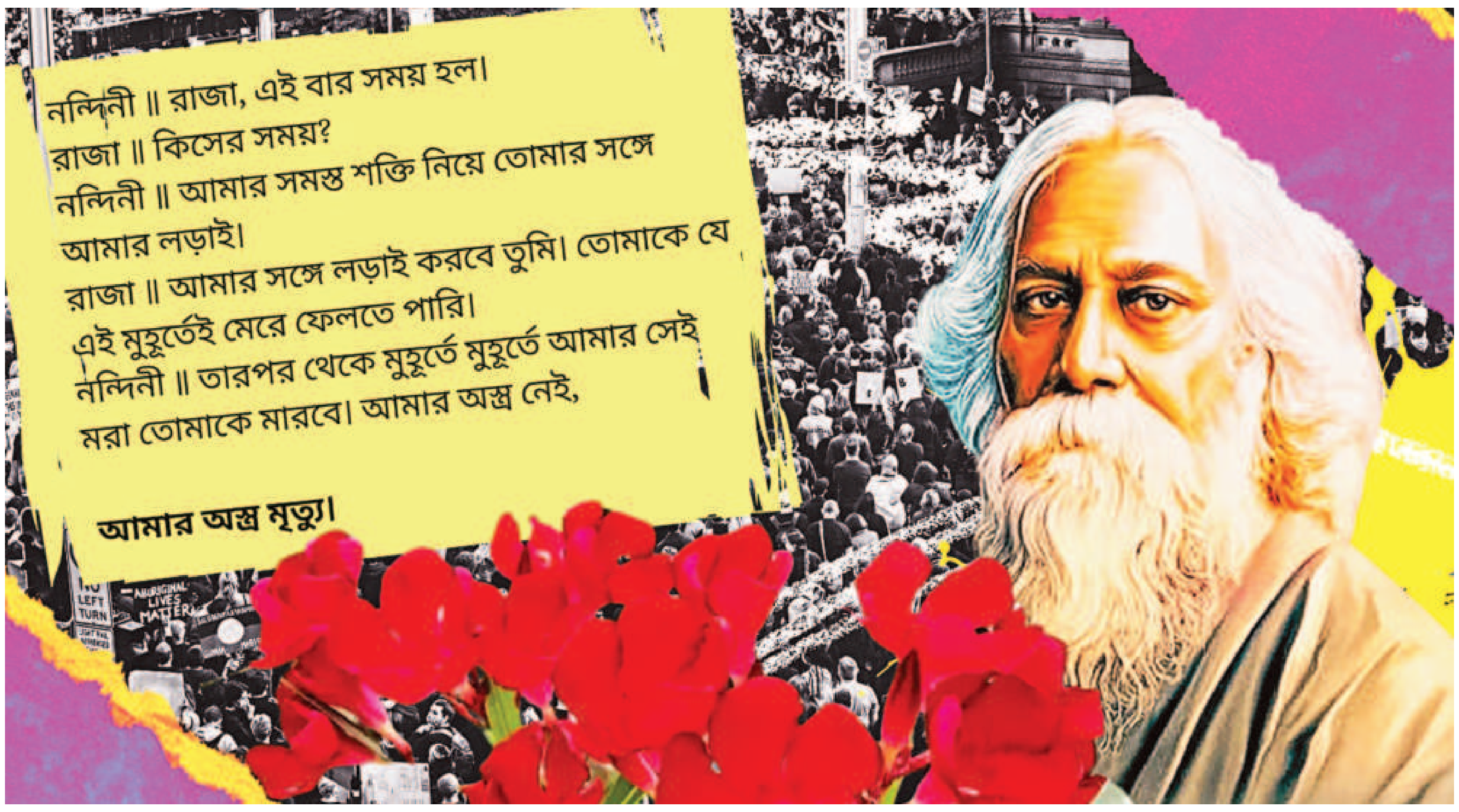

নন্দিনী ॥ রাজা, এই বার সময় হল।
রাজা ॥ কিসের সময়?
নন্দিনী ॥ আমার সমস্ত শক্তি নিয়ে তোমার সঙ্গে
আমার লড়াই।
রাজা ॥ আমার সঙ্গে লড়াই করবে তুমি। তোমাকে যে
এই মুহূর্তেই মেরে ফেলতে পারি।
নন্দিনী ॥ তারপর থেকে মুহূর্তে মুহূর্তে আমার সেই
মরা তোমাকে মারবে। আমার অস্ত্র নেই,
আমার অস্ত্র মৃত্যু।
NO LEFT TURN
ABORIGINAL LIVES MATTER

ILLUSTRATION: **MAISHA SYEDA**

In his long life, Rabindranath confronted protests and movements, revolutions and resistance efforts. His lectures, essays, letters, novels, and songs often tell the tales of those struggles.

NAZIA MANZOOR

One does not need to remember Rabindranath on the occasion of the anniversary of his death—22 Srabon or August 7 to be precise. Rabindranath is evoked often, and with spontaneity in our everyday lives. But perhaps he is recalled with a particular kind of urgency when we experience turmoil of the kind we are experiencing at our present political juncture. In his long life, Rabindranath confronted protests and movements, revolutions and resistance efforts. His lectures, essays, letters, novels, and songs often tell the tales of those struggles. From the Swadeshi Movement to Bongo Bhongo to colonial violence against the unarmed, Rabindranath's pen addressed them all. On the occasion of this baishe srabon, here are six essential revolutionary Rabindranath pieces everyone should read.

Letter to Lord Chelmsford Rejecting Knighthood (29 May, 1919)

Rabindranath was awarded the Knighthood in 1915, after winning the Nobel prize for *Gitanjali* (1910). However, he returned his Knighthood in 1919 in protest of Brigadier General Dyer's killings of 379 innocent, unarmed civilians at Amritsar in the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.

Condemning the killing of unarmed civilians, Rabindranath wrote to the Viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford: "Considering that such treatment has been meted out to a population, disarmed and resourceless, by a power which has the most terribly efficient organisation for destruction of human lives, we must strongly assert that it can claim no political expediency, far less moral justification." He adds, "The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in the incongruous context of humiliation, and I for my part wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions, by the side of those of my countrymen, who, for their so-called insignificance, are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings."

A bold declaration of solidarity and a firm rejection of such brutal violence meted out against unarmed general people, the letter affirms Rabindranath's sense of what is just and what one must stand for.

***Manusher Dhormo* (1931)**

A compilation of lectures delivered by Rabindranath and drawn from his Hibbert Lectures given at Oxford University in 1930, *Manusher Dhormo* is essential for everyone who wants to familiarise themselves with Rabindranath's philosophy on life and being human. The lectures were delivered while tensions surrounding India's independence struggle were high. Rabindranath proposes that the future of humanity must be based upon equality among the races when he claims, "I ask them to claim the right of manhood to be friends of men, and not the right of a particular proud race or nation which may boast of the fatal quality of being the rulers of men." A critique of race egotism and the race-centric human order, the book attests to Rabindranth's belief in the notions of insubordination, creativity, and autonomy.

***Pother Sonchoy* (1939)**

Rabindranath's trip to England and America in 1912–13 was his third visit to the West, and the impressions were recorded in a collection of small pieces in a text which was given the name, *Pother Shonchoy*. In one of the essays, he talks about the intellectual world in England which, as Rabindranath put it, bore no resemblance to the arrogance and pomposity demonstrated by the members of the British ruling class in India. Here, one might also recall the 1916 essay he wrote, condemning a Presidency College professor's ill words against Indians. He critiqued that men who are better suited for disciplinary roles—such as that of drill sergeant, or a jailer—have been put in charge of educating our young minds. Rabindranath's critique of English rule in India, particularly about how India was a source of profit for them and they kept India poor, is also worthy of engagement.

***Roktokorobi* (1923/1924)**

Often regarded as one of Rabindranth's staunchest protests against totalitarianism, *Roktokorobi* features Nandini—the woman whose only ornament is the flower roktokorobi which she wears for the man she loves—as a character who stands tall against oppressive regimes everywhere. The tyrant king's greed is contrasted sharply by Nandini's ability to love and her fierce determination to fight him. A play critiquing the onslaught of modernity and mindless industrialisation, *Roktokorobi* raises questions about what it means to be human when one is chained to a system that is intent on oppressing them.

Song lyrics

1905's Bongo Bhongo, or the first Bengal Partition by the British Raj was rejected by Rabindranath. Songs from this era, including "Ami porer ghore kinbo na ar", "Bidhir bidhon katbe tumi", and "Aji Bangladesher hridoy hote", are full of patriotic zeal and unparalleled love for Bengal. Other songs from this era include "Tor apon joney chhharbey torey, ta boley bhabna kora cholbena", "Jodi tor daak shune keu na ashe", "Ebar tor mora Gangey baan esechhey", and of course, "Aamar shonar Bangla", Bangladesh's national anthem. Lyrical, passionate, and poetic, the songs from this period continue to sway and move us—whether in music form or when appreciated for their poetic brilliance.

***Gora* (1910), *Ghore Baire* (1916), and *Char Odhdhay* (1934)**

While out of the three novels, *Ghore Baire* most explicitly and expertly analyses the limits of the Swadeshi movement, together the novels reflect the thinker's dis-ease with nationalism and how sometimes, the endeavour can be selfish. Rabindranath was an early advocate for the Swadeshi Movement, and later a critic, but his anti-nationalism is perhaps less interesting than what the novels cleverly reveal—his dis-ease with revolution itself. This is not to claim that he was anti-revolutionary, but Rabindranath's constantly shifting, morphing ideas of both concepts—nationalism and revolution—are exhibited brilliantly in the novels, and particularly in *Ghore Baire*. All three novels also hypothesise the dangers of hyper masculinity and hyper sexualisation, and discuss the emergence of the new, modern woman.

Nazia Manzoor *teaches English at North South University. She is also Editor, Daily Star Books and Literature. Reach her at nazia.manzoor@gmail.com.*

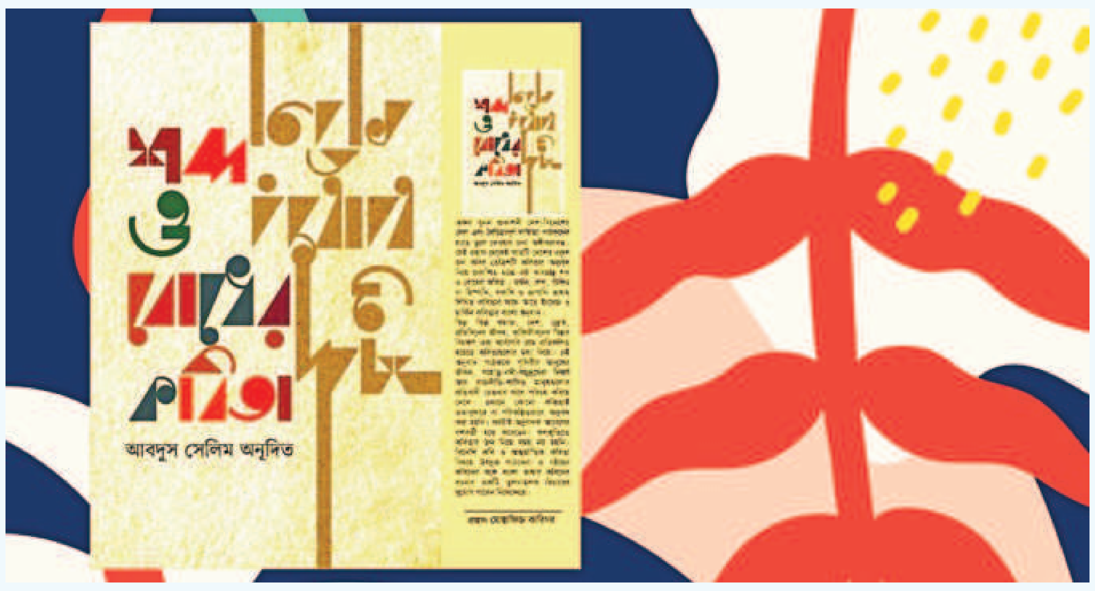
BOOK REVIEW: POETRY

About romances ever-appealing

Review of Abdus Selim's 'Shobdo O Bodher Kobita' (Aksar Bunan, 2024)

This book has been a clandestine romance all along; Selim makes no bones in admitting that this romance was initiated back in 1973 (I believe, the translator was studying literature in the US in those days) that continued till today.

ANSHUMAN BHOWMICK



DESIGN: **MAISHA SYEDA**

Poetry and Bangali gentlemen are perennial bedfellows. Unlike some romances that die young, a regular Bangali male, once smitten by the muse of poetry, never quite relinquishes that moment of epiphany. He keeps coming back to it whenever an occasion shows up. Thus, Abdus Selim, one of the most prolific translators of Bangladesh, with a mind boggling collection of plays that he has transplanted from lands near and far into our soil, finds an opportunity to return to his first love—poetry. And boy oh boy, have we been presented with an exquisite collection of poems culled from the whole Anglophone ecosystem rendered in exquisite Bangla!

When we say 'Anglophone ecosystem', we, of course, imply all the English translations from major languages like Spanish, French, German, et al. As a translator, Selim takes full advantage of the Anglophone privilege. In *Shobdo O Bodher Kobita* (roughly translating to *Poetry of Sound and Sense*), Selim accommodates 33 poems by 21 poets representing seven nations and six languages. In addition to the languages one would expect in such a volume, the list includes Japanese and Russian, demonstrating Selim's genuine interest in poetry at large.

This book has been a clandestine romance all along; Selim makes no bones in admitting that this romance was initiated back in 1973 (I believe, the translator was studying literature in the US in those days) that continued till today. Thus, the poems in this volume reflect both the purity of young love and the autumnal leaves.

Such diversity also reflects an educated Bangali's passion for literature of the world, a rarity these days. As I studied the poems—the translations and the originals, whenever I had an opportunity side by side—I was marvelled by Selim's complete command over the 'tatsama' elements in literary Bangla. This, facilitated by his penchant for matters linguistic, makes Selim a perfect representative of the last generation of Bangalis who inherited a multilingual ethos and chose to hone one's skills in several languages, including academic Bangla spiced with Sanskrit delicacies.This inheritance is rich, in every sense.

Selim does a marvellous job with Mathew Arnold's "Dover Beach" (1867), encapsulating the meditative mood of the original with smart deployment of transferred epithets. On reading Selim's rendering of John Keats' "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (1816), I was reminded of Jibananda Das debts to the wealth of literary allusions employed by the second generation of English Romantic poets, and also how Das emulated the syntax of Keats' language in "Much have I travelled in the realms of gold" (1820) to pen the opening verse of Banalata Sen.

Irrespective of the ambivalence that marks Metaphysical poetry of the 17th century, Selim marvels us with his choice of words and precision of utterance. The rendering of John Donne's sermon starting "No Man is an Island" (1624) is a case in point. Sometimes, Selim's translations are so lucid and musical that you feel like reading out his adaptation of Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise" (1978).

Some poems spring a surprise. Yevgeny Yevtushenko's "My Universities", for instance, is a socialist gem composed during the years of Communist atrocity. Jack Hirschman's "The Twin Towers Arcane" is a moving paean to the worst human massacre of recent years. That Selim introduces each poet in a few lines is helpful for the readers. As for publishing details, Selim gives the original titles at the end of each poem and names the English translators of non-English poems.

Translation is also about acknowledging the untranslatable. While digging into the culture specific registers of T S Eliot's "Ash Wednesday" (1930) for example, Selim leaves the title as it is.

Only one upsetting aspect lies in the production front. The proofing was below-par. And the cover design reflected nothing of the nuances that poetry carries.

Anshuman Bhowmick *is a cultural commentator and theatre critic based in Calcutta.*

WHAT WE'RE READING THIS WEEK

"Kaho" by Haruki Murakami

Imagine being called ugly on a blind date as a sort of social experiment. Then, imagine going out with him again. Within the fabric of such an absurd short story, entitled "Kaho", that was featured in *The New Yorker* last month, Haruki Murakami weaves a critique of our world's hypocritical condemnation of lookism and its simultaneous obsession with women's appearance. The force of such a statement is all the more amplified as it stands bare in an unembellished, blunt writing style. What strikes me is how Murakami conveys complex issues such as the symbiotic bond between one's face and one's perception of the self, the malleability of identity, and the fluidity of beauty, all through a deceptively simple character, Kaho—the eponymous protagonist of the story and the "plainest woman" her "quirky" blind date has, purportedly, ever seen.

Syeda Fatema Rahman

Star
DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 8, 2024, SRABAN 24, 1431 BS
SPORT

What to WATCH

Sports 18-1
Paris Olympics
Live from 11:30 am
T Sports
The Hundred
Oval Invincibles vs Southern Brave
Live from 11:30 pm

Uncertainty over Shakib's Pakistan Tests inclusion

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) officials are still undecided about the inclusion of premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan in their upcoming two-match Test series against Pakistan.

Shakib, who is currently playing in the Global T20 Canada, earlier expressed his desire to feature in the Test series -- with the first Test scheduled to begin on August 21 in Rawalpindi -- before leaving Bangladesh for the USA to take part in Major League Cricket last month.

Having been granted NOC by BCB until August 12, Shakib was expected to join the national teammates either in Bangladesh or Pakistan from Canada to prepare for the Test series.

However, Shakib, who was a lawmaker in the Awami League government that fell after a student protest on August 5, is no longer an MP following the president's order the next day. Due to the current unrest, he is unlikely to return to Bangladesh anytime soon.

It remains unclear whether his political identity would impact his selection in the national team. According to sources, Shakib's fitness for red-ball cricket is also a concern as he has been playing non-stop T20 matches since the home series against Zimbabwe in May.

"Before it was just about whether he [Shakib] could come to Bangladesh and then travel to Pakistan. He's been playing cricket but in a format where he has to score quickly in short time. And even though he knows how to play longer matches, there's a concern about whether he can handle the physical demands [of Test cricket]," a BCB official told The Daily Star yesterday.

The selectors, who were unable to contact Shakib over the past week due to unrest situation, are likely to sit with skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and head coach Chandika Hathurusingha in one or two days regarding the matter and other issues about the squad for the Pakistan Test series before they announce their final squad.

It was learned from another source that BCB has already formed an 18-member preliminary squad with Shakib and pacer Taskin Ahmed being in the team, but the final 15-member squad will be decided after the meeting with all the members of the selection panel, which had to be deferred a few times due to the current unrest situation.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, Cricket Operation In-charge Shahriar Nafees informed that Shakib's inclusion in the Test squad depends both on his availability and selection.

"He is only a cricketer now," Nafees told reporters in Mirpur. "There is a question of whether he is available for the series now, and another being whether he gets picked for the tour. We will run our activity keeping these two factors in mind," he concluded.

'Uncomfortable' presence of outsiders at Mirpur stadium

SPORTS REPORTER

Security concern is a quickly growing issue in Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium's premises due to the presence of outsiders.

While some club officials and organisers were seen coming with banners on Tuesday, demanding justice for the irregularities and corruption in the board under the Awami League government, on Wednesday there were presence of outsiders not affiliated with cricket.

Bangladesh 'A' team began their training following the unrest in the country but the presence of outsiders created an eerie atmosphere. Some were seen patrolling the periphery of the BCB offices while from time to time, media personnel saw people coming in with bikes and entering the premises of the stadium through gate number 2, virtually unobstructed.

Security personnel seemed unsure about the comings and goings. Inquired about these people, security personnel said, "Some of them quarrelled amongst themselves because there were two separate groups present at the same time."

A BCB official said, "It's an uncomfortable situation right now for everyone. It's a time for transition for the country. Let's see and hopefully after the interim government is formed, things will normalise."

Shahriar Nafees, in charge of BCB's cricket operations, was asked about the overall situation in terms of security or lack of it.

"Our players, many of them have practised in such situations. We have seen before that when change of power comes, this happens. But our regular staff are aware of the situation. The atmosphere in the whole country is a bit uncertain. We hope that just like the whole country would get back to normalcy in one to two days and run normally, the cricket board too would run in its normal course."

A patrol team of Bangladesh Army had visited the stadium as part of routine patrol.

"Bangladesh Army patrol team has been visiting since August 6. It's their routine work and not because of any security threat. The way they have been maintaining law and order in the country to normalise the situation, it's part of that," Shariar claimed.

PCB 'optimistic' about hosting Bangladesh Tests

AFP, *Karachi*

Pakistan are "optimistic" about hosting Bangladesh for their Test series this month, a source close to the cricket board said Wednesday, after a second-string team delayed its arrival amid an unfolding political crisis in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina stepped down on Monday and fled the country following mass protests demanding her resignation.

The second tier team, known as the "A team", were due to arrive in Islamabad on Tuesday but pushed back their schedule to Saturday.

The national team are due to land on August 17 for two Tests -- the first in Rawalpindi from August 21 and the second in Karachi from August 30.

"The PCB is proceeding with the plans and optimistic that the Test series will go ahead as scheduled," a source close to the Pakistan Cricket Board said, asking not to be named.

In an official statement on Wednesday, the PCB said it "has been in contact with the Bangladesh Cricket Board".

It also announced a 17-man squad for the two Tests against the Bangladesh national team.

Pakistan squad: Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Aamir Jamal (subject to fitness), Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Kamran Ghulam, Khurram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Huraira, Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi

'Mentally devastated' Saifuddin requests two-month break

SPORTS REPORTER

All-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin has withdrawn himself from the upcoming Bangladesh 'A' team's tour of Pakistan, saying he has been feeling 'mentally devastated' and requesting a two-month break from all cricketing activities.

Saifuddin, who was picked for the second four-day match of a two-match series and the following three-match one-day series against Pakistan 'A', expressed his desire to take a break through an email to the selectors earlier this month, informed a Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) official to The Daily Star on Wednesday.

In the email, he informed that he was devastated over not being picked for the ICC T20 World Cup squad in June, coupled with the fact that he could not fly to Canada to feature in the ongoing Global T20 due to the ongoing unrest in the country.

"Due to these matters, I want to keep myself away from all forms of cricket for the next two months. Hopefully, you will take the matter in a positive way," Saifuddin's email read.

However, it was learned that Saifuddin didn't mention the right rib injury that he sustained while attending an individual gym session in Mirpur two days before his Canada-bound flight, which was scheduled for late July.

Saifuddin was scheduled to represent the Montreal Tigers in the GT20 and he had also obtained a NOC from the BCB till August 8. Then, he was expected to join the 'A' team in Pakistan for the second four-dayer and one-day series.

"He observed the situation for a day [after the injury]. When he felt that his pain wasn't decreasing, he contacted our medical team. [BCB chief physician] Dr.Debashish [Chowdhury] checked him and gave him some instructions for treatment to assess his condition. We found severity in his pain," BCB physio Muzadded Sany told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We were not sure what type of injury it was. He planned to travel to Canada, and the 22-hour economy-class flight might have aggravated his injury.

"There would also be questions on us as to why we cleared him to play the tournament. So, we had asked him not to go to Canada to feature in the league," he added.

According to sources, Saifuddin's recent letter to BCB has irked the selectors as the cricketer had also skipped the Bangladesh Tigers' majority practice sessions in Sylhet and Chattogram last month.

"He only practised for nine days in Sylhet and four days in Chattogram out of a total of 45 days of Bangladesh Tigers' practice camp. He left the Chattogram camp after playing the first two white-ball practice matches citing that he had to attend his biometric for Canada visa," said an official on request of anonymity.

"He had also earlier taken leave citing family issues before Eid. He then sought extended leave which we also granted seeing his family emergency. Now he is talking about his reluctance about cricket," he concluded.

Saifuddin, who last represented Bangladesh in a T20I series against Zimbabwe in May this year, could not be reached for comments on the matter.

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

MARATHON SWIMMING
Women's 10 km
11:30 am
SPORTS CLIMBING
Men's Speed
4:16 pm
CANOE SPRINT
Men's Double 500m
5:20 pm
Women's Kayak Four 500m
5:40 pm
Men's Kayak Four 500m
5:50 pm
DIVING
Men's 3m Springboard
7:00 pm
WEIGHTLIFTING
Women's 59 kg
7:00 pm
SAILING
Men's Kite
Starts from 4:13 pm
Women's Kite
Starts from 5:13 pm
WRESTLING
Men's Greco-Roman 67 kg
Men's Greco-Roman 87 kg
Women's Freestyle 53 kg
Starts from 10:15 pm
HOCKEY (MEN'S)
11:00 pm
CYCLING TRACK
Women's Keirin
11:01 pm
Men's Omnium
11:37 pm
WEIGHTLIFTING
Men's 73 kg
11:30 pm
ATHLETICS
Women's Long Jump
12:00 am (Friday)
Men's Javelin Throw
12:25 am (Friday)
Women's 200 m
12:30 am (Friday)
Women's 400m Hurdles
1:25 am (Friday)
Men's 110m Hurdles
1:45 am (Friday)
TAEKWONDO
Men's 68 kg
1:19 am (Friday)
Women's 57 kg
1:37 am (Friday)
BOXING
Men's 51 kg
2:34 am (Friday)
Women's 54 kg
2:51 am (Friday)

A family affair

REUTERS, *Paris*

For the 32 women's and men's teams in the Paris Olympics table tennis the matches are about representing their country, but for the many siblings amongst them it is also about representing their family and the shared last name they hold dear.

At least eight sibling pairs are among the 96 athletes competing in the table tennis team events, a higher-than-usual percentage in the world of top-level competitive sports.

Some of these athletes come from families with deep-rooted table tennis traditions, while others were inspired by the desire to follow in the footsteps of an older sibling, finding joy in the sport and keeping each other company.

One of the best known sibling duos in the sport, French favourites Alexis and Felix Lebrun, have cheered for each other on and off the courts.

"Table tennis is a family sport. It's always a part of my family," said Felix, who ran to hug his brother after his bronze medal win for France, the first in the sport since 2000.

"I live my dream to be here with my brother," added Felix, who hails from a family where their father was a French champion and their uncle an Olympian.

When the younger Lebrun felt nervous before his medal match, he turned to his brother Alexis for support, especially since Alexis had been eliminated by the same opponent, Brazil's Hugo Calderano, earlier in the singles.

Sweden's Anton Kallberg echoed the influence of family on his decision to take up table tennis, as well as that of his younger sister Christina. Both are competing in their second Olympics together.

"I would say our parents played a big part. My dad, my mum, even my uncle and grandfather played a bit, so I pretty much had no choice but to get into table tennis," said Kallberg.

Not every Olympian table tennis sibling was inspired by their parents. For 19-year-old Brazilian Guilia Takahashi, it was her sister Bruna, five years her senior, who provided the inspiration.

"I play because of her. When I was six, I watched her play and thought, why not? Then I started to play, and this is my life now," said Takahashi, who described going to the Olympics with her sister as a dream come true.

Competing in sport with a close family member is not always easy. Rivalry between siblings, most famously demonstrated by the Williams sisters in tennis, can add complexity.

The Lebrun brothers, while teammates at the Olympics, often face each other in singles competitions, where Alexis has a better record despite Felix's higher world ranking.

Even siblings competing in different gender categories can feel the pressure brought on by their older counterparts.

"For the older sibling, if it works out, it works out; but for the younger one, they're under so much more attention and pressure to perform," said Japanese table tennis player Tomokazu Harimoto, who also comes from a table tennis family.

"I have a lot of respect for my sister. She faces so much pressure yet still delivers and continues to improve," Harimoto said of 16-year-old Miwa, who is making her Olympic debut in Japan's women's team.

Harimoto mentioned that while there are no current plans it would be very special to play mixed doubles with his sister at future Olympics.

Off the courts, travelling for tournaments with siblings can help combat homesickness. In the Olympics Village, Brazil's Giulia Takahashi, 19, shares a room with her sister Bruna, 24.

"It's like my house, I can do whatever I want. She takes care of me and wakes me up every morning," she said giggling.

And how do their parents back home feel? "Double proud for the double trouble," said Bruna.

Brazil forward Adriana celebrates with a teammate after scoring her team's third goal against Spain in their women's semifinal match of the Olympics at the Marseille Stadium on Tuesday. Brazil thrashed the world champions 4-2 to set up Saturday's final clash against four-time champions USA.

PHOTO: AFP

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Sacked Maj Gen Ziaul 'arrested' at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sacked Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan was detained at the Dhaka airport in the early hours of yesterday while trying to flee the country.

Ziaul, who was dismissed from the army on Tuesday, was on board an Emirates flight that was taxiing the runway for take-off.

The plane was asked to return to boarding bridge and Ziaul was taken off the aircraft and transported to the Dhaka Cantonment, The Daily Star has learnt from officials at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

Ziaul, who joined the Bangladesh Army as a commissioned officer in 1991, is alleged to have been involved in enforced disappearances and assassinations during his time in the Rapid Action Battalion.

In 2009, he was made the vice-captain of Rab-2 in 2009 when he

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Relatives of prisoners crowd near the entrance to Kashimpur High Security Central Jail in Gazipur yesterday, a day after at least 209 prisoners reportedly fled. The jail authorities said six bodies were recovered after multiple attacks were carried out from inside and outside the prison on Tuesday. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: STAR

Hundreds of Hindus at border to go to India

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Fearing attacks, several hundred Hindus, including women and children, gathered near two border areas of Thakurgaon and Panchagarh yesterday to enter India.

Mojakkarul Alam Kochi, chairman of Aloakhawa union under Panchagarh's Atwari upazila, told The Daily Star around 5:30pm that over 100 young people from different areas of Thakurgaon and Panchagarh reached near Barshalupara border.

They told the chairman that attackers looted valuables from their houses and businesses, and also threatened to kill them.

They refused to return home despite requests from Border Guard Bangladesh personnel, Mojakkarul said.

The UP chairman said nearly 3,000 people had thronged the border on Tuesday, but they returned home after failing to cross the border.

Local journalist Jibon Al Mamun, who visited Jagdal border of Thakurgaon's Ranisankail upazila yesterday afternoon, said around 600 people were waiting near the no-man's land to enter India.

Some of them alleged that their houses and businesses were vandalised and looted, the journalist said.

Uphold rule of law, respect democracy

Blinken urges; Australia asks all to ensure universal rights

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on Bangladesh to respect democracy after Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus was tapped to lead an interim government following an uprising.

"Any decisions that the interim government makes, they need to respect democratic principles, uphold the rule of law, and reflect the will of the people," Blinken told reporters, reports AFP.

The US embassy in Dhaka also reiterated calls for calm and peace, having expressed concerns about reported attacks on religious minorities and places of worship in Bangladesh.

"As a friend and partner to the Bangladeshi people, the United States will continue to support Bangladesh's democratic aspirations and respect for human rights," it said in a statement.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

'Stop violence against minorities, try perpetrators'

Rights groups, eminent citizens demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights groups, eminent citizens and sociocultural organisations have condemned the violence, specifically targeting Hindus, in different parts of Bangladesh amid a power vacuum in the wake of Sheikh Hasina's abrupt resignation and escape.

They demanded immediate steps to protect the religious minorities and bring the assailants to justice in statements issued yesterday, describing the attacks targeting Hindu homes, businesses and temples as an "evil attempt to destroy communal harmony".

Such violation of human rights can tarnish the image of the country, warned the National Human

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Mood in Bangladesh is 'one of hope'

Says UN resident coordinator Gwyn Lewis

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh Gwyn Lewis has described the national sentiment as "one of hope" despite recent chaos and violence following the fall of Sheikh Hasina.

"If and when this transitional government is shaped and the voices of the young people in the country are heard, I think we can really shape and move forward to continue the trajectory of positive development," she said in an interview with UN News on Tuesday.

Her comment comes ahead of the formation of an interim government led by Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus today.

"It's really a moment of a crossroads for Bangladesh, and so we're really hopeful that this will become something very positive that we can build

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

No detainees in Dhaka facility

Says DGFI; Mikel Changma 'released' after five years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) yesterday said there were no detainees at its Dhaka facility, known as "Aynaghor", at the moment.

The detention cells of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Detective Branch were found empty yesterday.

Although the Dhaka DGFI claimed that they were not holding anyone, Mikel Changma, 40, a UPDF activist who was forcibly disappeared on April 16, 2019, from Narayanganj, returned to his friend's home in Chattogram yesterday.

A source who spoke to his family confirmed this to The Daily Star.

A delegation of rights activists visited the DGFI headquarters yesterday morning.

The team, led by Sanjida Islam Tulee, coordinator of Mayer Daak, a platform of the victims of enforced

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Civil admin still without direction

BAHARAM KHAN

From rural areas to the secretariat, the civil administration officials have been directionless in the absence of a government since former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's departure on Monday.

The secretariat, usually abuzz with officials and visitors, looked almost deserted for the last two days as very few officials went to work and visitors were not allowed.

Most of the secretaries and other senior officials were absent and some even switched off their phones, leaving the junior officers in the dark and badly affecting the chain of command.

> **Most of the secretaries and other senior officials were absent and some even switched off their phones, leaving the junior officers in the dark and badly affecting the chain of command.**

"This has led to the collapse of civil administration across the country," a secretary told this correspondent over the phone.

Cabinet Secretary Mahbub Hossian, Public Security Division Secretary Jahangir Alam and Senior Secretary of the Security Services Division Mashiur Rahman, and Agriculture Secretary Wahida Akhter, did not attend office, said sources.

Mohammad Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, senior secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration, was found at his office.

"We are in a special situation. We are working to overcome this. We hope everything will be normal soon," he told The Daily Star.

"Even though there is no government, the President is there. We are carrying out some important tasks. Soon, there will be no administrative vacuum," he added.

Some officials said that they were feeling insecure because of the attacks on important government structures. Secretariat buildings have offices of at least 45 ministries and divisions.

Many had said they did not know offices would reopen on Tuesday. The government on Sunday, when Hasina was the prime minister, announced that all offices would be closed for the three following days.

Army Chief Waker-Uz-Zaman on Monday afternoon announced on TV that the offices would reopen the next day. But very few went to work on Tuesday and left shortly after midday.

The situation improved ever so slightly yesterday.

Most of the officers present at the secretariat said they felt that they had been deprived of promotions over the last 15 years.

Witnesses said many held a meeting at the library room of the public administration ministry and expressed anger at their colleagues who they thought had enjoyed undue benefits.

ADMINISTRATION WITHOUT GUARDIANS

Administration officials in the districts are hardly getting any direction from top bureaucrats.

"The field administration officials feel like

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

Major shakeup in police high-ups

Heads of Rab, DMP replaced; low-ranked cops place 11-point demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The high-ups of Bangladesh Police have gone through a major reshuffle since the ouster of Sheikh Hasina.

Since August 5, changes have been made to the positions of the inspector general of police, director general of the Rapid Action Battalion and the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Md Mainul Islam has been appointed the new IGP, replacing Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun. Additional IGP AKM Shahidur Rahman has been made the DG of Rab while Additional Deputy Inspector General of Police Md Mainul Hasan took charge as the DMP commissioner (current charge).

The change in the top post came as the contractual appointment of Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun as the IGP was revoked.

Shahidur replaced former Rab DG Md Harun-or-Rashid who has been transferred to the Police Headquarters. Mainul Hasan took over from outgoing DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman who has been attached to the PHQ as the additional IGP.

The home ministry issued separate circulars in this regard on Tuesday

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

Traffic on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway is increasing as the situation is improving following the fall of the Awami League government on Monday. The photo was taken in Paka Rastar Matha area of Chattogram's Sitakunda upazila around noon yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

AL not dead, not easy to wipe it out

Joy says in video message

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sajeeb Wazed Joy yesterday said his family cannot sit idle when Awami League activists are being persecuted.

The comments came in less than 24 hours after he said his mother Sheikh Hasina and other family members will not return to politics.

"I said my family will not do politics again. But we cannot sit idle while our leaders and activists are being persecuted," he said in a video message yesterday evening.

"To whoever is in charge of the country at the moment, I want to say that we, too, want a terrorism-free Bangladesh. To that end, we are willing to initiate dialogues with anyone, as long as they discard terrorism," he said.

"Bangladesh is going through a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

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শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Yunus-led interim govt takes charge

13 advisers including 2 student representatives sworn in; 3 to take oath later

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR *and* **BAHARAM KHAN**

The interim government led by Prof Muhammad Yunus took oath last night, four days after the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina amid a mass upsurge led by students.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin administered the oath of office and oath of secrecy to the 84-year-old Nobel laureate and pioneer of microcredit and 13 advisers at the Bangabhaban Darbar Hall around 9:30pm in a ceremony conducted by Cabinet Secretary Mahbub Hossain. Three advisers could not be sworn in as they are outside the capital.

Wearing a chequered punjabi and a white vest, Prof Yunus arrived at the Bangabhaban to a standing ovation.

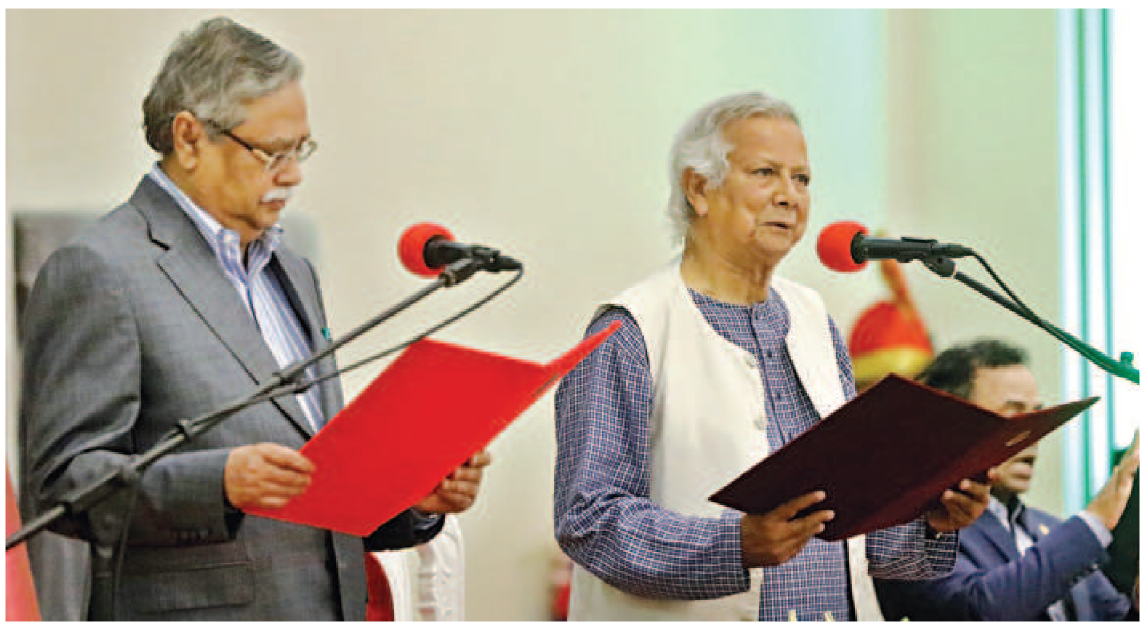
Earlier in the afternoon, Prof Yunus arrived at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport from Paris. Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman and student organisers received him there.

He made a short speech and talked to the student leaders and civil society members at the airport.

In 1996, Prof Yunus became an adviser to an interim government after declining an offer to lead the caretaker government.

It is, however, not clear for how long this interim government will be in power. The Daily Star asked the question to four of the

SEE PAGE 7 COL 3



President Mohammed Shahabuddin swearing in Prof Muhammad Yunus as the chief adviser to the interim government at the Bangabhaban last night.

PHOTO: PID

'Anarchy is our enemy, it must be defeated'

Yunus says '2nd independence' for everyone to enjoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus said those who spread the poison of anarchy would face the full power of law enforcement agencies, along with the victorious students and the people, who will make them fail.

He sounded the warning in his first address to the nation last night after taking the oath as head of the interim government.

"The conspirators have created an atmosphere of anarchy and fear in the country to thwart our second independence through the uprising of the student-masses. Anarchy is our enemy, and it must be defeated quickly," he said.

"As the first duty of the government, we will suppress these conspirators with a heavy hand.

"The first promise of our government is to ensure that everyone can breathe

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Normalcy should return soon

Hope eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent citizens welcomed the new interim government, hoping it would restore normalcy and address the ongoing crises across the country.

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury yesterday said one of the duties of the interim government would be to restore order, which has been disrupted over the last few days following the fall of Sheikh Hasina.

"The other task is to ensure the safety of citizens," he said in his immediate reaction to the oath-taking of the interim government last night.

He added that this government would also need to eliminate all forms of oppression and the culture of fear prevailing across the country.

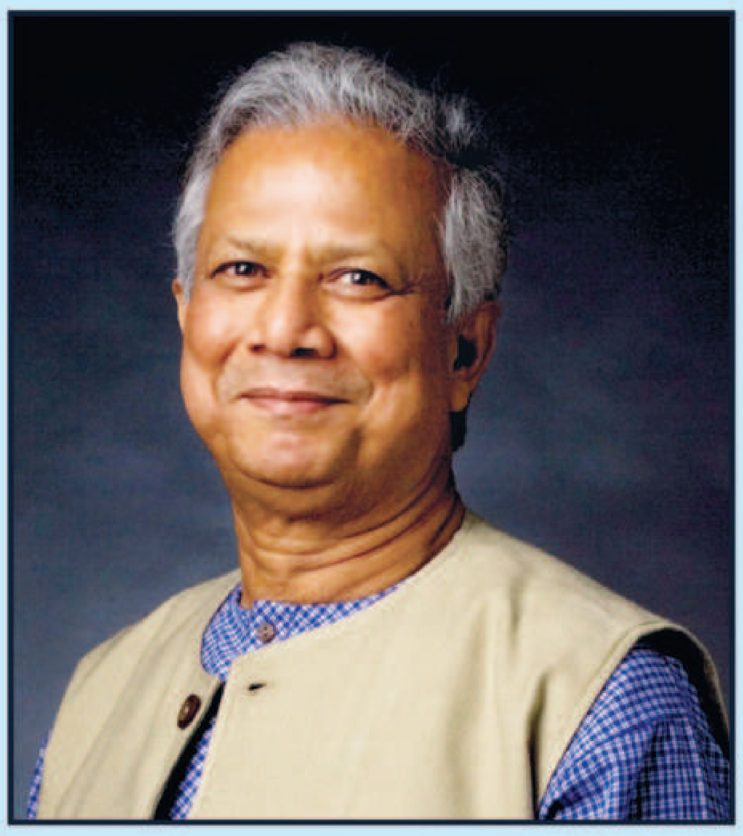
However, the main responsibility of the government, he emphasised, would be to hold a fair and acceptable election to facilitate a democratic transition of power.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

> **The main responsibility of the government would be to hold a fair and acceptable election to facilitate a democratic transition of power."**
>
> Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury

P 2 Profiles of advisers
P 5 Not all heroes wear capes

অভিনন্দন



অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের প্রধান উপদেষ্টা হিসেবে দায়িত্ব নেয়ার জন্য পোশাক শিল্প পরিবারের পক্ষ থেকে আমাদের গর্ব, শান্তিতে নোবেলজয়ী, ক্ষুধা ও দারিদ্র বিমোচনে ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ এবং সামাজিক ব্যবসা ধারণার প্রবর্তক, প্রখ্যাত অর্থনীতিবিদ
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ADVISERS TO THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT

DR SALEHUDDIN AHMED

Salehuddin Ahmed is a former governor of the Bangladesh Bank and is currently a professor at BRAC Business School.

Born in Old Dhaka, Ahmed hails from a family in Nabinagar upazila of Brahmanbaria. He completed his schooling at Dhaka Collegiate School in 1963 and went on to earn a postgraduate degree in economics from the University of Dhaka in 1969.

In 1974, he enrolled in another postgraduate course at Canada's McMaster University, from where he earned a PhD degree four years later.

Ahmed began his career in academia as a lecturer in economics at the University of Dhaka in 1970. He later joined the erstwhile Civil Service of Pakistan and served in various administrative roles within the government of Bangladesh.

His career includes significant contributions at the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific, an inter-governmental organisation headquartered in Dhaka.

Ahmed served as the central bank governor from May 1, 2005, to April 30, 2009.

He also served as the managing director of the Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation and the director-general of Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, Cumilla and the NGO Affairs Bureau under the Office of the Prime Minister.

AF HASSAN ARIFF

AF Hassan Ariff is a senior advocate for the Supreme Court who has been practicing law in Bangladesh since 1970.

From October 2001 to April 2005, he served as the attorney general under the four-party alliance government led by the BNP and Jamaat.

From January 2008 to January 2009, he served as the legal adviser to the caretaker government.

Hassan Ariff began his career at the Calcutta High Court in West Bengal, India, in 1967.

After that, in 1970, he moved to Dhaka and began working as a lawyer at the High Court.

Hassan Ariff is a Court Member of the ICC International Court of Arbitration.

He has previously served as an adviser to the Roads and Highways Department of the Government of Bangladesh, the Chittagong Port Authority, the Mongla Port Authority, the Security Exchange Commission, the Bangladesh Bank, the Capital Development Authority, the Chittagong Development Authority, the Chittagong Stock Exchange, the University Grants Commission (UGC), Robi Axiata Limited, and Grameen Phone Bangladesh.

He is currently an adviser to the Dhakeshwari National Temple Complex.

BRIG GEN (RTD) M SAKHAWAT HUSSAIN

M Sakhawat Hussain is a former election commissioner and a retired brigadier general of the Bangladesh Army.

He graduated from the Defence Services Command and Staff College in Mirpur, Dhaka in 1979. He studied at the United States Army Command and General Staff College from 1981-1982.

He obtained a postgraduate degree in strategic studies from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. He is an alumnus of the National Defence College, Pakistan.

Sakhawat was commissioned into Pakistan Army in 1966 from Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul. He joined the Bangladesh Army in 1972 after the country's independence.

He was appointed as a commissioner in the Election Commission headed by ATM Shamsul Huda in 2007 and served until 2012.

An author of 26 books, Sakhawat served as a lieutenant colonel in the Military Operations Directorate.

Post-retirement, he became an individual researcher in national security and defence, a columnist and security analyst.

He served on the board of state-owned Sonali Bank.

Currently, he is an honorary research fellow at the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance at North South University.

M TOUHID HOSSAIN

Md Touhid Hossain, 70, is a former foreign secretary of Bangladesh.

Hossain, born on 1 February 1955, completed his master's degree in history from the University of Dhaka.

He joined the Bangladesh Foreign Service in 1981.

From January 1999 to February 2000, he served as the principal of the Foreign Service Academy.

Hossain was the Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Kolkata from 2001 to 2005 and served as Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh from 2006 to 2009.

In June 2012, Hossain was appointed the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to South Africa.

Md Touhid Hossain is a regular commentator on international affairs in media and writes columns for The Daily Star, Prothom Alo and other news outlets.

He is also a researcher on regional and international relations issues.

In 2022, he wrote a paper on "Prospects and Challenges in Bangladesh's Relationship with Germany and the European Union" on the country's 50th Anniversary of Independence.

FARIDA AKHTER

Farida Akhter is a well-known rights activist who has been vocal about women's rights since the 1980s.

Also an advocate of biodiversity-based ecological agriculture, she has carried out extensive research in this field.

She is the executive director of UBINIG (Policy Research for Development Alternative) -- a policy and action research organisation formed in 1984 by a group of activists to support the people's movement for social, economic, political and cultural transformation.

Farida is also the president of Narigrantha Prabartana, a book store and publication house for women.

She fiercely protested the 1995 rape and murder of 14-year-old Yasmin Akhter in Dinajpur by members of the Bangladesh Police, a crime that sparked widespread demonstrations.

Farida is also a crusader for direct election to the reserved seats in parliament.

Born in Chattogram in 1953, she graduated from Chittagong University with a degree in economics. She is married to writer, columnist, and poet Farhad Mazhar.

Farida herself has written several books, including Resisting Norplant: Women's Struggle in Bangladesh Against Coercion and Violence; Depopulating Bangladesh, among others.

SHARMEEN MURSHID

Sharmeen Murshid is a well-known election expert and the chief executive officer at "Brotee," an organisation that monitors elections.

She has long advocated for free and fair elections as well as open democracy and the strengthening of democratic institutions in the country.

Sharmeen is the daughter of Khan Sarwar Murshid, an educationist, diplomat, and intellectual, as well as a renowned teacher at Dhaka University.

Sharmeen's mother, Nurjahan Murshid, was a journalist, teacher, and social activist.

Sharmeen is also secretary-general of "Uttarsury", a cultural center.

During the Liberation War in 1971, she was a member of "Bangladesh Mukti Shangrami Shilpi Shangstha", a cultural troupe that used to travel to refugee camps and different liberated areas (also known as "Mukta Anchal") and perform patriotic songs, arrange puppet shows, and stage dramas to inspire freedom fighters and lift the spirits of war-affected people.

Later in 1995, a famous documentary titled "Muktir Gaan" was made on the works of the troupe.

SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN

Syeda Rizwana Hasan is a Supreme Court lawyer and the chief executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA).

Rizwana has been vocal on environmental issues in the country.

She is a recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award, which is regarded as the Nobel Prize of Asia, for her campaign for environmental justice.

She has also been named one of the 40 Environmental Heroes of the World by TIME magazine.

Rizwana is also the chairperson of RDRS. It was established as the Bangladesh field programme of the Geneva-based Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service (LWF/DWS) in February 1972 to provide relief, rehabilitation, and development assistance to the war-affected people in northwest Bangladesh.

She serves on the boards of several other NGOs, including FIVDB, Nijera Kori, the Association of Land Reforms and Development (ALRD), Gonoshashaya Kendra (GK), the NGOB Platform, and the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC).

Rizwana, born on January 15, 1968, began her career at BELA in 1993.

She got her honour's and master's degrees in law with distinction from Dhaka University.

NURJAHAN BEGUM

Nurjahan Begum is one of the earliest associates of Muhammad Yunus during the establishment of Grameen Bank in 1976 in the village of Jobra in the Chittagong district.

A student of Chittagong University, Nurjahan played an important role in organising poor rural women in Grameen Bank's grassroots groups in the bank's earliest and most challenging days when rural women were hardly allowed to go out of doors and speak to non-relative males, let alone take a loan from an institution.

She worked as Grameen Bank's programme officer at Chittagong, Tangail, Rangpur and Patuakhali and general manager of Training and International Programme for more than a decade. She also served as the principal of Grameen Bank's Central Training Institute.

She worked as deputy managing director of the Nobel Prize-winning organisation and after Yunus retired in 2011, she became the acting MD.

She has been working as an honorary MD of Grameen Shikkha and director of several companies under the Grameen umbrella.

Nurjahan was awarded the Susan M Davis Lifetime Achievement Award 2008 by the Grameen Foundation, World Summit Millennium Development Goals Award 2009, and Vision Award 2009.

DR ASIF NAZRUL

Asif Nazrul is a faculty of the University of Dhaka's law department.

Born as Md Nazrul Islam in 1966, Nazrul did his LLB (Honours) and LLM from the University of Dhaka. He received his PhD in International Law from the School of Oriental and African Studies in 1999.

Before joining Dhaka University in 1991, he used to work with Bichitra, a well-reputed newsweekly of that time. He also worked as a government officer (Magistrate) for a few months.

Nazrul is a popular columnist and human rights defender. He co-authored a number of books and wrote research papers on constitutional and international legal issues in leading journals and books.

He was a Bureau Member of the South Asian for Human Rights from 2011-17.

He worked as a consultant to the EU delegation in Bangladesh, UNDP, ADB, DANIDA, SIDA, CARE, TIB and other organisations on issues of good governance, access to justice and human rights.

Nazrul actively supported the recent anti-quota discrimination student movement and attended various programmes in favour of protesters.

ADILUR RAHMAN KHAN

Adilur Rahman Khan is a Supreme Court lawyer and prominent human rights activist in Bangladesh.

He is also the secretary of rights organisation Odhikar, which monitors the human rights violations in the country.

Adilur, along with several other members of the civil society, founded Odhikar back in 1994.

He and his colleague were sentenced to two years in prison in a case filed over allegedly "running a distorted report and doctored images" over the May 5-6, 2013 police action on a Hefazat-e-Islam rally in the capital's Motijheel.

Adilur, along with several other members of the civil society, founded Odhikar back in 1994.

In 2022, the government had cancelled Odhikar's registration.

Khan studied law at Dhaka University and was part of the democratic movement against Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammad Ershad.

He was a deputy attorney general during the last tenure of BNP-led government.

BIDHAN RANJAN ROY PODDER

Bidhan Ranjan Roy Poddar is a former director of the National Institute of Mental Health and Hospital in Dhaka. Bidhan, a psychiatrist, now practices in Mymensingh.

He was born in Sunamganj in 1964. He completed his SSC from Sunamganj Government Jubilee High School and his HSC from Dhaka College. He got his MBBS degree from Sir Salimullah Medical College.

He was born in Sunamganj in 1964. He completed his SSC from Sunamganj Government Jubilee High School and his HSC from Dhaka College. He got his MBBS degree from Sir Salimullah Medical College.

He served as the director of psychiatry department at the National Institute of Mental Health and Hospital from March 2020 to July 2023.

"I was out of the city [last night] so I could not take the oath along with the other advisers. I will be taking the oath later," he told The Daily Star.

FARUK-E-AZAM

Faruk-e-Azam, awarded Bir Pratik for his valiant role in the Liberation War, was a naval commando.

Born in Chattogram's Hathazari upazila, Faruk was a sub-commander of "Operation Jackpot", one of the biggest operations against the Pakistan occupation forces carried out in Chattogram port.

Three teams were selected to attack the port on August 16, 1971. One team could not reach Chattogram, but the other two teams, comprising 37 members, participated in the attack, with AW Chowdhury as the captain.

In 1971, Faruk completed his Higher Secondary Examinations and was in Khulna at the beginning of the Liberation War.

He overcame many obstacles to reach Chattogram.

On May 6, he crossed the border and took shelter in India's Harina Youth Camp.

During his stay there, he was enlisted in the navy. After two months of training in Palashi, he was chosen for the "Operation Jackpot".

Faruk was one of the organisers of the first Bijoy Mela in Chattogram in 1989 and was an active member of the Forum for Planned Chattogram.

AFM KHALID HOSSAIN

AFM Khalid Hossain is a professor in the department of Quranic Science and Islamic Studies at the International Islamic University Chittagong.

He is the Nayeb-e-Ameer of Hefazat-e-Islam Bangladesh and an advisor for Islami Andolan Bangladesh.

Hossain is now serving as the Muhaddith at Al Jamia Al Arabia Jiri in Chattogram's Patiya upazila and is the Khateeb at Hadrat Uthman Jame Mosque in Halishahar, Chattogram.

Born in 1959 in Babu Nagar village in Satkania upazila, he earned his MA and BA from the Islamic History and Culture department of Chittagong University and PhD from the same university in 2006.

He was an associate professor and head of the Islamic History and Culture Department at Omar Ghani MES College and a former principal of Satkania Alia Madrasah.

He had also served as the editor of the monthly At Tawheed and was a correspondent for The Bangladesh Times and The Daily Sangbad.

Additionally, he was on the editorial board of the Islamic Encyclopedia at the Islamic Foundation.

His teaching experience includes roles at various educational institutions, and he has published four literary translations, five articles and seven books.

SUPRADIP CHAKMA

Supradip Chakma is a former ambassador and the current chairman of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board.

He previously served as the Bangladesh ambassador to Vietnam and Mexico.

As a foreign cadre from the BCS 1985 batch, he held various positions at the Bangladesh Embassy in Rabat, the Bangladesh High Commission in Colombo, the Bangladesh Embassy in Brussels, and the Bangladesh Embassy in Ankara.

As a foreign cadre from the BCS 1985 batch, he held various positions at the Bangladesh Embassy in Rabat, the Bangladesh High Commission in Colombo, the Bangladesh Embassy in Brussels, and the Bangladesh Embassy in Ankara.

Born in Khagrachhari in 1961, he studied marketing at Dhaka University.

When contacted, Supradip said, "When the cabinet secretary called me, I informed him that I'll not be able to take the oath today as I'm currently in Rangamati. If the procedure permits, I am willing to take the oath at a later date."

NAHID ISLAM

Nahid Islam is a key organiser of the student movement that led to the departure of Sheikh Hasina.

A masters student of sociology at Dhaka University, Nahid is one of the two youngest advisors to a government. The other one is Asif Mahmud.

Nahid is also the member secretary of Ganotantrik Chhatra Shakti formed by the breakaway members of Chhatra Odhikar Parisahd led by Nurul Haque Nur.

He was picked up allegedly by the law enforcers last month and was tortured until he lost consciousness. When the student protests peaked, he was detained by the Detective Branch of police again along with five other fellow protesters.

In 2018, Nahid participated in the quota-reform protests that shook the nation. At the time, he received threats from the university administration and teachers.

In 2019, he vied for the cultural secretary post at Dhaka University Central Students' Union from Nurul-Rashed-Faruk panel under the banner of Bangladesh Sadharon Chhatra Odhikar Songrokkhon Parishad.

He lost the election and later separated himself from the parishad.

He admitted to DU in the 2016-2017 session.

ASIF MAHMUD

Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyian is one of the coordinators of the quota reform protest that later turned into an anti-government movement, which eventually toppled the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

Asif, a master's student at linguistics department of Dhaka University, along with five other leaders of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement was detained by the Detective Branch of police for several days.

He was active during the quota reform protest in 2018. He was elected president at the first conference of Chhatra Adhikar Parishad in 2023.

He was active during the quota reform protest in 2018. He was elected president at the first conference of Chhatra Adhikar Parishad in 2023.

He, however, resigned within around five months alleging that the central leadership violated the organisation constitution.

He became the convener of a new student organisation, named Gonotantrik Chhatra Shakti, on October 4 last year.

Asif was born on July 14, 1998, in Cumilla.

‘I could not believe my eyes’

Says father of Nafiz, 16, after identifying slain son in a photo

NILIMA JAHAN

On August 5, several newspapers featured the image of a wounded protester being carried by a rickshaw-puller in the Farmgate area of the capital.

The photo showed a protester with a Bangladeshi flag tied around his head, lying in the footwell of a rickshaw with his head hanging over one side and his feet dangling from the other.

The viral image helped Golam Rahman, a businessman from Mohakhali, identify the protester as his son, Golam Nafiz, 16.

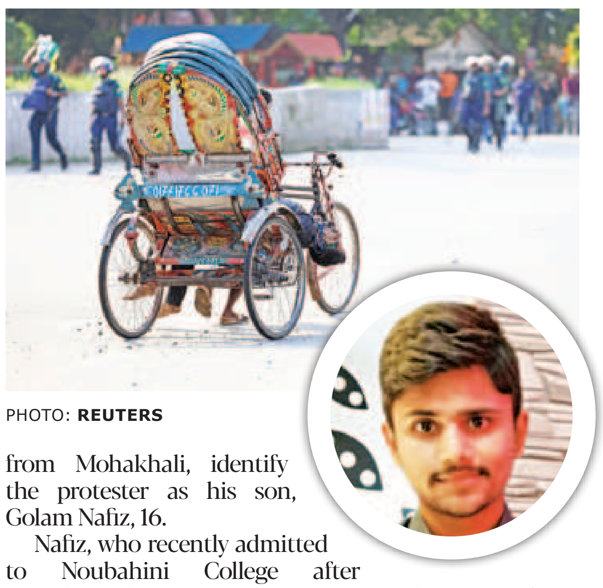

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Nafiz, who recently admitted to Noubahini College after completing his SSC, was a participant in the quota reform movement from the very start.

While he was alive when the photo was taken, he died on the way to Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital. The rickshaw-puller later handed his body over to the hospital's morgue authorities.

“Nafiz was my youngest of two sons, but he was the most active in protesting. I admired his passion and never discouraged him from joining protests. He participated in demonstrations across Mohakhali, Rampura, Mirpur, Farmgate, and other locations,” said Rahman.

“On August 4, he was protesting in the Farmgate area. He even called his mother in the afternoon from a friend's phone. She asked him to come home, and he said he would be coming soon. That was their last conversation,” he added.

When Nafiz did not return home, the family feared he had been arrested and searched nearby police stations in Tejgaon, Kolabagan, Hatirjheel, Khilgaon, the DB office on Minto Road, and the CID office in Malibagh. Despite their efforts, no one could confirm his arrest.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

ROBBERIES IN DHAKA

People stand vigil through the night

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sleepless nights and living in a state of panic have become a constant for the residents of different areas in the capital for the past three days due to a series of alleged attacks and robberies in their neighbourhoods, amid the absence of law enforcers.

However, people did not sit idly and instead took the matter into their own hands, as residents of Uttara, Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Basila, Adabor, Mirpur, Jigatola, Gulshan, Badda, Jatrabari, and the old part of Dhaka took to the streets to ensure their safety.

Armed with sticks, they patrolled their areas every night amid the situation and returned to their homes in the morning.

Students, alongside general citizens from all walks of life, formed area-specific patrol teams, coordinating through various social media messaging platforms.

To alert residents of potential attacks, announcements were made from mosques urging everyone to stay vigilant. Many also took to social media to seek help from neighbours and volunteer groups during alleged robberies.

Army men were also seen patrolling the streets in some areas of Mirpur, Pallabi, Uttara, and Mohammadpur.

Robbers of various ages, mostly teenagers and young adults, wielding knives and machetes, reportedly entered several houses and establishments. Army personnel, in association with locals, apprehended some of these robbers from various areas.

Meanwhile, information and videos of robberies in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

GAZIPUR, JAMALPUR

19 hurt in prison escape attempts

Kashimpur jail super withdrawn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 16 people were injured, including inmates and prison guards, at the Gazipur District Jail yesterday morning following sudden firing of shots after prisoners protested and demanded their release.

Similarly, three inmates were injured and taken to the district hospital as prisoners set fire to the Jamalpur District Jail in the afternoon, during a jailbreak attempt. The situation was brought under control around 7:00pm.

On the same day, Senior Jail Superintendent Subrata

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

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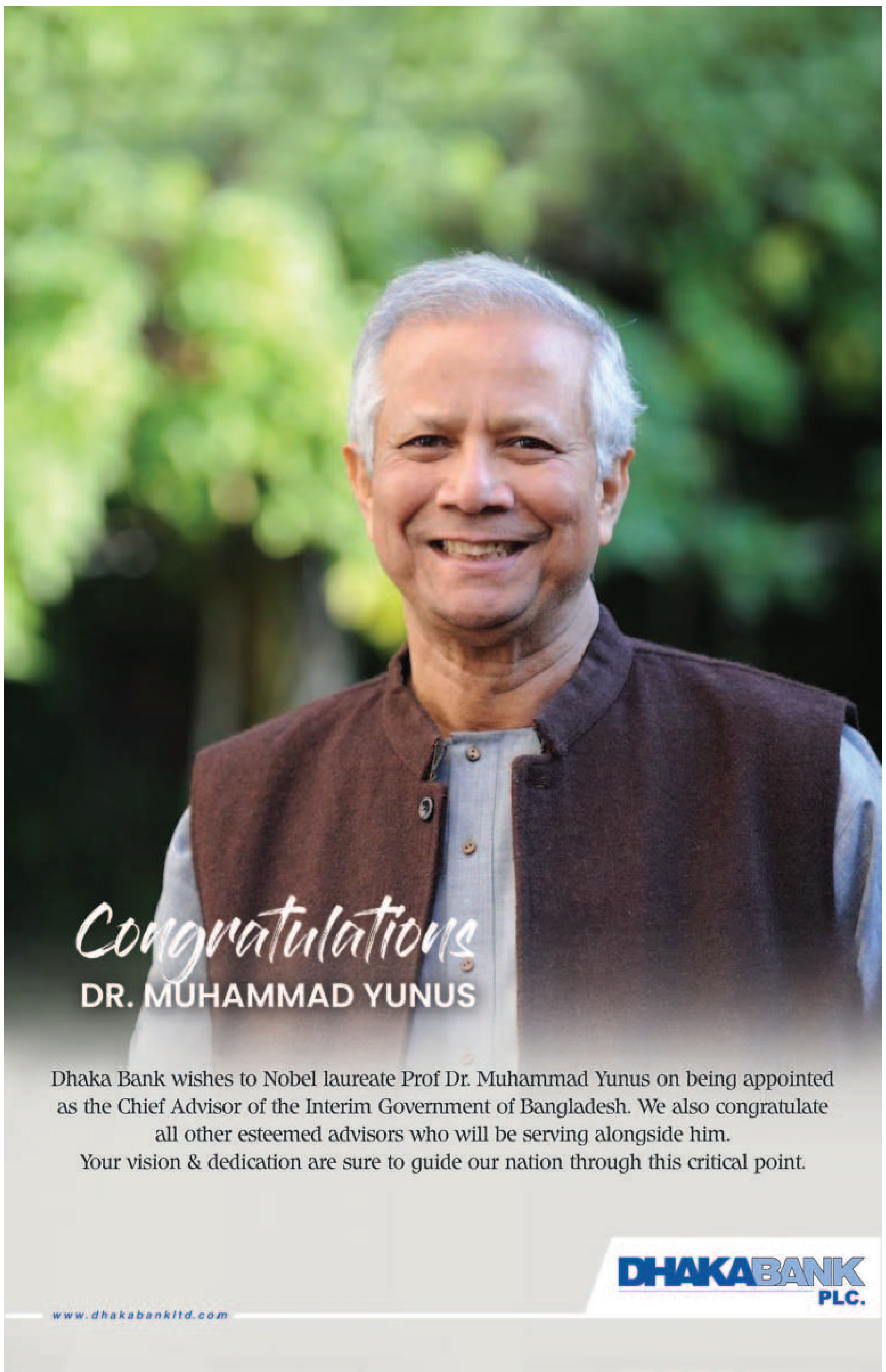
অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের প্রধান উপদেষ্টা
বিশ্ব বরেণ্য অর্থনীতিবিদ ও শান্তিতে নোবেল জয়ী
ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস
এবং তাঁর সহযোগী অন্যান্য সকল উপদেষ্টাকে
এফবিসিসিআই এর পক্ষ থেকে
আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা।
অর্থনীতি পুনরুদ্ধার ও জাতীয় সমৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে
অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের সাথে
এফবিসিসিআই একসাথে কাজ করবে।

পরিচালনা পর্ষদের পক্ষে-
মাহবুবুল আলম
সভাপতি
দি ফেডারেশন অফ বাংলাদেশ চেম্বার্স অফ কমার্স এন্ড ইন্ডাস্ট্রি (এফবিসিসিআই)



Congratulations
DR. MUHAMMAD YUNUS

Dhaka Bank wishes to Nobel laureate Prof Dr. Muhammad Yunus on being appointed as the Chief Advisor of the Interim Government of Bangladesh. We also congratulate all other esteemed advisors who will be serving alongside him.
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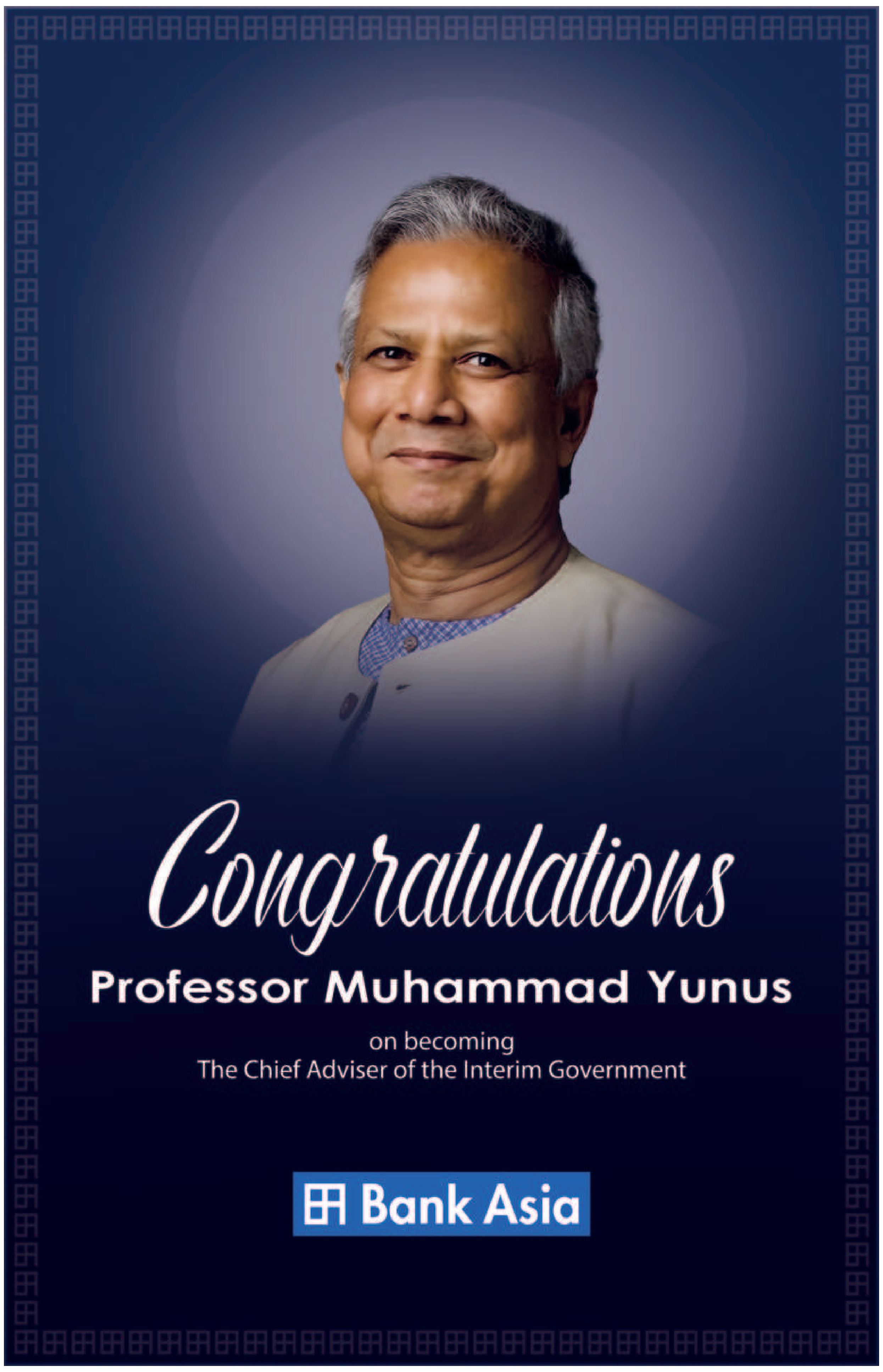

Congratulations
Professor Muhammad Yunus
on becoming
The Chief Adviser of the Interim Government

Bank Asia

People stand vigil through the night

FROM PAGE 3

Mohammadpur, Keraniganj's Atibazar, Washpur, Arshinagar, and Uttara areas have spread through social media.

In Mirpur's ECB Chattar, witnesses said on Wednesday night, a group of over 400 people carrying sharp weapons and firearms came there. At around 11:45pm, locals called upon army personnel for help, who detained some of the attackers.

During a visit there yesterday, locals told The Daily Star that the incident was related to a land dispute between two groups, not a robbery.

Following the incident, announcements were made from mosques in other areas, including East Shewrapara, Senpara, Mirpur, and Bhasantek, urging residents to stay vigilant.

Shaheen, a resident of East Shewrapara, said, "Last night (early Thursday) around 2:00am, we heard an announcement from the mosques that robbers had entered the neighbourhood. We then went out onto the streets with sticks."

Badda area.

Mohammadpur area. PHOTO: COLLECTED

A resident of Mirpur said, "We are passing sleepless nights. This situation can't continue. The law enforcement agencies should start their duties and provide security to the people."

Md Faisal, a resident of Arshinagar, said robbers entered their area, which led to the announcements from the mosques to remain vigilant.

A resident of Mohammadpur mentioned that robbers entered the area from different directions around 12:30am early yesterday, but people came out of their homes with sticks and chased away the robbers.

Residents in Uttara said robberies took place late at night at Sector 7. Afterwards, the mosques made announcements asking everyone to stay alert in Sectors 11, 12, and 14.

Tahmid Islam, a resident of Uttara, said he and many others patrolled the area the whole night.

Meanwhile, in Dhanmondi, locals were seen patrolling the area with multiple cars and chasing alleged miscreants.

People are in fear that such incidents will increase if police stations are not operational soon.

Police personnel have yet to return to work following attacks on them during clashes with protesters after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Army, along with other armed forces and law enforcement agencies, has decided to take strict action to stop the ongoing anarchy, according to a press release issued by ISPR yesterday.

During a meeting, they discussed initiating operations in all police stations across the country within the next 24 hours with the support of the army.

19 hurt in prison escape attempts

FROM PAGE 3

Kumar Bala of Kashimpur High-Security Central Jail was withdrawn in connection with the escape of 209 prisoners on Tuesday.

Pedestrians and locals were in fear after sudden firing occurred at Gazipur jail around 11:00am, said Jail Superintendent Anwarul Karim.

He said there was unrest in the prison. "However, the situation was brought under control."

Gazipur District Jail Hospital's physician Maksuda told reporters that 16 people were injured when the prisoners started protests inside the jail, demanding their release. Then, gunshots were heard from outside the jail.

Of the injured, 13 are prisoners and three are prison guards, she said.

New Jail Superintendent Main Uddin was given charge of Kashimpur High-Security Central Jail yesterday morning, said Gazipur Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate Abul Fateh Mohammad Safiqul Islam.

On Tuesday, 209 prisoners fled Kashimpur high-security prison, while six people -- including three militants -- were killed by prison guards.

In Jamalpur, inmates of Jamalpur District Jail rebelled for their release around 1:30pm yesterday and attempted to break out of the prison. The prison guards started firing around 2:00pm and it continued till 3:30pm, said locals.

After hearing loud noises in the jail, Abu Fatah, the jailor, rushed there, where prisoners took him hostage.

Later, the guards opened fire and snatched the jailor from the inmates. Panic spread across the city within a short time.

Three injured inmates were taken to Gazipur Sadar Hospital.

Four units of Jamalpur fire service worked to douse the fire. The amount of damage is yet unknown, said Iqbal Hossain, assistant director of Jamalpur fire service.

Abu Fatah, the jailor of Jamalpur district jail, could not be reached for comments.

Salina Akter, deputy jailor of Jamalpur District Jail, said, "The prisoners rebelled, demanding their release. We are trying to control the situation."

On Wednesday, a group of jail guards kept Pirojpur District Jail Super Debdulal Karmakar confined to his office for three hours starting from 12:15pm, alleging that he was involved in irregularities and corruption.

On Tuesday, 104 prisoners fled from the Kushtia jail around 2:00pm.

On Monday evening, an unidentified number of prisoners escaped from the Satkhira District Jail. However, at least 200 of them surrendered to the authorities a day later, according to jail sources.

The same evening, a mob stormed the Sherpur District Jail, leading to the escape of 518 inmates.

On July 19, at least 826 prisoners fled the Narsingdi jail. During the jailbreak, around 85 arms and 9,000 bullets were looted.

However, around 598 prisoners surrendered later, and 51 arms and 1,085 bullets were recovered.

Hasina will return

FROM PAGE 5

help build international opinion and exert pressure for the restoration of democracy in Bangladesh.

"Yes, it is true that I had said she wouldn't return to Bangladesh. But a lot has changed in the last two days following continuous attacks on our leaders and party workers across the country. Now we are going to do whatever it takes to keep our people safe."

"She will definitely return to Bangladesh once democracy is restored," he told PTI over the phone.

He said he also expects the interim government to create a level playing field whenever democracy is restored and fresh elections are held.

Joy mentioned that once democracy is restored, either the AL or BNP will come to power, and the "Mujib family and Sheikh Hasina will be around".

"She has been in touch with all our party leaders for the last two days. My mother was going to retire anytime soon, so we thought now that she is gone, they (rioters) would leave our party people alone, but that did not happen. Instead, they started attacking," he said.

He declined to comment directly on whether he and his sister Saima Wazed, who is currently the South East Asian regional director for the WHO, would join politics.

Joy also said there is circumstantial evidence suggesting foreign interference and alleged involvement of Pakistan's ISI agency.

He also pointed out that the rioters attacked police with guns, which could only be provided by terror outfits and foreign powers.

On reports of involvement of a US intelligence agency like the CIA, Joy said he had no evidence but added, "maybe, they are." He dismissed any Chinese involvement when asked about it.

Dismissing reports of Hasina seeking asylum in the UK or any other country as "rumours," Joy said the reports of her US visa being revoked are also untrue.

"At this point, she wants to go back to Bangladesh. It's a question of when rather than if," he said, hinting that the ousted Bangladesh PM will be staying at an undisclosed location in India for now.

Refuting claims that Hasina ran away to save her own life, he said the family insisted on stopping the bloodshed.

"She was not willing to leave the country. The prime minister's security was ready to protect her till the end. But that would have led to hundreds of deaths of protesters who were marching towards the PM's residence. We convinced her for the sake of Bangladesh, we cannot let her get killed," he said.

"Our government was not weak, but my mother did not want to harm the students. Even after her leaving the country, the bloodshed has not stopped. The people will now understand the difference with and without Sheikh Hasina," he said.

An opportunity

FROM PAGE 5

carefully weighing the costs and benefits between sticking to the constitutional limit of 90 days from the day of the dissolution of the parliament to the organising of new elections, or pushing back the elections to allow for the formation of new political parties -- possibly one led by students -- as elections right now would probably end with BNP emerging victorious.

ICG opined that India needs to tread carefully and "generally avoid actions that Bangladeshis could perceive as undermining their efforts to restore democracy".

While ICG admitted that Bangladesh is in a period of high instability, it also expressed hope that this is an opportunity for renewal. It urged foreign powers to help Bangladesh take advantage of this "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity.

Please don't break

FROM PAGE 5

part to ensure safety on the roads. The response from both pedestrians and drivers has been positive."

Shirin Akhter, a student from Daffodil International University managing traffic in Gulshan, added, "This is more than just controlling traffic; it's about building awareness. If we can influence even a few people to follow the rules, it's worth it."

The efforts of these students have not gone unnoticed by the public.

Jahanara Begum, a private sector employee, said people are obeying the rules from the heart.

Bashir Uddin, a shopkeeper from Panthapath, said, "The students have brought some discipline, and it's refreshing to see that."

Students were also involved in painting graffiti, cleaning street walls and metro rail pillars.

Not all heroes wear

FROM PAGE 5

hour to finish his self-assigned duty, promising to study for four hours afterward. I couldn't refuse his request."

Araf explained his motivation, saying, "Usually, the police uncles manage traffic here, but they haven't been around for a few days, leading to chaos. I decided to step in to restore order. It feels great that the rickshaw and auto drivers listen to me."

In addition to his traffic duties, Araf has also been seen cleaning the road with other students.

Residents and local business owners have expressed their admiration for Araf.

Many have noted the difference his efforts have made in maintaining order and cleanliness.

"It's heartwarming to see such a child take on responsibilities usually managed by adults," said a local shopkeeper. "Araf's dedication is a reminder that we all have a role to play in our community," he added.

Besides, Government PC College, Government Women College, and other institutions were seen maintaining traffic at all key intersections and safeguarding state establishments yesterday for the third day in a row.

Tarique, BNP leaders

FROM PAGE 5

"He is chosen by the students and by us. He has been entrusted with this responsibility on behalf of the entire nation. We are confident he will fulfil this duty," Fakhrul said during his visit to the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR).

After attending the oath-taking ceremony at Bangabhaban, BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru said, "In the coming days, they [members of the interim government] will fulfill the expectations for which so many have shed their blood. The ownership of the country must be returned to the people."

I could not believe my eyes

FROM PAGE 3

"Later, around midnight, someone sent some images of protesters who were injured or had died to my wife's phone. One photo caught my eye, and I immediately recognised my son. I could hardly believe my eyes," Rahman said.

The family rushed to the nearby government medical college hospitals at midnight and found Nafiz's body in the morgue at Suhrawardy Hospital around 4:00am on August 5. His body was listed as "unidentified".

"We found that he had been shot in the chest and had wounds from being beaten on his face," said Rahman.

The following day, Nafiz was laid to rest in Uttarkhan area.

His mother is in such a condition that she can barely speak.

According to Rahman, Nafiz's intermediate classes were scheduled to begin yesterday. He had dreamed of becoming a pilot and was actively involved in scouting, sports, BNCC, cultural activities, alongside his education.

"We hope to see justice once a new government is in place. We have collected all the evidence, including newspaper clippings, and have reached out to student leaders. They have promised to compile a list and take action against those responsible for the deaths of innocent students like my son," he added.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 9

	Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-20	12-30	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Request for Proposals (RFP): Production of Audio-Visuals for USAID's ACTB Activities

Tender Ref. icddr,b/SCM/ OTM/2024/NS-24-3113 Date: August 09, 2024

icddr,b is inviting proposals from bonafide qualified companies/organizations/agencies for the production of audio-visual content for USAID's ACTB Activities. Prospective bidders may download the complete tender documents from the following link:

https://www.icddrb.org/work-with-us/tender-notices

Pre-bid meeting: August 19, 2024, from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM BST.
(The pre-bid meeting will be conducted online. The link is provided in the tender document.)

Submission deadline: September 01, 2024 by 3.00 PM BST.
icddr,b reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without providing any reason.

icddr,b

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Supply Chain Management
Tel: 88 02 222277001-10, Ext.# 4401/3777

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Phone : 0247-7741305
E-mail : eesat1@yahoo.com

Memo No. 1 T-4/171 Dated:07/08/2024

e-Tender Notice
(Tender No: 02/2024-2025)

E-Tenders have been invited in the national e-GP system Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of the following work:

Sl No.	Tender ID	Package No. & Description	Location of the Work/Supply	Tender/Proposal Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Closing & Opening Date & Time
1.	1007496	W Sat1/29 Re-Construction of DS- Ramnagar Sluice (4-Vent) at Polder No-1 in Satkhira District.	Satkhira Sadar, Satkhira.	Date: 04-09-2024 Time: 17.00 hours	Closing: Date: 05-09-2024 Time: 13.00 hours Opening: Date: 05-09-2024 Time: 13.00 hours

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to banking hours as stated on tender notice.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) (01762625528-31). (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)

পানি-১৪৫/২০২৪-২০২৫
৬"x ৩

07/08/2024
(Md. Salauddin)
Executive Engineer(C.C)
ID NO. 920926001
Satkhira WD Division-1
BWDB, Satkhira.

GD-136

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Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA)
WASA Bhaban, Dampara, Chattogram, Bangladesh

Ref. No: 46.06.0000.315.02.094.2024-36 Date: 08.08.2024

Corrigendum Notice of Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

EOI Memo No. : 46.06.0000.304.95.08.2023-35
Package Description : Engineering Design & Construction Supervision of Chattogram Sewerage System Development Project (Catchment-2 & 4) Under Chattogram WASA.

SL No.	Section & Clause No.	As mentioned in original EOI	Amendment
15.	EOI Closing Date and Time	20/08/2024 and 12:30 BST	10/09/2024 and 12:30 BST

All other terms & conditions will remain unchanged.

08/08/2024.
(Muhammad Nurul Amin)
Project Director, Chattogram Sewerage System Development Project (Catchment-2 & 4)
&
Superintending Engineer, MOD Circle
Chattogram WASA, Chattogram
Tel: +880-2333-353571
Email: ratanbd@gmail.com

SPR 87/8/8/24

GD-137

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Pabna
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.7600.000.07.309(Part-1).21-3424 Date: 08/08/2024

Invitation for Tender (Works)
e-Tender Notice: 02/2024-25 (LTM & OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of undermentioned work:

Sl No.	Name of work	Tender ID No.	Tender security (Tk)	Closing, opening date & time
1	2	3	4	5
1	**Package No- GPBRIDP-2/PABNA/SANTHIA/VR-40/23-24:** Improvement of Goisbari Shapara R&H - Pucca road Near H/O Dr. Totul via Club road. from Ch.000-380m (Road ID-176725317) (Salvage cost Tk 1,33,167.00) under Upazila-Santhia, Dist-Pabna.	1005224 LTM	1,00,000.00	**28/08/2024 14:00pm**
2	**Package No- RDIRWSP/PAB/SUJ/R-29** Widening & Strengthening of Shamgonj GC - Kagirhat GC road (Sujanagar part) from Ch. 00- 1500m under Upazila-Sujanagar, Dist- Pabna. Road ID No- 176832006	1006597 OTM	6,50,000.00	**02/09/2024 14:00pm**
3	**Package No- RDIRWSP/PAB/SUJ/R-28-Part-1** Widening & Strengthening of Raipur GC - Shayemganj GC via Bonkola Boruria road from Ch. 00- 7000m under Upazila-Sujanagar, Dist- Pabna. Road ID No- 176832004	1006598 OTM	27,00,000.00	**09/09/2024 14:00pm**
4	**Package No- RDIRWSP/PAB/SUJ/R-28-Part-2** Widening & Strengthening of Raipur GC - Shayemganj GC via Bonkola Boruria road from Ch. 7000- 14000m under Upazila-Sujanagar, Dist- Pabna. Road ID No- 176832004	1006599 OTM	26,00,000.00	
5	**Package No- RDIRWSP/PAB/SUJ/R-28-Part-3** Widening & Strengthening of Raipur GC - Shayemganj GC via Bonkola Boruria road from Ch.14000- 20300m under Upazila-Sujanagar, Dist- Pabna. Road ID No- 176832004	1006600 OTM	23,00,000.00	

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any **registered Bank branches and Purchase e-Tender documents up to dated: 27/08/2024 (LTM), 01/09/2024 (OTM) & 08/09/2024 (OTM).** Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Monirul Islam
Executive Engineer
LGED, Pabna
Tel: 02-588846133
E-mail: xen.pabna@lged.gov.bd

GD-132

‘Please don’t break rules’

Students continue managing traffic, cleaning streets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students remained in the roads of Dhaka for a third day in a row yesterday to manage traffic and collect wastes in absence of law enforcement and conservatory workers, following the upheaval that led to Sheikh Hasina’s fall.

From Panthapath to Gulistan, Shahbagh to Banglamotor, young volunteers have stepped up to restore order and safety in the city.

Around 1:30pm in Panthapath, rickshaw puller Amjad Hossain was attempting to overtake a line of vehicles when a female student intervened, saying, “Please don’t break the rules.”

Hossain, who has been using the road for nearly two years, happily complied.

The student, Sadia Amreen, a private university student, along with her peers, took it upon themselves to guide drivers and ensure adherence to traffic rules.

“A dozen of us are here controlling traffic. We work in a roster system. It’s encouraging to see people actually listening to us,” Sadia told The Daily Star.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Amjad expressed his approval of the initiative.

“Today, a young girl approached me and told me it was wrong. This change is positive, and I’m following their directions,” he said.

This scene was replicated across the city. Students from various educational institutions were seen managing traffic at major intersections, including Gulistan, Paltan, Shahbagh, and Banglamotor. Working in shifts, sometimes joined by Ansar members, they filled the void left by absent traffic police.

Students were also engaged in cleaning efforts.

Arif Hossain, a private university student managing traffic at Farmgate, said, “With traffic police not fulfilling their duties, we, as students, stepped in to control the situation. I’ve been here since 8:00am, and despite the long hours, I’m enjoying it because I love this work.”

Rafiqul Islam, a Dhaka College student stationed in Dhanmondi, shared a similar sentiment.

“It’s our responsibility to step in when things aren’t being managed properly. People are actually responding well to us, and it’s a great feeling,” he said.

Maria Rahman, a high school student managing traffic at Bijoy Sarani, added, “At first, I was nervous about confronting drivers, but they have been surprisingly cooperative.”

In Moghbazar, student volunteer Nafis Ahmed said, “We’re just doing our

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Not all heroes wear capes

7-year-old Araf Mahin manages traffic, cleans street in Bagerhat

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY, *Bagerhat*

In times of chaos, heroes often emerge from the most unexpected places. They don’t always wear capes -- in fact, some show up wearing a raincoat, armed with nothing more than a stick and a whistle.

A seven-year old hero has emerged in Bagerhat in the aftermath of a complete breakdown in law and order following a power vacuum triggered by the fall of Sheikh Hasina and absence of police.

Araf Mahin, a first grader, has been managing traffic and cleaning streets in front of the Police Line School in Bagerhat for the last two days.

He uses his whistle, which he bought for Tk 30, to direct vehicles and maintain separate lanes.

Yesterday morning, Araf was seen organising separate lanes for rickshaws, motorcycles, and auto-rickshaws all alone.

His mother Laili Anjuman shared her pride, saying, “Araf asked for 30 taka for a snack, but instead, he bought a whistle to manage traffic. When I came to take him home, he asked for one

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Artists repair damaged Zainul sculpture

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

A group of artists repaired the damaged sculpture of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin at Mymensingh city’s Zainul Park area yesterday.

They worked for four hours and repaired the damaged sculpture, said Mohammad Rajon, president of Mymensingh Bibhagio Charushilpi Parshad.

Artistes Joyanto Kumar Talukder Shibu, Hossain Farook, Hasan Masud, Gautom Kumar Debnath, and Biswajit Karmakar Tapu took part in the repair work, said Rajon.

Tarique, BNP leaders laud Yunus, advisers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman has congratulated Prof Mohammad Yunus and his advisers on forming the interim government.

“The BNP supports the formation of an elected government with a public mandate, an accountable parliament serving the people, and the restoration of people’s rights and freedoms, thereby establishing the rule of law and good governance,” Tarique stated on his verified Facebook account yesterday.

“With the fall of the regime, the people of Bangladesh now expect the interim government to create an environment where they can vote freely, reflecting their democratic aspirations and enabling fair and credible national elections,” he added.

Meanwhile, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir hoped that Prof Yunus would be successful in leading the interim government.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Asaduzzaman new AG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Asaduz-zaman, a senior lawyer of the Supreme Court and a BNP leader, has been appointed as new attorney general of Bangladesh.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin appointed him as the 15th top law officer of the state since the post fell vacant after previous attorney general AM Amin Uddin resigned on August 7 citing personal difficulties.

Law Secretary Md Golam Sarwar issued a gazette notification to this effect yesterday.

The attorney general has been appointed even before the formation of the interim government, which was sworn in last night.

Advocate Asaduzzaman, hailing from Shailakupa in Jhenidah, is the human rights affairs secretary of BNP. He was a student of 17th batch of law faculty of Dhaka University.

He was a candidate for the post of a lawmaker of Jhenidah-Shailakupa constituency from BNP ticket in national election held in 2018.

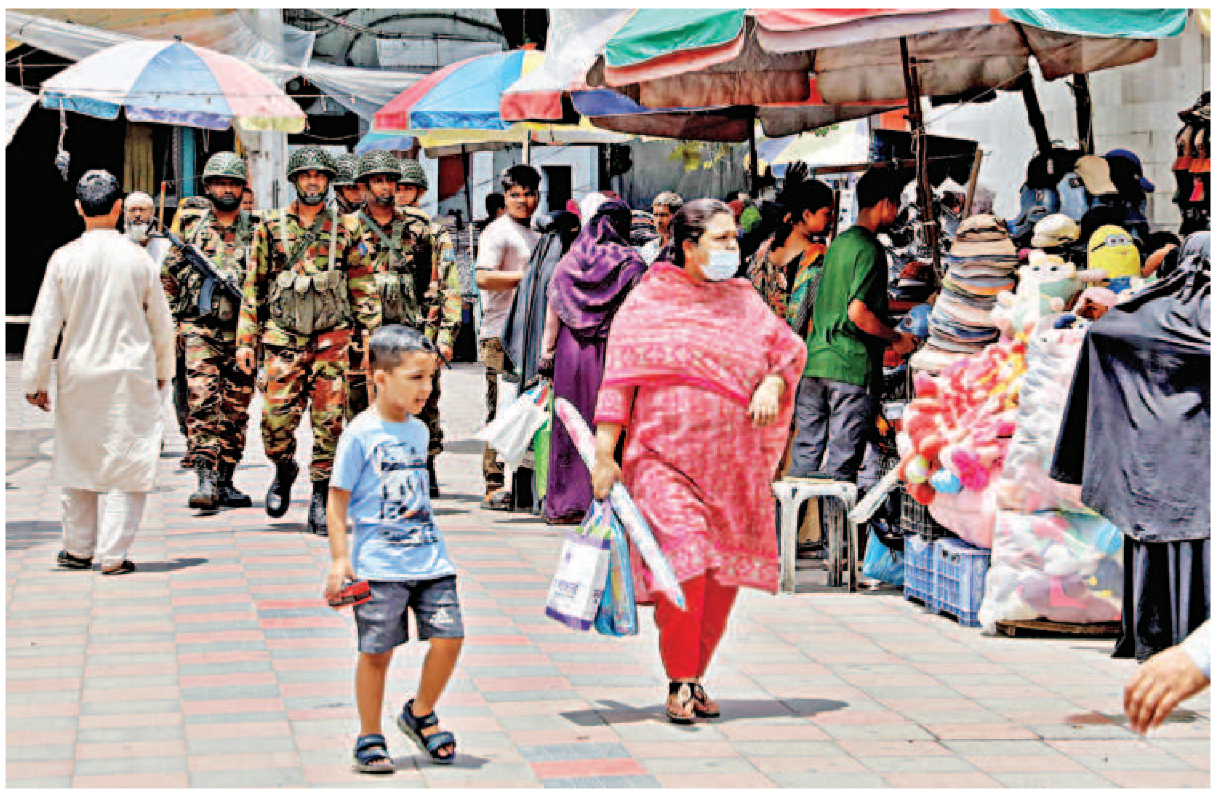


PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

A woman and her son walk inside New Market in the capital while army personnel stand guard.

INTERIM GOVERNMENT

An opportunity for a new start

Says ICG, gives set of recommendations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crisis Group (ICG), a global NGO and think tank, on Wednesday night published a set of recommendations for the army and the interim government in Bangladesh in the wake of the fall of Sheikh Hasina after week-long protests that engulfed the country in violence.

“The army should prevent reprisal killings, and the soon-to-be-formed interim government should investigate abuses and begin rebuilding democracy,” the statement said.

The statement stresses upon the challenges of forming an interim government and the constitutional challenges it faces.

The ICG says the key will be to ensure that the protest movement is capably represented. If calm is to be restored, the statement read, those who risked and sacrificed the most to compel Hasina to resign -- namely, the students who initiated the protest movement -- should have a meaningful voice in the government’s counsels, rather than finding themselves sidelined by conservative generals and opportunistic politicians.

The ICG recommended that the army and the interim government need to ensure “security and stability, including staving off reprisal attacks on Awami League members.”

Ensuring justice for the violence of recent weeks and compensating victims are going to be equally important to this process, according to the ICG. Stability is also going to be important to avoid the short-term economic crisis, the ICG said.

In the statement, ICG said, “The bigger challenge for the interim government will be to put Bangladesh back on the path of genuine democracy.”

The think tank recommended

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Hasina will return once democracy is restored: Joy

UNB, *Dhaka*

Awami League President and former prime minister Sheikh Hasina will return to Bangladesh once democracy is restored, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy told PTI, an Indian news agency.

He also alleged that Pakistan’s ISI fuelled the unrest in Bangladesh.

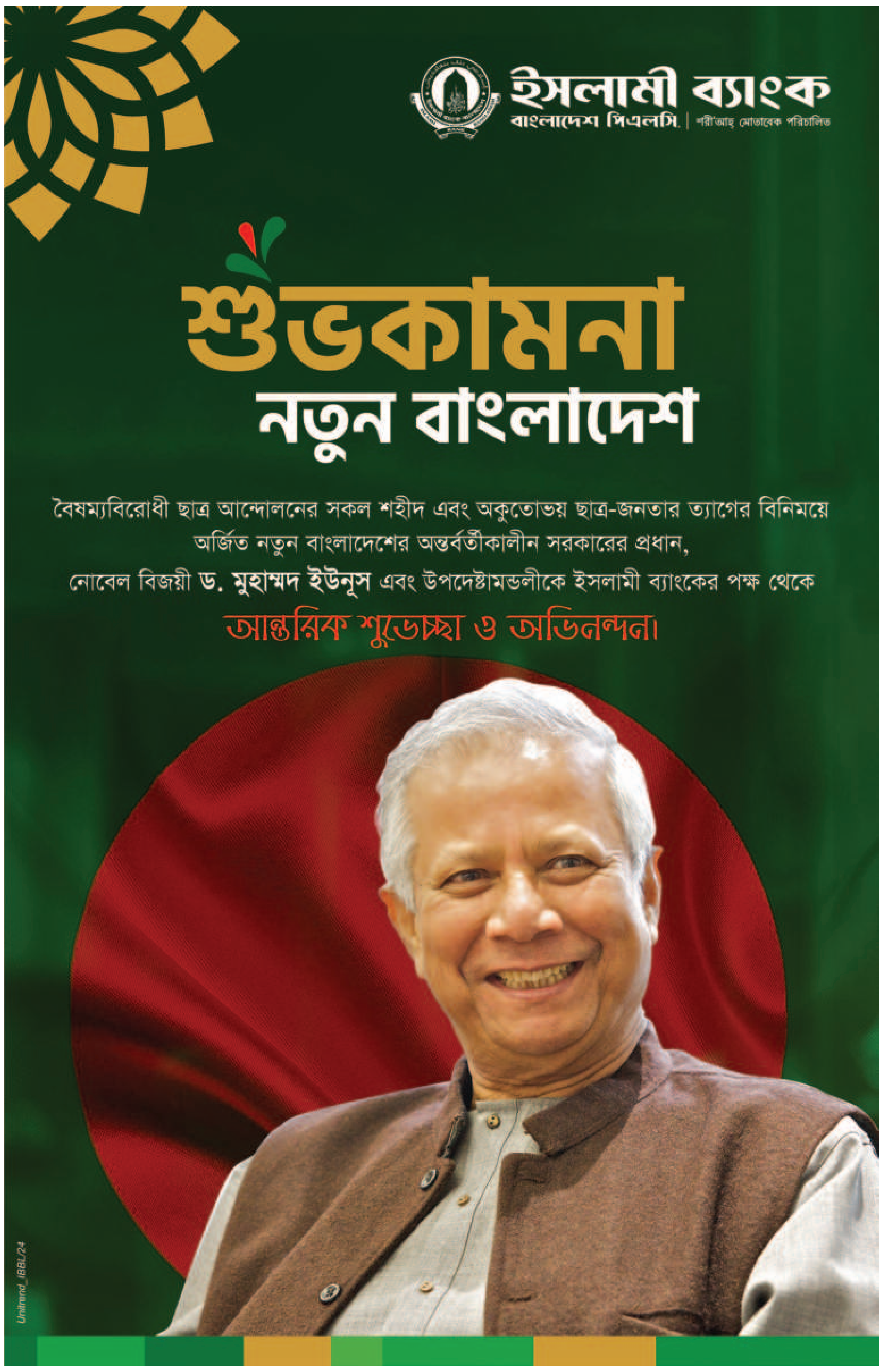
He said the Indian government must “build up international pressure” for swift restoration of democracy in Bangladesh, PTI reported.

Joy said although 76-year-old Hasina would definitely return to Bangladesh, it is not yet decided whether she will be back as a “retired or active” politician.

He also asserted that the members of the Sheikh Mujibur Rahman family will neither abandon the people of Bangladesh nor leave the Awami League in the lurch.

He expressed gratitude to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government for protecting his mother and appealed to India to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



ইসলামী ব্যাংক
বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি. | শরী'আহ্ মোতাবেক পরিচালিত

শুভকামনা
নতুন বাংলাদেশ

বৈষম্যবিরোধী ছাত্র আন্দোলনের সকল শহীদ এবং অকুতোভয় ছাত্র-জনতার ত্যাগের বিনিময়ে
অর্জিত নতুন বাংলাদেশের অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের প্রধান,
নোবেল বিজয়ী **ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস** এবং উপদেষ্টামন্ডলীকে ইসলামী ব্যাংকের পক্ষ থেকে
আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন।

Imran 'ready to apologise' if PTI role in riots proved

DAWN ONLINE

Former prime minister of Pakistan Imran Khan on Wednesday offered to apologise for the May 9 riots, provided the involvement of PTI supporters in the violent protests was proved.

His remarks came during a media talk at the Adiala Jail following the proceedings of the £190 million corruption reference against him and Bushra Bibi.

Khan said if CCTV footage identified that the PTI workers had trespassed and attacked government installations, he would not only apologise, but also expel those from the party, and ensure their prosecution before a court of law.

The ex-PM, however, pointed out that he too was manhandled on May 9, as Rangers had dragged him from premises of Islamabad High Court despite the fact that he was "the most popular leader in Pakistan".

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Palestinians gather to receive food at a UNRWA distribution centre amid a hunger crisis in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday. The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said that at least 39,699 people have been killed in the Israeli offensive, which is now in its 11th month.

UN troubled by Thai opposition party ban

AFP, *Geneva*

The United Nations yesterday said the dissolution of Thailand's main opposition Move Forward Party was "deeply troubling" and seriously impacted fundamental freedoms.

The Constitutional Court, Thailand's top court, voted unanimously on Wednesday to dissolve the MFP, the vanguard of the country's youthful pro-democracy movement, and ban its executive board members from politics for 10 years.

"This decision seriously impacts fundamental freedoms of expression and association, and people's right to participate in public affairs and political life in Thailand," UN human rights chief Volker Turk said in a statement.

"No party or politician should ever face such penalties for peacefully advocating legal reform, particularly in support of human rights."

The MFP took first place in a general election last year after pledging to reform Thailand's strict royal defamation law.

Calling the court move "deeply troubling", Turk said UN human rights mechanisms had long expressed concern about Thailand's lese-majeste laws, saying they were inconsistent with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

"I call on the government to find pathways to ensure a vibrant, strong and inclusive democracy that promotes and respects rights to freedom of expression and association, and end use of lese-majeste laws to suppress critical voices," said Turk.

Anarchy is our enemy

FROM PAGE 1

the fresh air of freedom," he said, seeking cooperation from people.

"Secondly, our peace and discipline maintaining institutions will not be excluded from [enjoying] this freedom. The army, navy, air force, border guard, police, Ansar, Village Defence, and coast guards will not be left out. Like everyone else, each of their members is today free from the extralegal coercive orders of the dictator government. If there is deviation from this in the slightest for anyone, our celebration today will be tarnished," he added.

Alleging that the "cruel autocratic government" was in power by using these forces, Prof Yunus said the government would restore the previous glories of these forces.

"Those who were involved in wrongdoings will be brought to justice," he said, adding that the same applies to all ministries, agencies, and educational institutions.

"Every criminal will be brought to book," he said.

He called on everyone to join their respective offices and enjoy the freedom of independence.

Earlier, Yunus called upon all to save the country from chaos and violence. He said restoring law and order would be his first priority to take the country forward.

"Keeping faith in me, you have invited me; the students have invited me, and I have responded to that invitation. My appeal to the people: if you have faith in me and trust me, then ensure that no attack is carried out on anyone and anywhere in the country. This is our first responsibility," he told a crowded news briefing upon his arrival in Dhaka from abroad in the afternoon.

Flanked by the navy and air force chiefs, Chief of Army Staff General Waker-uz-Zaman received Yunus at the airport.

Some key organisers of the anti-discrimination student movement and representatives of the civil society were also present at the airport to welcome him.

Prof Yunus said, "Today is our day of glory. We have to move forward keeping in mind the revolution through which a new Victory Day has been created in Bangladesh today."

The microcredit pioneer expressed his gratitude to the young people who made it possible. "They have saved this country. They have given rebirth to our country. Our pledge is that we will take the country forward at a very fast pace after this rebirth."

In a choking voice, Prof Yunus paid tribute to Abu Sayed, the student who was among those killed first in police firing during the anti-discrimination student movement.

"I am remembering Abu Sayed. His image is etched in the mind of each Bangladeshi. No one will be able to forget it -- an incredibly courageous young man standing in front of guns. No young men and women accepted defeat after that, and they marched forward."

The movement then spread across the country and Bangladesh achieved independence for the second time, Prof Yunus said.

He said the people must protect this freedom. "We also have to make sure that the benefits of this freedom reach every citizen. Otherwise the freedom would be meaningless. So, we pledge to take the freedom to every home."

Prof Yunus said the elderly citizens have to make the young people understand that this country is in their hands. "You [young people] will build the country as you like. Since you could liberate the country, you will also be able to build it as you like. The whole world will watch you and learn how a young generation can change the country."

He said the people have no confidence in the government system as they think it to an instrument of repression.

"This cannot be a government system. The government will come forward to help and protect the people, and stand by them...We have to bring the confidence back to the people so that they join the government."

The Nobel Peace Prize winner said Bangladesh is a big family.

"We want to move forward unitedly. We want to overcome the hesitation and conflict. Those who have gone astray will have to be brought back on the right path so we can work together."

Speaking about vandalism and arson attacks on the religious minority communities and state establishments, Prof Yunus said those were carried out as part of a conspiracy.

"Our job is to protect them, protect everyone. Every human being is our brother and sister, and we have to protect them and restore discipline."

He said chaos and violence are the greatest enemies of progress. He urged all to stop violence and make a pledge not to take law into own hands and resort to repress anyone.

"Our law enforcement agencies should be built in such a way that we would feel secure about action to be taken against the troublemakers once they are handed over to them."

US PRESIDENTIAL POLLS

Biden, Harris warn of Trump threat to democracy

AFP, *Detroit*

US President Joe Biden said Wednesday he is "not confident" Donald Trump would concede peacefully if he loses the US election, as the Republican's rival Kamala Harris warned a Trump victory would usher in a lawless administration set on curtailing Americans' freedoms.

Trump has been impeached twice and indicted twice over various alleged attempts to cheat in the 2020 election -- which he still has not acknowledged he lost -- and was convicted of 34 felonies over a hush money scheme to deceive voters in 2016.

His false claims of widespread fraud in 2020 preceded the storming of the US Capitol -- and the wounding of more than 100 police officers -- by a violent mob determined to prevent the certification of his defeat.

"If Trump loses, I'm not confident at all," Biden told US network CBS after he was asked if he expected a peaceful transfer of power in 2025.

"He means what he says. We don't take him seriously," Biden warned. "He means it."

The president's remarks, which air fully on Sunday, came soon after Harris had sounded the alarm over Trump's conduct in the opposite scenario -- victory for the 78-year-old billionaire.

Speaking to a crowd in Eau Claire, Wisconsin as part of a multi-day tour of swing states, she used the former president's own words -- as well as his felony convictions -- to argue that a second Trump term would be a disaster for America.

She pointed to his vow to be a dictator "on day one," his threats to weaponize the Justice Department against his political enemies and his 2022 comment demanding the "termination" of constitutional provisions over his 2020 election defeat.

"Someone who suggests that we should terminate the constitution of the United States should never again have a chance to stand behind the seal of the president of the United States," Harris said, exhorting Americans to reject the "chaos, fear and hate" of Trumpism.

Harris reprised the theme hours later at a rally in Detroit, where she called herself and her new running mate, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, "joyful warriors" in White House battle.

The 59-year-old vice president was on day two of a blitz of the most closely-fought election battlegrounds as she seeks to capitalize on a surging excitement since she replaced Biden atop the Democratic ticket in July.

Office of the Benapole Pourashava
District: Jashore

Memo No. 41.08.02.001.070.00.2024-321 Date: 08.08.2024

e-Tender Notice (LTM) No. 02/2024-25

e-Tender is invited from the enlisted tenderers under Benapole Pourashava in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of works as mentioned in the following table:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of works	Online(e- GP System) tender publication date & time	Online(e-GP System) tender closing date & time
1002281	BENA/ADP/2023-24/P-7	Construction of RCC Box Culvert on Deghirpar-Bhabarbar Eidgah road at Deghirpar under Benapole Pourashava.	11-Aug- 2024 09:00:00	28-Aug-2024 13:00:00

There are an online tender, where only, e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gv.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tendering documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 28-08-2024 at 12.00am.

Further information and guideline in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Mosharaf Hossain
Executive Engineer
Benapole Pourashava
District: Jashore

GD- 131

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Bhola
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.09.00.000.14.037.24.2396 Date: 08.08.2024

Re-Tender Corrigendum Notice No. 02

Due to unavoidable situation the tender notice issued by the office of the undersigned vide Memo No: 46.02.09. 00.000.037.24.2210 Date: 15/07/2024 has been Changed as follows:

Last date of selling : 27/08/2024 till 16.00pm instead of 13/08/2024 16.00pm
Last date of submission : 28/08/2024 till 13.00pm instead of 14/08/2024 13.00pm
Date of opening : 28/08/2024 till 16.00pm instead of 14/08/2024 16.00pm
Time for completion : 18 month instead of 21 month.

All other terms & conditions will be remain unchanged.

Mohammad Ibrahim Khalil
Executive Engineer
LGED, Bhola
E-mail: xen.bhola@lged.gov.bd

GD-129

কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তর
খামারবাড়ি,ফার্মগেট, ঢাকা-১২১৫।
www.dam.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-১২.০২.০০০০.০০২.২৭.৪৬৪.২৪.১১৪১ তারিখঃ ২৩ শ্রাবণ ১৪৩১
০৭ আগস্ট ২০২৪

নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর এ মর্মে প্রতীতি জন্মেছে যে, কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তরের আওতাধীন সিনিয়র কৃষি বিপণন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, ঢাকার অফিস সহকারী কাম কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক, মিজ মিথিলা আফরিন তাঁর বিরুদ্ধে রুজুকৃত ০১/২০২৪ নম্বর বিভাগীয় মামলার অভিযোগনামা ও অভিযোগবিবরণী গ্রহণ এড়ানোর উদ্দেশ্যে বিভিন্নভাবে অপচেষ্টা করছেন মর্মে বিশ্বাস করার যুক্তিসঙ্গত কারণ রয়েছে। এমতাবস্থায়, সরকারি কর্মচারী (শৃঙ্খলা ও আপীল) বিধিমালা, ২০১৮ ৮(২) বিধি অনুসারে এবং দেওয়ানি কার্যবিধি ১৯০৮ এর আদেশ ৫ বিধি ২০(১এ) অনুযায়ী প্রতিকল্প ব্যবস্থা (Substituted Service) হিসাবে মিজ মিথিলা আফরিন-এর বিরুদ্ধে রুজুকৃত বিভাগীয় মামলার অভিযোগনামা ও অভিযোগবিবরণী দু'টো এতদসঙ্গে পত্রিকায় প্রকাশ করা হলো।

স্মারক নং-১২.০২.০০০০.০০২.২৭.৪৬৪.২৪-১০২২ তারিখঃ ২০ চৈত্র ১৪৩০
০৩ এপ্রিল ২০২৪

বিভাগীয় মামলা নং-০১/২০২৪

বিষয়ঃ মিজ মিথিলা আফরিন, অফিস সহকারী কাম কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক, সিনিয়র কৃষি বিপণন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, ঢাকা-এর বিরুদ্ধে সরকারি কর্মচারী (শৃঙ্খলা ও আপীল) বিধিমালা, ২০১৮ অনুসারে আনীত অভিযোগ নামা।

নামঃ মিজ মিথিলা আফরিন
পদবীঃ অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক
বেতনঃ ১০,২০০-২৪,৬৮০/-

"অভিযোগ নামা"

যেহেতু আপনি মিজ মিথিলা আফরিন, অফিস সহকারী কাম কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক গত ২৪/০৯/২০২৩ হতে ২৬/০৯/২০২৩ তারিখ পর্যন্ত ০৩ (তিন) দিনের নৈমিত্তিক ছুটি গ্রহণপূর্বক কর্মস্থল ত্যাগ করেন। আপনার ২৭/০৯/২০২৩ তারিখ অফিসে যোগদান করার কথা থাকলেও অদ্যাবধি কর্মস্থলে যোগদান করেন নি। আপনি অননুমোদিতভাবে ৬০ দিনের অধিককাল কর্মস্থলে অনুপস্থিত রয়েছেন। নিয়ম মোতাবেক সিনিয়র কৃষি বিপণন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা হতে অফিসে যোগদানের জন্য একাধিক পত্র প্রদান করা হলেও আপনি সে সকল পত্রের কোন জবাব অত্র কার্যালয়কে অবহিত করেন নি।

০২। আপনার এরুপ বিনানুমতিতে কর্মস্থলে অনুপস্থিতি সরকারী কর্মচারী (শৃংখলা ও আপীল) বিধিমালা, ২০১৮ এর বিধি-২ (চ) অনুযায়ী অসদাচরণ ও পলায়ন (Desertion) হিসেবে গণ্য ও শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ;

০৩। সেহেতু আপনাকে সরকারী কর্মচারী (শৃংখলা ও আপীল) বিধিমালা, ২০১৮ এর বিধি-৩ এর দফা (খ) ও (গ) অনুযায়ী অসদাচরণ ও পলায়ন এর অভিযোগে অভিযুক্ত করা হলো। এবং কেন আপনাকে সরকারি চাকুরী হতে বরখাস্ত (Dismissal) কিংবা উপরোক্ত বিধিমালার আওতায় অন্যকোন দন্ড প্রদান করা হবে না তার লিখিত জবাব যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে এ অভিযোগনামা প্রাপ্তির ১০ (দশ) কার্যদিবসের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী বরাবর দাখিল করার জন্য নির্দেশ প্রদান করা হলো।

০৪। যে সকল অভিযোগের উপর ভিত্তি করে এ অভিযোগনামা প্রণয়ন করা হয়েছে তার একটি বিবরণী এতদ্সংগে প্রেরণ করা হলো।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-
০৩/০৪/২০২৪
(মোঃ মাসুদ করিম)
মহাপরিচালক

প্রাপক,
মিজ মিথিলা আফরিন
অফিস সহকারী কাম কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক
সিনিয়র কৃষি বিপণন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।

"অভিযোগ বিবরণী"

জনাব মিথিলা আফরিন, অফিস সহকারী কাম কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক, কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তর, সিনিয়র কৃষি বিপণন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, ঢাকা গত ২৪/০৯/২০২৩ হতে ২৬/০৯/২০২৩ তারিখ পর্যন্ত ০৩ (তিন) দিনের নৈমিত্তিক ছুটি গ্রহণপূর্বক কর্মস্থল ত্যাগ করেন। তার ২৭/০৯/২০২৩ তারিখ অফিসে যোগদান করার কথা থাকলেও অদ্যবধি কর্মস্থলে যোগদান করেন নি। তিনি গত ২৪/০৯/২০২৩ তারিখ থেকে অদ্যাবধি পর্যন্ত সর্বমোট ১৪৬ (একশত ছিচল্লিশ) দিন অননুমোদিতভাবে (৬০ দিনের অধিককাল) কর্মস্থলে অনুপস্থিত রয়েছেন।

০২। তিনি উর্ধ্বতন কর্তৃপক্ষের নির্দেশনা না মেনে একই ধরনের অপরাধ বার বার করে যাচ্ছেন; এবং

০৩। তাঁর এরুপ কার্যকলাপ সরকারি কর্মচারী (শৃংখলা ও আপীল) বিধিমালা, ২০১৮ এর বিধি-৩ (খ) ও (গ) অনুযায়ী যথাক্রমে অসদাচরণ ও পলায়ন (Desertion) হিসেবে গণ্য এবং শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-
০৩/০৪/২০২৪
(মোঃ মাসুদ করিম)
মহাপরিচালক।

GD-135

Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee no more

AGENCIES

Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, veteran Left leader and former West Bengal chief minister, died at his south Kolkata residence this morning. He was 80.

He had been unwell for a while and had been suffering from respiratory problems that led to his frequent hospitalisation in recent years.

Last year, he had to be put on life support after he contracted pneumonia. But the veteran CPM leader made a comeback.

He is survived by his wife Meera and son Suchetan.

Bhattacharjee, also a former member of the CPM's top decision-making body, Politburo, served as Bengal chief minister from 2000 to 2011, succeeding Jyoti Basu in the top post. Bhattacharjee led the CPM into the 2011 state polls when the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress posted a historic win, ending the 34-year Communist rule in the eastern state.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Students form liaison committee to work with govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-discrimination Student Movement yesterday announced a committee to liaise with the newly formed interim government, civil society, students, and stakeholders.

Formed on August 5, the six-member committee selected and recommended the names of the advisers for the caretaker administration in one of its first tasks, the movement's coordinator Nahid Islam announced at a press conference at Dhaka University Journalists' Association at 7:30pm.

> **Nahid also said that the committee would hold dialogues with all stakeholders and make proposals for the new leadership of the government.**

The size and scope of the committee's work will increase in future and it will be inclusive on the basis of dialogue with all parties, according to him.

Nahid also said that the committee would hold dialogues with all stakeholders and make proposals for the new leadership of the government.

Committee coordinator Mahfuz Abdullah said at the press conference, "It is the work of the liaison committee to present proposals based on discussions, consultations, debate and dialogue with all the stakeholders of the state."

The members are Nasir Uddin Patwari aka Nasir Abdullah, Akram Hussain, Bhuiyan Asaduzzaman, Mamun Abdullahil, Ariful Islam Adeeb – all students of Dhaka University.

Yunus-led interim govt takes charge

FROM PAGE 1

advisers last night, but none could give an answer.

With almost the entire police force remaining absent after numerous attacks on police, law and order situation has sharply worsened across the country. Students and volunteers have been controlling traffic on roads.

Political analysts say the Yunus-led government must quickly ensure people's safety, restore law and order, and get the barely-functioning civil administration back to normal.

For years, the winner of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize was subject to bitter criticism from Hasina and the Awami League. Hasina said Prof Yunus was behind the cancellation of World Bank funding for the Padma Bridge.

He was stalked by lawsuits that many said were aimed at harassing him. A labour court sentenced him and three other top officials of Grameen Telecom to six months in prison in a case filed over labour law violations.

On Wednesday, a Dhaka tribunal acquitted Yunus in the case.

Last night's ceremony attended by almost 700 guests began with the recitation from the holy Quran.

Leaders of the BNP, the recently banned Jamaat, chiefs of the three armed forces, journalists, and top civil and military officials attended the event.

The chief justice, election commissioners and Awami League leaders were not seen there.

The new advisers include Nahid Islam and Asif Mahmud, two key organisers of the student movement that led to the fall of the previous government, are also advisers.

This is the first time in Bangladesh that university students are in the advisory council. At just 26, Nahid and Asif are the youngest people ever to have the status of a minister.

As the chief adviser, Prof Yunus enjoys the status of prime minister.

The other advisers include Salehuddin Ahmed, former governor of Bangladesh Bank; Asif Nazrul, law professor at Dhaka University; Adilur Rahman, secretary of rights organisation Odhikar; Hassan Ariff, former attorney general and adviser to a caretaker government; Touhid Hossain, former foreign secretary; Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of BELA; and Sharmeen Murshid, chief executive officer of election watchdog Brotee.

Besides, Faruk-e-Azam, a freedom fighter; Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hossain, former election commissioner; Supradip Chakma, chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board and former ambassador; Bidhan Ranjan Roy, a psychiatrist; AFM Khalid Hossain, nayeb-e-ameer of Hefazat-e-Islam and adviser to Islami Andolan Bangladesh; Farida Akhter, women rights activist; and Nurjahan Begum, trustee board member of Grameen Telecom are advisers.

Supradip, Bidhan, and Faruk have yet to be sworn in, said the cabinet secretary.

In her impromptu reaction, Sharmeen Murshid said, "The country has fallen apart, it is fragmented, and people are divided. Institutions have been destroyed. We need to rebuild these.

"Even if I were an ordinary citizen, I would still have to contribute to the efforts. Now I have the opportunity to contribute more. I believe we have a strong team of advisers."

Another member Syeda Rizwana Hasan said, "Many countries around the world have become democratic, established accountability, and upheld human rights. Why can't we do the same here?"

"Half of the country's population is young. But we never considered how important they could be in getting things done. Today, they have proven their relevance and importance."

Student protests demanding reform in quotas in government jobs began on July 1 and gradually gained strength despite the government's use of excessive force leading to over 300 deaths.

The movement climaxed in a people's uprising on Monday as the student organisers urged people to "march to Dhaka".

After the fall of military dictator Hussain Muhammad Ershad, Bangladesh saw an interim government headed by Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in 1991.

In 1996, another interim government was formed under Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman. The interim government system was included in the constitution in the face of a movement led by the Awami League.

Justice Latifur Rahman was the head of the 2001 caretaker government.

The then president, Iajuddin Ahmed, also served as the chief adviser to the caretaker government from October 2006 to January 2007.

Former central bank governor Fakhruddin took charge as the head of the caretaker government on January 12, 2007.

In 2011, the Hasina-led government abolished the caretaker government system.

Prof Asif Nazrul on August 6 said, "We are going to form the government in an extraordinary situation. There are different constitutional means and customs to legalise certain actions. We will do that."

Supreme Court lawyer Shahdeen Malik said it might not be possible to fully abide by the constitution in the context of such an extraordinary political upheaval.

The general elections held under Shahabuddin, Habibur, Lutfor and Fakhruddin were comparatively acceptable to the people.

Just after being sworn in, Prof Yunus visited the Dhaka Medical College Hospital to visit those injured in the anti-government clashes.

'Interim govt will play vital role in establishing peace, stability'

Hopes US State Dept

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Washington thinks the interim government headed by Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus will play a vital role in establishing long-term peace and political stability in Bangladesh, said Matthew Miller, the US State Department spokesman.

"And as you heard the secretary say yesterday, any decision that the interim government makes should respect democratic principles, rule of law and the will of the Bangladeshi people," he said at a press briefing yesterday.

> **"... Any decision that the interim government makes should respect democratic principles, rule of law and the will of the Bangladeshi people."**
>
> **Matthew Miller**
> US State Dept spokesman

The US will continue to monitor developments in Bangladesh, he said.

"I have already spoken to the interim government in Bangladesh and what steps we want to see it carry out as it moves forward."

The interim government took oath last evening, three days after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government following a mass movement calling for her resignation.

Meanwhile, some media reported that Hasina's US visa has been revoked.

Asked about this, Miller said visa records are confidential under US law, so he cannot comment on that in any way.

When informed that Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, a US resident, was instrumental in the shut down of internet in Bangladesh during the recent students' protest, Miller said he does not have any comment on statements made by a private citizen.

Normalcy

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, Gonoforum Emeritus President and eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain said, "The change that has come today [yesterday] was welcomed by everyone. There has been an extraordinary turnout at the event. Everyone feels that change has come.

"We hope they [members of the advisory council] will be able to address the new crises. People will expect a meaningful change -- let this be that change."

Speaking to The Daily Star last night, Barrister Sara Hossain said, "My main expectation from this government is that it will enable substantial reforms to institutions in Bangladesh and clear the path for truth-telling about what has happened not only in the immediate past or the past few weeks but even over the last 14 years and before that. The students' anti-discrimination movement was for reforms and against repression and these should be the interim government's main themes.

"What I perhaps am a bit troubled by is that, unlike previous years, there is no balance of political background and police. We obviously have no representation from Awami League. This absence of balance could cause a problem."

Bangladesh has a secular constitution, history and tradition, which has not denied any faith but encouraged pluralism, "But the swearing-in today did not reflect that and I hope that is not a sign of things to come."

The inclusion of students is of course unprecedented, she said, adding, "But I think it can only add energy to the whole process ... I believe they can be a part of keeping the interim government in the right direction and keep it within the demands of the students and general people. We need to remember that even post-Liberation in 1971, we had many young leaders."

Sara Hossain observed, "We are a secular country of diverse religions, beliefs, ethnicities, genders and sexualities but we have seen some parties such as Hefazat-e-Islam who are opposed to inequality and non-discrimination, and so, I question their inclusion in this current interim government."

Samina Luthfa, associate professor at Dhaka University, said, "While I welcome the interim government, it is to be noted that many of them are from non-government organisations and require a specific kind of skill set. However, there is much work to be done to reform the nation, whether they have the skills for that remains a question. I think including the students [leaders of the anti-discrimination student movement] in the government brings hope."

Asked whether minority and women representation were enough, she said, "I believe those could be higher. Many other women and actors from religious minority backgrounds are skilled and have been supporting the movement, they too could have been included. More people from these segments of society could have ensured a higher possibility of a 'discrimination-free' country."

She added that since the Jamaat-e-Islami was banned, the Hefazat Nayeb-e-Ameer may have been included to balance out participation from all religious backgrounds.

"We are in an extraordinary situation and of course, we cannot expect everything to be perfect already, it will all take time.

"However, at this moment, the first thing the interim government must look after is the safety of all citizens, justice, the economy, and restoring law and order."

Samina Luthfa added, "Institutions that valued justice, law, and culture were all destroyed and politicised in the previous [Hasina] regime. Meanwhile, university administrations, which are of utmost importance for the growth of the newer generations, were also negatively influenced. All of these need rational and logical reforms."

On the other hand, she believes social inequality, and lack of justice must be addressed, regardless of race, religion or merit.

Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Limited, Khulna
Invitation for International Tender (IFIT)

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications & Information Technology	
2	Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Limited	
3	Procuring entity district	Khulna	
4	Invitation for	Procurement of Raw Materials for Manufacturing of Telecomm. Copper Cables / Optical Fiber Cables/HDPE Duct/Electrical Overhead Conductor.	
5	Tender Invitation Ref. No.	14.37.0000.702.07.755.24.3169	
6	Date	08-08-2024	
KEY INFORMATION			
7	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method with International Competition	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
8	Budget and source of funds	BCSL's own fund	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
9	Tender publication date	Within 11-08-2024	
10	Tender last selling date	09-09-2024 till 16:30 hours	
		Date	**Time**
11	Tender closing date and time	10-09-2024	11:00 hours.
12	Tender opening date and time	10-09-2024	11:15 hours.
13	Name & address of the office(s)	**Address**	
	Selling tender document	Dhaka Liaison Office, Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Limited, Nilkhet Telephone Exchange Building (1st Floor), Dhaka-1205, Phone No-0088-02-9615501, Mobile: 01550059620/01739152828 Cash Section, Accounts Dept., Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Ltd., Shiromoni Industrial Area, Khulna. Telephone No. 024-77707230 Ext. 206, 01550059638	
	Receiving tender document	Dhaka Liaison Office, Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Limited, Nilkhet Telephone Exchange Building (1st Floor), Dhaka-1205, Phone No-0088-02-9615501, Mobile: 01550059620/01739152828	
	Opening tender document	Dhaka Liaison Office, Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Limited, Nilkhet Telephone Exchange Building (1st Floor), Dhaka-1205, Phone No-0088-02-9615501, Mobile: 01550059620/01739152828	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
14	Eligibility of tenderer	As per TDS	
15	Brief description of goods	Please see serial No. 21 below:	
16	Price of tender document	Taka **3,000.00** (three thousand) only per set (non-refundable).	

	Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location	Quantity	Fixed tender security	Completion time
17	1	Virgin PBT Granules for Loose Tube (Natural Color)	Khulna	42 M. Ton	USD 2,000.00	As Per Schedule of Requirements
	2	Tube Lessening Jel (Thixotropic)	Khulna	42 M. Ton	USD 2,000.00	
	3	Core Filling Compound (Flooding Compound)	Khulna	21 M. Ton	USD 1,000.00	
	4	Virgin Black Polyethylene Granules (MDPE) For Outer Jacket of OFC	Khulna	150 M. Ton	USD 5,600.00	
	5	Virgin Black Polyethylene Granules (HDPE) For Outer Jacket of OFC	Khulna	300 M. Ton	USD 11,000.00	
	6	Polyester Binder Yarn	Khulna	5 M. Ton	USD 400.00	
	7	Hot Marking /Stamping Foil	Khulna	10,000 Reel	USD 500.00	
	8	Fiber Reinforced Plastic (FRP), (Sizes: 2.10 mm, & 0.9mm)	Khulna	8,000 KM	USD 2,000.00	
	9	Water Blocking Tape (Different Sizes)	Khulna	10.5 M. Ton	USD 1,000.00	
	10	Co-Polymer Coated Steel Tape, Silted Sizes for OFC	Khulna	130 M. Ton	USD 4,200.00	
	11	Polyester Foil (Different Sizes)	Khulna	5 M. Ton	USD 300.00	
	12	Galvanized Steel Rope (Size: 7 x 0.8) mm & (Size: 7 x 1.0) mm	Khulna	63 M. Ton	USD 3,000.00	
	13	Virgin HDPE-RT Granules Natural Color (Pipe Grade)	Khulna	150 M. Ton	USD 5,100.00	
	14	Virgin Black HDPE Granules (PE 100) HDD Pipe Grade	Khulna	396 M. Ton	USD 14,100.00	
	15	PE Color Master Batch (Different Color)	Khulna	5.5 M. Ton	USD 500.00	
	16	Polyethylene Granules (HDPE) for Wire Insulation Natural Color	Khulna	10.5 M. Ton	USD 600.00	
	17	Polytal Foil (Different Color)	Khulna	2.5 M. Ton	USD 600.00	
	18	Galvanized Steel Tape (Size: 25mm)	Khulna	5 M. Ton	USD 300.00	
	19	Aluminum Wire (Size: 9.5mm)	Khulna	200 M. Ton	USD 17,000.00	
	20	Galvanized Steel Core Wire (Size: 1.68mm)	Khulna	42 M. Ton	USD 1,500.00	
	21	XLPE Compound for LT Power Cable Jacket (With catalyst)	Khulna	84 M. Ton	USD 4,000.00	

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
18	Name of official inviting tender	**Md. Arifur Rahman FCMA**
19	Designation of official inviting tender	General Manager (Purchase & Marketing)
20	Address of official inviting tender	Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Ltd., Shiromoni Industrial Area, Khulna-9206.
21	Contact details of official inviting tender	Foreign Purchase Section, Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Ltd., Shiromoni Industrial Area, Khulna. Phone No. 880-2477707250, 01711066077/01550059625. **Please visit our website at www.bcsl.gov.bd & CPTU Website: www.cptu.gov.bd & E-mail: dmpurbcsl702@gmail.com.**
22	**The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.**	

Md. Arifur Rahman FCMA
General Manager (Purchase & Marketing)

GD- 138

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
মহাপরিচালকের কার্যালয়
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, রেলভবন, ঢাকা

সংশোধিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ের "ট্রেন এক্সামিনার, ট্রেন কন্ট্রোলার, ট্রাফিক এ্যাপ্রেন্টিস, ট্রেড এ্যাপ্রেন্টিস" পদে সংশোধিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশিত হয়েছে। প্রকাশিত সংশোধিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ের ওয়েবসাইট (www.railway.gov.bd) ও টেলিটক বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড এর ওয়েবসাইট (http://br.teletalk.com.bd) থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

এ এম সালাহ উদ্দীন
যুগ্ম-মহাপরিচালক (অপারেশন)
ও আহ্বায়ক, বিভাগীয় নির্বাচন কমিটি

GD-133

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
প্রধান প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়
স্বাস্থ্য প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তর (এইচইডি)
স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়
১০৫-১০৬, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০

নথি নং-৪৫.০২.০০০০.০০১.১৪.০২৫.২৪-২০৫৬ তারিখঃ ০৮/০৮/২৪

এইচইডি'র ঠিকাদার তালিকাভূক্তি নবায়ন বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়ের আওতাধীন স্বাস্থ্য প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তর (এইচইডি) এর অস্থায়ীভাবে তালিকাভূক্ত ঠিকাপ্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের মালিকদের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, চলতি ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের তালিকাভূক্তি নবায়নের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ৩১/১২/২০২৪খ্রিঃ নির্ধারণ করা হয়েছে। উক্ত তারিখের পর ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা জরিমানা এবং জরিমানার উপর ১৫% হারে ১৫০/- (একশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা ভ্যাটসহ নবায়ন করা যাবে। নিম্নের ছক অনুযায়ী নির্ধারিত তারিখের মধ্যে ট্রেজারি চালানের মূলকপি স্বাস্থ্য প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তরের যে কোন নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়ে জমা স্বাপেক্ষে নবায়ন করতে হবে।

বিবরণ	টাকার পরিমাণ	কোড নং	ব্যাংকের নাম
নবায়ন ফি	২০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকা	১২৭০৫০১-১১৬৫১৮-১৪২২৩৩৫	জেলা শহরের সোনালী ব্যাংক অথবা বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের যে কোন শাখা।
নবায়নের উপর ১৫% হারে ভ্যাট	৩০০/- (তিনশত) টাকা	১-১১৩৩-০০১০-০৩১১ নতুন (১১৪১১০১)	জেলা শহরের সোনালী ব্যাংক অথবা বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের যে কোন শাখা।
জরিমানা বাবদ (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে)	১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা	১২৭০৫০১-১১৬৫১৮-১৪৩১১০১ (পুরাতন-১৯০১)	জেলা শহরের সোনালী ব্যাংক অথবা বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের যে কোন শাখা।
জরিমানার উপর ১৫% হারে ভ্যাট	১৫০/- (একশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা	১-১১৩৩-০০১০-০৩১১ নতুন (১১৪১১০১)	জেলা শহরের সোনালী ব্যাংক অথবা বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের যে কোন শাখা।

২। তালিকাভূক্তি নবায়নের জন্য ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের নবায়নকৃত ট্রেড লাইসেন্স প্রথম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত করে দাখিল করতে হবে।

৩। যে সকল ঠিকাপ্রতিষ্ঠান ইতিপূর্বে নবায়ন ফি জমা দিতে ব্যর্থ হয়েছেন তারা নিয়মিত নবায়ন ফি এর অতিরিক্ত ট্রেজারী চালানের মাধ্যমে ১০০০/-(এক হাজার) টাকা হারে জরিমানাসহ উপরোক্ত ছকে বর্ণিত কোড নম্বরে জমা দিতে পারবেন। ট্রেজারী চালানের মাধ্যমে প্রতি অর্থ বছরের জন্য ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা হারে জরিমানা এবং জরিমানার উপর ভ্যাট বাবদ ১৫০/- (একশত পঞ্চাশ টাকা) সহ পর পর তিন অর্থ বছর নবায়ন করতে পারবেন। যদি কেহ পর পর তিন অর্থ বছর পর্যন্ত নবায়ন ফি জমা দিতে ব্যর্থ হন তবে তার তালিকাভূক্তি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

৪। তালিকাভূক্তি নবায়নের ব্যাপারে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত চূড়ান্ত হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।

৫। ইহা প্রধান প্রকৌশলী মহোদয়ের অনুমোদনক্রমে জারী করা হলো।

প্রকৌঃ মোঃ আনোয়ার হোসেন
অতিরিক্ত প্রধান প্রকৌশলী (চঃদাঃ)
এইচইডি, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা

GD- 130

DHAKA FRIDAY AUGUST 9, 2024, SRABAN 25, 1431 BS ● starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Star BUSINESS

Protests erupt at half a dozen banks

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Protests broke out at half a dozen banks yesterday as officials demanded the cancellations of illegal appointments, punishment for owners involved in money laundering and irregularities, and restoring the jobs of those who were terminated in the past several years.

Employees of Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank, United Commercial Bank, Bangladesh Commerce Bank, Rupali Bank and Sonali Bank demonstrated at their respective head offices.

A group of shareholders of United Commercial Bank voiced demands to restructure the board and remove former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury's family members from its board.

The protesters displayed various banners and alleged that the former land minister was involved in money laundering and irregularities.

The shareholders also sent a letter to the central bank, alleging that although Rukhmila Zaman is the chairperson of the bank, her husband Saifuzzaman Chowdhury was playing the role in reality.

The letter further said that Chowdhury was acting as the chairman by wielding his political power, flouting central bank regulations.

The lender is nearing bankruptcy because of Chowdhury's irregularities and looting, the letter reads.

They also alleged the former land minister acquired assets worth Tk 1,888 crore in the UK by looting depositors' money. As a result, the asset quality of the bank has become weak, it added.

The bank's founder chairman was the late Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury, an Awami League leader and the father of Saifuzzaman Chowdhury.

MA Hashem, founder chairman of Partex Group, was also at the bank since the beginning. But he and his family members, one of whom was the chairperson, were forced to leave the bank in 2017.

Afterwards, Rukhmila Zaman took charge as chairperson.

The Daily Star attempted to contact Arif Quadri, managing director of UCB, but he did not respond.

Elsewhere, a storm was brewing at Social Islam Bank.

Officials of the bank said former chairman Md Rezaul Haque, who was forced to resign in 2017 after S Alam Group acquired a majority stake in the bank, returned to office and demanded his directorship be restored.

Officials also demanded that the jobs of those who were sacked after the takeover in 2017 be restored.

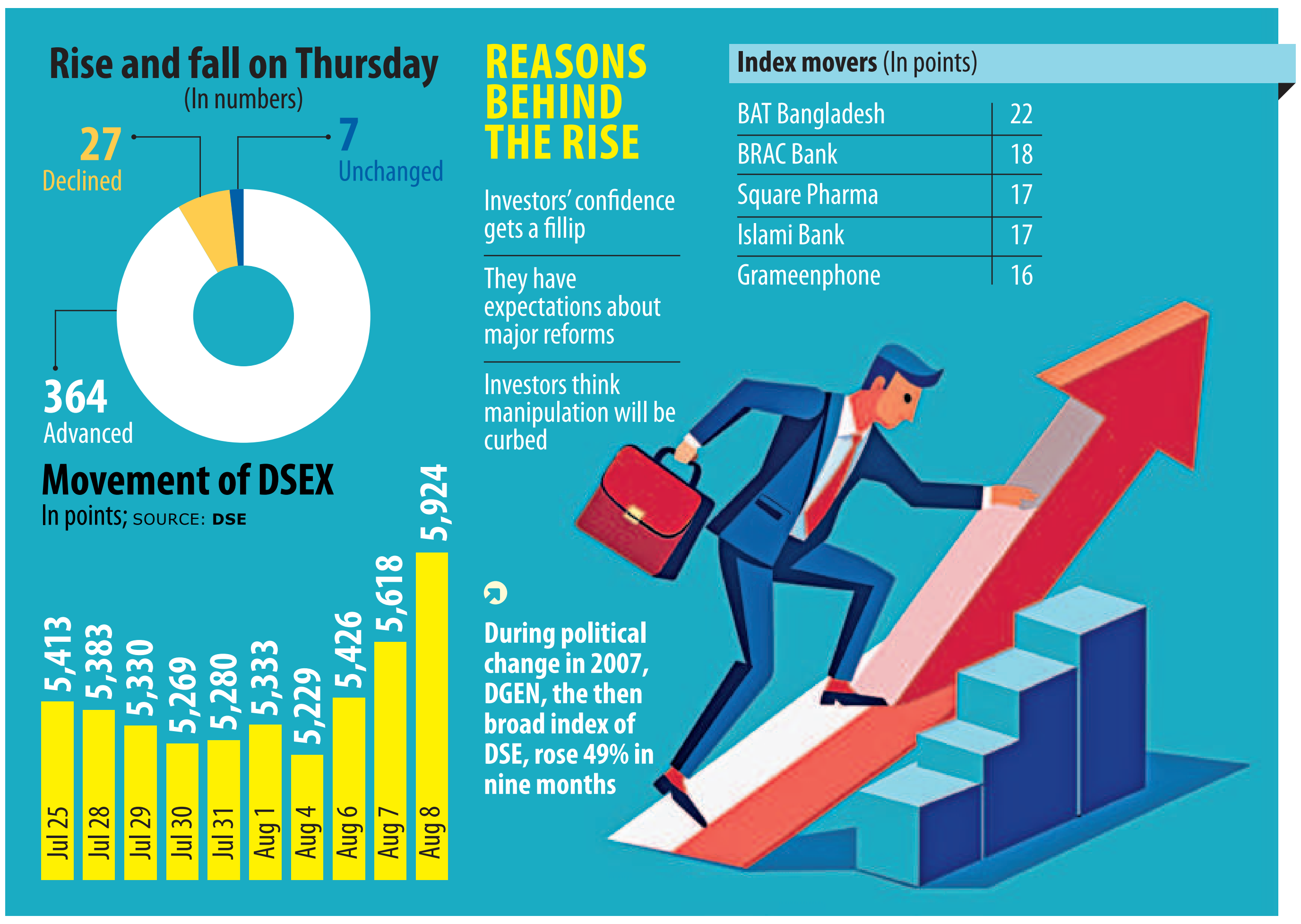
Zafar Alam, the bank's managing director, was absent yesterday.

A day prior, protestors had forced six senior Bangladesh Bank officials, including four deputy governors, to leave the central bank headquarters.

The demonstrating officials forced Bangladesh Bank Deputy Governor Saydur Rahman to resign and sought the resignation of Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder.

The Bangladesh Bank governor, four deputy governors, the head of the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit and the central bank's policy advisor were absent yesterday.

Investors cheer as stocks soar



REASONS BEHIND THE RISE

- Investors' confidence gets a fillip
- They have expectations about major reforms
- Investors think manipulation will be curbed

During political change in 2007, DGEN, the then broad index of DSE, rose 49% in nine months

Index movers (In points)

BAT Bangladesh	22
BRAC Bank	18
Square Pharma	17
Islami Bank	17
Grameenphone	16

AHSAN HABIB

Share prices rallied for a third consecutive session yesterday, with the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) registering a 5.44 percent spike, the highest jump in four and a half years.

With yesterday's jump, the DSEX added 13 percent, or 695 points, in just three days after the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising.

"This rally is a reflection of the investors' upbeat mood," said Mir Ariful Islam, managing director and CEO of Sandhani Asset Management Limited.

"When there is a regime change, expectations run high that the new government will make some structural changes for the benefit of the market," he said.

The three-day gain coincided with the arrival of Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus, who was later sworn in as the chief of an interim government, ending a three-day power vacuum in what can be considered an unusual development.

Investors said they were happy since shares of healthy companies rose rather than that of companies with poor financials and business prospects, reflecting a lack of presence of manipulators.

This shows that institutional investors, who had been on the sidelines for many years, are now injecting funds into stocks.

Turnover at the DSE, which indicates the volume of shares traded, shot up 107 percent to Tk 1,606 crore yesterday.

"Investors are hopeful, so they are entering the market with fresh funds. They were unhappy year after year seeing the ailing stocks. Now, they are happy to see the dynamism," Islam said.

"I hope the market will remain good as the interim government has been formed with some economists who are being vocal for reforms in the financial sector," he said.

"The reform is necessary and this will send out a good message to institutional investors and foreign investors too," he added.

Yesterday, the DSES index, which represents Shariah-compliant companies, increased by 55 points, or 4.57 percent, to 1,274 points.

Similarly, the DS30 index comprising blue-chip stocks surged by 110 points, or 5.46 percent, to 2,132 points.

British American Tobacco Bangladesh made the biggest contribution with 22 points followed by BRAC Bank with 18 points, Square Pharmaceuticals with 17 points and Islami Bank with 16.7 points, according to LankaBangla Securities.

"Most share prices had reached their lowest due to the lack of investor confidence. So, the recent rise is not ensuring profits for many yet," said Md Sajedul Islam, a former vice president of the DSE Brokers Association of Bangladesh.

"Now, investors are coming to the market only because they regained some confidence, and they think they will not incur loss for manipulation," he added.

Citing how turnover grew even though banking activities were not fully operational and banks were not allowed to withdraw more than Tk 1 lakh, Islam said this indicates that investors injected hefty funds.

"This shows that if investors have confidence and think there will be profit, funds will come to the market. So, it proves that the market only needs confidence. No other support is needed if confidence can be boosted," he said.

"Actually, support is needed for the sick but none wants to invest in a sick market," he added.

Against this backdrop, Islam said the regulator should undertake reform measures in line with the government's overall reform initiative to retain investor confidence.

Shares of companies listed with Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) also rose yesterday as the Caspi, the broad index of the port city bourse, increased by 861 points, or 5.40 percent, to 16,799 points.

The market movement was driven by positive changes in the market capitalisation of bank, financial institutions, and food and allied scrips amid negative changes in the market cap of travel and leisure, paper and printing, and jute scrips, Shanta Securities said in its daily market review.

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Almost all RMG factories reopen

Some textile mills yet to follow suit

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Almost all garment and textile mills have reopened after staying in limbo for four days as fears of vandalism and arson gripped the nation, industry leaders said yesterday.

Several factories were vandalised and set ablaze since Sheikh Hasina handed in her resignation from the post of prime minister and fled the country on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising.

Top businesspeople and leaders of different business and trade bodies on Wednesday demanded the immediate restoration of law and order to ensure safety at their factories.

They added that production is being hampered as goods are not being transported from the port to factories at present due to the lack of security on major roads.

Garment and textile mills were supposed to reopen on Wednesday but many decided to stay shut while others could not reopen, particularly in Ashulia, after rumours spread that they would be attacked.

However, almost all factories reopened yesterday, according to Khandoker Rafiqul Islam, acting president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

> **Garment factory owners and textile millers had no choice but to shutter their units under the threat of violence**

He added that no untoward incident was reported afterwards, except for one in Ashulia. "But that was not a major incident," he said.

Similarly, Mohammad Hatem, executive president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), said all member factories had reopened in Narayanganj and other areas.

"So, timely production and shipment can be expected if there is no further violence," Hatem added.

Mohammad Ali Khokon, president of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), said some factory owners opened their units but not all of them. The others may take a bit more time to reopen, he said.

Garment factory owners and textile millers had no choice but to shutter their units under the threat of violence after Sheikh Hasina fled the country in the face of massive student and civilian protests.

The protests, which began in early July, had also caused a prior four-day shutdown. On that occasion, fears of violence were accompanied by a five-day internet blackout, dealing the sector a double blow.

Other than safety concerns, many garment owners also expressed worries as some have already missed the lead times set by international retailers and brands.

Many more may have to provide discounts or go for costly air shipments if they cannot maintain lead times due to the recent spells of disruption.

July, August and September are the peak months for the shipment of goods for Christmas. They are also the prime months when work orders are placed for the following summer and spring seasons.

STOCKS

DSEX ▲	CASPI ▲
5.44% 5,924.81	5.40% 16,799.76

COMMODITIES

Gold ▲	Oil ▲
$2,394.73 (per ounce)	$75.02 (per barrel)

ICT industry sees hope on the horizon

MAHMUDUL HASAN

ICT entrepreneurs in Bangladesh, who faced uncertainties due to an internet blackout enforced by the government to suppress protests in recent weeks, are now brimming with hope following the fall of the dictatorial Sheikh Hasina-led government.

They now seek stability, good governance, democracy and reforms.

Just last week, there were fears that they might fail to attract foreign investments and lose foreign clients amidst the deepening political crisis and government crackdown on students.

Now, with the imminent positive changes expected from an interim government which is set to be formed, they anticipate good policies and a business-friendly environment.

"The transformational change we witnessed over the past few days, brings with it the opportunity to retell our story to the outside world, including global venture capital investors," said Fahim Ahmed, CEO of ride-sharing, food delivery and courier service platform Pathao.

"But for that story to be compelling, credible and executable, we must soon demonstrate meaningful steps towards building the institutions that can create a business environment that is open and transparent, and nurtures skill, innovation and enterprise," he said.

He said the first among such steps are the appointments to key positions at the institutions that will shape the trajectory for the economy, the financial system, and technology sector.

"Now more than ever, we must earn back the confidence of our promising young entrepreneurs, leaders, builders, coders, operators and professionals so that they choose to pursue their aspirations in Bangladesh," Ahmed said.

Morin Talukder, co-founder and CEO of online shopping platform Pickaboo, said: "Due to the internet blackout, we are now suffering from an image crisis."

"In the last few days, I spoke to some investors, and they are not interested in talking about business. They just ask if I am fine," he said.

"When I used to pitch to foreign investors, I would say we are a very stable country," he said.

"We have lost the trust of the international community. Our market was not good, the e-commerce industry was struggling to grow and now there is another blow," said Talukder.

He said the international investors prefer countries that have good policies, infrastructure and business environment.

"Now, we have to recover," he added.

Fahim Mashroor, CEO of bdjobs.com, said the ICT industry has gone through a very tough time in the last few years.

"Apart from the blow in the last few weeks, industry has been hit very hard because of a lot of issues, including Covid-19 and the Russia-Ukraine war. The government talked a lot about digital Bangladesh and Smart Bangladesh," he said.

"But very few things have happened. A lot of government money has been wasted. Political people looted government ICT funds," he said.

"I think all industry people are excited because they feel that corruption in the sector will come down. Also, democracy and stability will attract a lot of foreign investment in tech startups," said Mashroor.

"The local ICT market will also grow if governance and transparency are ensured," Mashroor added.

Waseem Alim, CEO of grocery e-commerce platform Chaldal, said the biggest challenge now was to regain the confidence of international investors.

"It will take some time to recover," he added.

The startup funding landscape in Bangladesh has already been experiencing a significant downturn.

In the first quarter of 2024, Bangladesh's startup sector secured only $7 million across four deals, according to the Bangladesh Startup Investment Report 2024 by LightCastle Partners.

This illustrates a 70 percent quarter-on-quarter decline in funding, a substantial drop from the surge witnessed in the fourth quarter of 2023, it said.

The decrease is even more significant when compared to the same period last year, representing an 82 percent drop.

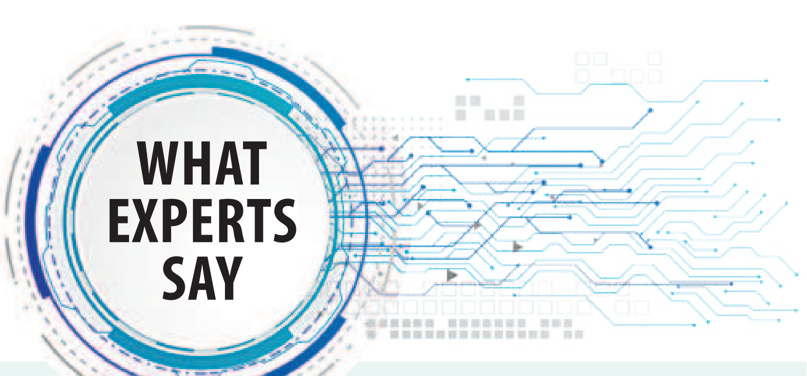
The government shut down mobile internet services on July 17 amid widespread violence over the quota reform protests.

A day later, on July 18, broadband internet was blocked, severely affecting public life and a wide range of economic activities, including utility bill payments, online banking, digital communications, digital commerce and clearance of goods from ports.

Mobile internet was restored on July 28 while social media platforms were unblocked on July 31. Mobile internet users were unable to access their Facebook and Messenger accounts for approximately 7 hours on August 2.

Mobile internet and Facebook were blocked again on August 4.

On August 5, mobile and broadband internet was blocked again for a few hours. However, the internet was fully restored after 2:00pm, when Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister and fled the country.



- ICT entrepreneurs faced uncertainty due to internet blackout
- Internet outage caused image crisis among international investors
- Internet shutdown may hinder foreign investment
- Recent political changes may help improve business environment
- Credible, executable steps are needed now
- Key appointments vital for economic and technological advancement
- Fight against corruption and for democracy may help attract foreign investment

Currently there are little to no tourists in Cox's Bazar, which features the world's longest unbroken sea beach, for the deterioration of law and order situation since Sheikh Hasina resigned from her post as prime minister and fled the country on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising.

PHOTO: MOKAMMEL SHUVO

Holiday destinations devoid of tourists for security concerns

JAGARAN CHAKMA, SOHRAB HOSSAIN *and* **MOKAMMEL SHUVO**

Hotels, resorts and motels in the country's holiday destinations are lying idle for a lack of tourists amidst the deterioration of law and order since Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising.

Vandalism and looting of business establishments, houses and places of worship of religious minorities have created panic, denting the flow of tourists to popular holiday destinations.

"Not a single tourist came to visit Sajek during the last three weeks due to instability and fear," said Suparna Debbarman, president of an association of the area's resort and cottage owners.

During the rainy season, tourists come to witness the beauty of the green hills and small waterfalls, but the prevailing situation is not favourable for travel.

He added that bus services connecting Dhaka and Khagrachhari are yet to resume in full swing.

According to him, there are at least 130 resorts and hotels and 16 restaurants in Sajek that can accommodate around 3,500 tourists.

These resorts and hotels employ at least 1,000 people, Debbarman said.

However, most staff are on leave with pay, which has helped reduce food costs for staff, he added.

Basically, people are panicking about the instability and rapid change in the political scenario, which has impacted tourism-centric businesses in Sajek and other holiday destinations, he said.

Echoing Debbarman's sentiments, Imranul Alam, owner of Tour Group BD, which offers houseboat services at Tanguar Haor in Sylhet, said the peak season for tourism in the region comes during the months of July and August.

He said the natural beauty of Tanguar Haor, the tea gardens of Sreemangal and the waterfalls of Jaflong attract many visitors but there were no such prospects in the foreseeable future.

However, the ongoing situation had affected their business.

According to Alam, there are at least 200 houseboats in Tanguar Haor passing idle times due to a lack of tourists.

Currently, there is little to no tourism-centric business at Cox's Bazar, which boasts the world's longest unbroken sea beach, due to a lack of tourists, said Selim Newaz, general secretary of the Cox's Bazar Hotel Motel Guest House Owners' Association.

"We are incurring huge losses every day...this prime tourist destination currently has almost no tourists. But we still have to bear our fixed costs," Newaz said.

"We don't know when normality will return and when we will get tourists," he added.

Since mid-July, hardly any tourists have arrived in Kuakata, which features another sea beach, said Rumman Imtiaz Tushar, president of the Tour Operators Association of Kuakata.

Many bookings have been cancelled since a curfew was first imposed by the government on July 20, he said.

There are around 140 establishments catering to tourists, including restaurants and tea shops, alongside people who rent out beach umbrellas and benches in Kuakata. They are all having to deal with potential business losses, he said.

There are no tourists in hotels, said Motaleb Sharif, general secretary of Kuakata Hotel-Motel Owners Association.

"The owners of the hotels are struggling to meet various expenses, including hotel maintenance costs and electricity bills," he added.

Economy recorded sharp contraction in July: PMI

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's economic activities suffered sharp contractions in July owing to disruption in production and overall businesses amid violence, internet outage and curfew imposed by the immediate past government to quell protests, according to the latest Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI).

The July reading of the Bangladesh PMI -- an index based on data compiled from monthly surveys of over 500 private sector enterprises -- dropped a hefty 27 points from the previous month to record a sharp contraction at 36.9 points, much below the mid-point reading of 50 that means 'no change'.

A PMI reading above 50 generally indicates 'expanding' and below that shows a 'contraction', according to the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and Policy Exchange Bangladesh, which developed the PMI.

The latest PMI shows contraction in all key sectors of agriculture, manufacturing, construction and services, said the MCCI.

> **The Purchasing Managers' Index dropped a hefty 27 points in July compared to the previous month**

"The recent events of widespread unrest that culminated in the eventual resignation of the prime minister and fall of the government, have also had an impact on the economy," the MCCI said in a statement regarding the PMI.

"All key sectors of the economy recorded sharp contractions as the previous regime resorted to extreme measures to regain control. Nonetheless, there appears to be a silver lining as the future business index of all key sectors posted expansion readings."

According to the index developed in 2024, the agriculture sector recorded a sharp contraction after six consecutive months of expansion.

The sector posted a sharp contraction rate for the indexes of new business, business activity, and employment. However, the input costs index posted a faster expansion whereas the order backlog index posted a slower expansion rate.

The manufacturing sector also posted a sharp contraction after seven consecutive months of expansion, according to the index.

The sector recorded a sharp contraction rate for the indexes of new orders, new exports, factory output, and supplier deliveries, whereas the employment index recorded a slower expansion.

However, faster expansion rates were recorded for the indexes of input purchases and input prices, and the finished goods index reverted to an expansion.

AGRANI BANK PLC
Establishment & Engineering Division
Head Office
9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka

Invitation for Tenders

1	Procuring entity name	Agrani Bank PLC, Establishment & Engineering Division, Head Office (7th floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	
2	Procuring entity district	Dhaka	
3	Invitation for	Supply, Installation and Upgradation of CCTV System Agrani Bank PLC, 8 Branches of Dhaka Circle-1 & 2	
4	Invitation Ref No.	ABL/E&ED/Eng/Mecha-272/2024	
5	Date	04/08/2024	
KEY INFORMATION			
6	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method.	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
7	Budget and source of funds	Own fund of Agrani Bank Limited.	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
8	Tender publication date	04/08/2024	
9	Tender last selling date	25/08/2024	
		Date	Time
10	Tender closing date and time	27/08/2024	3.00pm
11	Tender opening date and time	27/08/2024	3.15pm
12	Name & address of the tender document selling office	Agrani Bank PLC, Establishment & Engineering Division, Head Office (7th Floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	
13	Receiving tender document	Agrani Bank PLC, Establishment & Engineering Division, Head Office (7th Floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	
14	Place of tender opening	Tender Opening will take place at the Primary Place	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
15	Brief eligibility and qualification of tenderer	Tenderers who have: a. Not been prevented by order of any judicial court from entering into and/or signing contract with the procuring entity. b. Tenderers shall have at least 03 (Three) years of overall business experience in similar works preceding the date of publication of IFT. c. Bidder must be the sole agent/commercial distributor of the proposed brand CC Camera of the contract and he/she must submit its all supporting documents. d. Certificate by the bidder stating that he/she had successfully completed CCTV installation, testing and commissioning works at govt/semi-govt/autonomous organizations/ reputed limited company. e. No joint venture company is allowed.	
16	Tenderer to attach copies of the following documents	i. Up-to-date valid trade license ii. Up-to-date income tax paid certificate iii. Valid VAT registration certificate iv. TIN certificate v. Minimum amount of liquid asset i.e. working capital or line of credit certificate of the Tenderer shall be Tk. 9.25 lac only. vi. Catalogue/ brochure. vii. The minimum specific experience as Supplier in supply of similar Goods of at least 2 contract(s) successfully completed within the last 3 years, each with a value of at least Tk. 7 lac/-. viii. Tender Submission Letter (Form PG3-1) ix. Bidder must be the sole agent/commercial distributor of the proposed brand CC Camera of the contract and he/she must submit its all supporting documents. x. International Standard Conformity Certificate and every other documents mentioned in TDS.	
17	Price of document (Tk) tender	1500/- (Tk one thousand and five hundred only) non-refundable Pay-Order from any branch of Agrani Bank PLC in favor of Agrani Bank PLC, Head Office, Dhaka.	
19	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Abdur Rahman	
20	Designation of official inviting tender	Deputy General Manager	
21	Address of official inviting tender	Agrani Bank PLC, Establishment & Engineering Division, Head Office (7th Floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	
22	Contact details of official inviting tender	02223381674	eedmechanical@agranibank.org
23	a) The tenderer shall furnish registration certificate and evidence of being managed by Bangladeshi nationals in original and certificates of satisfactory completion of previous work for proposed brand CC Camera of above magnitude from the owner at the time of dropping the Tender documents. b) If communication is disrupted on the date of receiving and opening the Tender(s), the same will be received at the same time on the day after next working day. c) Furnishing of any false, misleading documents may result in rejection of tender and may lead to action under Reg. 127 of PPR 2008. d) d) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever. No claims will be entertained in this regard.		

Md. Abdur Rahman
Deputy General Manager

GD-139

Congestion at Ctg port clearing up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The congestion of import and export containers at the Chattogram port is slowly clearing, with port activities ramping up since yesterday morning.

The backlog had accrued as container handling at the country's premier seaport came to a halt after the government enforced public holidays to quell the unrest stemming from a nationwide student movement.

The movement, which claimed more than 591 lives till yesterday according to The Daily Star's count, climaxed on August 5, when Sheikh Hasina resigned from her position as prime minister and fled the country.

According to the Chattogram Port Authority (CPA), importers are slowly clearing their goods in a bid to minimise risks amid security concerns.

CPA data shows that around 3,924 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of containers were released as of 8:00am yesterday, with 3,039 TEUs being export-oriented.

However, 41,581 TEUs of import containers are still awaiting release in port yards.

CPA officials say container congestion is gradually decreasing as port activities are returning to normal.

Omar Hazzaz, president of the Chattogram Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said traders are still delaying the clearance of import and export cargo in fear of theft as there has been no police presence along the highways for at least two days now.

"But the situation is slowly returning to normal," he added.

Hazzaz also hoped port activities would move ahead at full steam after the interim government is sworn in.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for
Nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience
in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part)
Department of Agricultural Marketing
Dipnagar, Gabtali, Mirpur, Dhaka.

Invitation for Tenders

1	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Agriculture
2	Agency	:	Department of Agricultural Marketing
3	Name of Procuring Entity	:	Agency Program Director, Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part)
4	Invitation for	:	Hiring of event management/HR institutes/logistics provider for Entrepreneur hunt, award ceremony, branding, road shows, events etc.
5	Invitation Reference	:	Memo No. 12.02.0000.549.23.003.24.989 Dated 08/08/2024
6	Procurement Method	:	Open Tendering Method (OTM) [PSN]
7	Budget and Source of Fund	:	Development Fund, World Bank, GoB
8	Project Code	:	224374700
9	Package Name	:	Hiring of event management/HR institutes/logistics provider for Entrepreneur hunt, award ceremony, branding, road shows, events etc.
10	Tender Publication Date	:	09/08/2024
11	Tender Last Selling Date	:	04/09/2024 (within office hours)
12	Tender Submission Date and Time	:	05/09/2024 up to 14:00
13	Tender Opening Date and Time	:	05/09/2024 at 14:30
14	Office Address of Selling Tender Document	:	Agency Program Director's Office Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part), Department of Agricultural Marketing, Gabtali Flower Wholesale Market (Level-2, Room No-302), Dipnagar, Gabtali, Mirpur, Dhaka.
15	Office Address of Receiving and Opening Tender Document		Department of Agricultural Marketing, Head Office Khamarbari (Front Building, Level-4, Room No-501), Farmgate, Dhaka.
16	Eligibility of Tenderer	:	a) Minimum 10 (ten) years overall experience in the field of event management, branding and marketing of products or services nationally; b) Minimum 2 Contact in public sector at least minimum contract value of BDT 2 (two) Crore over the last 5 years in Agribusiness related project and Experience of working with 100+ Micro Entrepreneurs under one project in Agriculture Related Project; c) Experience of performing similar assignments under the development partner funded projects; d) Experience of implementing full-fledged marketing and branding campaign (360-degree campaign) like television commercials), Radio Commercials), Press/Print media, Digital (Facebook and other digital), Events/Activation, Outdoor (shop sign, billboards) etc; e) Evidence of permanent office in Bangladesh; Evidence of updated Trade license (2023-24) mentioning event management service; Income Tax Clearance Certificate (2022-23); TIN Number; BIN Number and Proof of VAT submission status (December, 2023); f) List of Manpower having the criteria as per the required qualifications and experience in the TOR and having adequate permanent manpower and other office equipment and logistic support; g) Audited financial reports for the financial years (2022-23, 2021-22, 2020-21); and h) The firm must demonstrate at least BDT 2 (two) crore as Working Capital in the form of a Letter of Credit or Credit Commitment or equivalent.
17	Price of Tender Document	:	BDT 4,000.00 (Four Thousand only)
18	Description of Activities	:	Hiring of event management/HR institutes/logistics provider for Entrepreneur hunt, award ceremony, branding, road shows, events etc. [Details Terms of Reference (TOR) are available at **www.dam.gov.bd** at Tender Menu box]

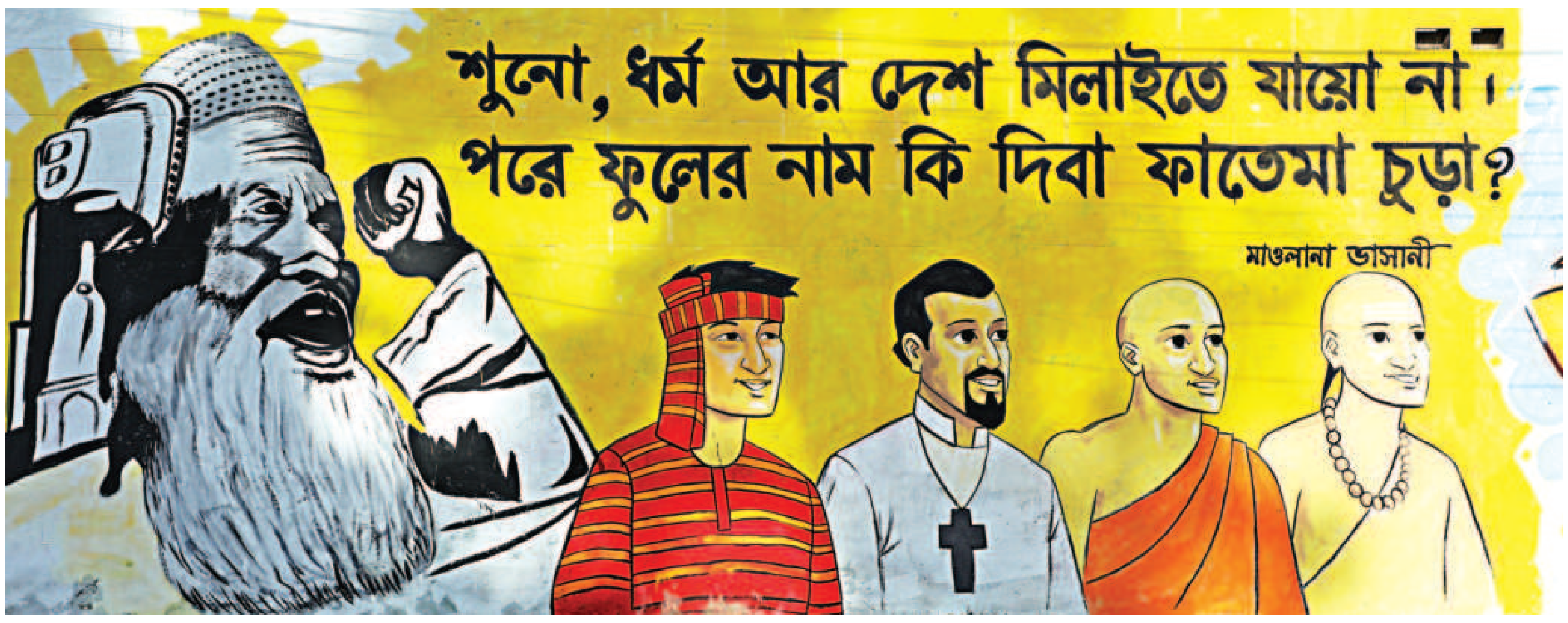
Package No	Identification of Package	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Completion Time
SD-11	Roadshow and Entrepreneur Hunting Campaign, National Fair/Export Fair/Divisional Fair/Agribusiness Summit on Women Entrepreneurship (2-3 days), Social Media Campaign, Award Giving Ceremony (National and Divisional), Public relation and Media Engagement, AV (OVC), Printing Materials (Flyers/Posters), Festoon and Banner, SMS, Miking etc.	All over Bangladesh	BDT 35,00,000/- (Thirty Five Lac Only)	30 June, 2028

19	Name and Contact Details of Procuring Entity	:	Agency Program Director Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part), Department of Agricultural Marketing, Gabtali Flower Wholesale Market (Level-2), Dipnagar, Gabtali, Mirpur, Dhaka. E-mail: partner.dam@gmail.com
20	Reserved Right	:	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders
21	Procurement Rules	:	The tender will be performed according to the Public Procurement Rules 2008

08/8/2024
Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Faroque
Agency Program Director
Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition,
Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part)

GD-134

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT


শুনো, ধর্ম আর দেশ মিলাইতে যায়ো না।
পরে ফুলের নাম কি দিবা ফাতেমা চূড়া?
মাওলানা ভাসানী

PHOTOS: **SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED**

Students paint over vandalised walls, GIVE DU NEW LIFE

In the absence of the city's usual traffic management, a group of students have taken matters into their own hands. From directing vehicles to repainting the urban landscape, the young students are transforming Dhaka's streets in unexpected ways.

Different student-led groups have taken the initiative to revitalise the walls of Dhaka University and adjacent areas.

The walls have now come alive with powerful messages, rebel poetry, and artistic expression. While the quality of the graffiti varies, the shared purpose is clear– to inspire change and elevate the spirit of the community.

Some murals display technical mastery, their striking visuals demanding attention. Others convey raw emotion through simple strokes. One graffiti painted in the Dhaka University area is particularly striking, as it conveys the message of a secular Bangladesh. The graffiti features quote from Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani. Another graffiti has been dedicated to the martyr Abu Sayed, who was brutally killed by police during the quota reform protests.

Together, these student-led initiatives have transformed the cityscape, injecting it with renewed energy and purpose.

বল বীর
চির উন্নত
মম শির

NEWS

Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee no more

FROM PAGE 7

Known for his simple lifestyle, Bhattacharjee breathed his last at the two-bedroom flat at Palm Avenue from where he once ran the state. His organs will be donated for medical research as per his wishes.

His body will be kept in the CPM headquarters for his followers to pay respects and the last journey will take place tomorrow.

An alumnus of Presidency College, Kolkata, Bhattacharjee was a school teacher before he joined politics full-time. After serving as an MLA and a state minister, he was elevated to deputy CM before Basu stepped down in 2000. As chief minister, he led the CPM to Assembly poll victories in 2001 and 2006.

During Bhattacharjee's tenure, the Left Front government adopted a relatively open policy towards business as compared to the Jyoti Basu regime. Ironically, this policy and land acquisitions related to industrialisation paved the way for the Left's stunning defeat in the 2011 election.

Trinamool Congress, which won just 30 seats in the 2006 elections, led the movement against the Tata Motors plant in Singur. Eventually, in 2008, Ratan Tata decided to shift the project to Gujarat and cited the movement by Mamata Banerjee as the reason. This was a big setback to Bhattacharjee's government. Equally damaging was the violence in Nandigram where police action against a group protesting against land acquisition for a chemical hub project led to 14 deaths.

Banerjee's Trinamool Congress reaped the political dividends of the anti-incumbency of the Left Front rule and the negative perception of the state government's land acquisition policies, winning 184 seats in the 2011 election. The Left's defeat in the 2011 polls started a decline it is yet to recover from. Over the next decade, the BJP overtook it as the main opposition and the Left now is reduced to a minor force in the state it once ruled unchallenged for decades.

President Droupadi Murmu wrote on X, "Saddened to learn that former West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee is no more. The veteran leader personified dignity and was an epitome of principled politics. He will be long remembered for dedication to the welfare of the people of West Bengal. My heartfelt condolences to his family and followers."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was saddened by the news. "He was a political stalwart who served the state with commitment. My heartfelt condolences to his family and supporters. Om Shanti," the PM tweeted.

In her condolence message, Mamata Banerjee said she had a decades-long association with the veteran Left leader. "I am very upset. My condolences to Meera di, Suchetan and to all supporters of CPM. We have already taken a decision that we shall give him full respect and ceremonial honour during his last journey and rites," she said.

Leader of the Opposition, BJP's Suvendu Adhikari, said he is "deeply saddened" by the news and expressed his condolences to Bhattacharjee's family and admirers.

Nahid, Asif make history

FROM PAGE 16

the DB office on July 30 protesting their detention and the brutal crackdown on students nationwide.

The student movement soon resonated with the ordinary people and the protest ended the Awami League's rule.

Nahid is a master's student of sociology at Dhaka University. He is also the member secretary of Ganotantrik Chhatra Shakti, a group formed by breakaway members of Chhatra Odhikar Parishad, led by Nurul Haque Nur, a former vice president of Ducsu.

Asif, another coordinator of the quota reform movement, is a master's student of linguistics at the same university.

A friend of Nahid, Asif is the convener of Ganotantrik Chhatra Shakti.

After taking oath as advisers yesterday, both Nahid and Asif said they will now fight for the people's voting rights and work for restoring democracy and eliminate discrimination and injustice from the society.

"People relied on the young people and took to the streets. The young people shed blood and the countrymen also did so. If the people think that the young citizens should take the top positions of the state, the young people would be ready to do so," he said replying to a query.

Nahid said the interim government has been formed with representatives from the young and experienced people from all opinions.

"The participants of anti-discriminatory student movement will not only work in the government but will also remain on the streets. Together, we will lead the country to prosperity.

"The people of Bangladesh have been deprived of voting rights for a long time. The main objective of the interim government is restoring democracy by ensuring voting rights," he said.

It is not possible to ensure a free and fair election unless reforms are made to the structure of the state as well as to the Election Commission, he observed.

Speaking to reporters, Asif said they are ready to take on the challenge to serve as the youngest advisers to an interim government.

"All the state institutions were made dysfunctional under the fascist Awami League government. We aim to eliminate fascism by reforming these institutions."

Though the major political parties could not unseat the autocratic government in the last 17 years, the students managed to do so in just four days after announcing their one-point demand, he said.

"We will prove that the members of the younger generation can also serve the country with passion and patriotism," Asif said.

Stern action to be taken to end anarchy

FROM PAGE 16

IGP Mainul Islam on Wednesday evening instructed all police personnel to return to their respective police lines, offices, and barracks within 24 hours to ensure law and order.

Yesterday morning, the Police Headquarters said people from all walks of life, leaders of political parties, and students were extending all-out support to ensure the safe return of police members to their work.

Witnesses said a small number of police personnel were seen going to Rajarbagh Police Lines in plain clothes. They were seen signing on the attendance book and chatting.

However, they were not going to their posts, like in police stations, out of security concerns.

While visiting police stations and other police establishments in Dhaka, other metropolitan cities, and districts, it was found that most stations hardly had any police personnel in them.

There were almost no police activities as the police personnel either did not join work or had left the station out of security concerns.

A few policemen reported to police lines and offices of different police units in Dhaka, Chattogram, Sylhet, Rangpur, six districts under Rangpur range, Bogura, Noakhali, Shariatpur, Gazipur, Kushtia, Jhenidah, Patuakhali, Noakhali, Jamalpur and Natore, report our correspondents.

Students and Ansar members were seen guarding the capital's Mirpur and Pallabi police stations, which were attacked by mobs. Only eight Ansar members were seen guarding Kafrul and Bhashantek police stations.

Many policemen are scared of being at the receiving end of public wrath and further violence since the police had opened fire on protesters and people at the fag end of Sheikh Hasina's rule.

More than 400 people, including police personnel, were killed in violence centring protests by students against discrimination.

Sources said many police personnel loyal to the outgoing Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Habibur Rahman were yet to join work. Many of them were in hiding, they claimed.

A superintendent of police said some top police officials ordered the firing on people and that they were still conspiring to prevent police personnel from returning to work.

"They have taken refuge in secure locations but are spreading propaganda to instigate police personnel. These culpable officers should be brought to justice," the SP told The Daily Star.

A constable, preferring anonymity, said, "We are in a dilemma over joining work and risking our lives."

Another official said, "We do not want to be used for political purposes. We want reforms to the police force and a change of uniform before we join."

Police personnel of different ranks met the IGP and made various proposals yesterday. The IGP assured them of taking steps in the shortest possible time.

Later, an eight-member committee, led by Assistant Inspector General Nazmul Islam, was formed for making recommendations on compensations for the families of deceased policemen, treatment of the injured, and implementations of other proposals.

The committee is composed of an SP of police hospital, an additional SP, an assistant commissioner, an inspector, a sergeant, a sub-inspector, and a constable.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Retired Police Officers Welfare Association yesterday said, "Some unprofessional and biased policemen on behalf of the dictatorial government have tortured, oppressed and killed innocent students." It demanded that those be brought to book.

The association also appealed to the people to create a safe working environment for the police force.

It demanded reforms to the force and urged policemen to return to work.

Modi offers best wishes to Yunus

FROM PAGE 16

interim government.

"India remains committed to working with Bangladesh to fulfill the shared aspirations of both our peoples for peace, security, and development."

Sheikh Hasina resigned on August 5 and went to India following an uprising.

During Hasina's 15-year rule, Bangladesh and India deepened relationship, especially in the areas of connectivity. Bangladesh supported India in ensuring security in India's northeast.

In the wake of Hasina's resignation, India sealed its borders with Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, our New Delhi correspondent reported that hours before members of the interim government took oath, India said it was too early to evaluate the situation in Bangladesh and the "interests and well-being" of the people of Bangladesh is New Delhi's primary concern.

At a weekly media briefing in New Delhi, Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for Indian Ministry of External Affairs, was repeatedly asked what stand India would take on the interim administration in Bangladesh.

He said, "As far as we are concerned, the expectations and the interests of the people of Bangladesh are on top of the mind of the government and the people of India."

Earlier in the day, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy spoke to Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and discussed the developments in Bangladesh and West Asia.

"Received a call from UK Foreign Secretary @DavidLammy today [Thursday]. Discussed the situation in Bangladesh and West Asia," Jaishankar said in a post on his official X.

Asked at the media briefing if the issue of Hasina's possible asylum in the UK figured during the conversation, Jaiswal said, "I don't have any information on that."

Responding to a query about Hasina's plan and whether she would continue to stay in India or seek asylum in any other country, he said, "We don't have any update on that. It is for her [Hasina] to take forward her plan."

On attacks against the minorities, their properties, and temples in Bangladesh, Jaiswal said India has noted how individuals and groups under different banners have come out to protect the minorities and their set-ups.

"It is the responsibility of every government to ensure proper law and order and take care of its people. The restoration of law and order as early as possible is in the interests of both the people of Bangladesh and the region at large."

The Indian visa centres in Bangladesh will open once normalcy returns, he said.

Jaiswal said India is in talks with Bangladesh authorities about the safety and security of its high commission and assistant high commissions so that they can discharge their work.

CHILD RIGHTS

Safeguards under the Children Act 2013

QUOTA REFORM MOVEMENT IN CONTEXT

BIVA MOSHARRAF & H.M. FAZLE RABBI

Amid the quota reform protests, A juvenile court in Dhaka rejected bail petition of a 17 year old Dhaka College student Hasnatul Islam Faiyaz. Below is a general analysis on the legality of treating children in contact and in conflict with law.

Firstly, coming to the question of who a child is, section 4 of the Children Act 2013 categorises a child as anyone under the age of 18, which is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (CRC). The preamble of the Act also mentions that it was enacted to implement the CRC.

Section 3 of the Act stipulates that *"notwithstanding anything contained in any other existing law, the provisions of this Act shall prevail."* This overriding clause ensures the Act's primacy over all other laws concerning offenses committed by children and other specified matters within the statute. Moreover, section 17 of the Act provides that in any case where a child in conflict with the law or a child in contact with the law is involved under any law whatsoever, the children's court shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to try that case. The reality, however, paints a far different picture, showcasing a glaring disconnect between our law's noble intentions and its actual implementation.

The rights and legal safeguards guaranteed under the 2013 Act and the CRC are there for a reason. When these principles are violated, it serves as a stark reminder that even the most well-crafted laws are powerless without genuine commitment to their enforcement.

When a child is tried at a normal court as opposed to a children's court, it constitutes a direct violation of the Children Act. Additionally, by not transferring the case to the children's court, the court fails to adhere to the essential principles of child protection and justice. The overarching aim of the Children Act is to ensure that children in conflict with the law are treated with dignity and provided with the opportunity for rehabilitation, rather than punitive measures designed for adults. It is important to adhere to this principle as general courts are ill-equipped to address the unique needs and rights of a child.

JUVENILE
JUSTICE

Section 28 of the Act explicitly prohibits the publication of any material that could identify a child involved in judicial proceedings. Under the provisions of the Children Act 2013, in any case under trial before the children's court involving a child, no photograph or description of the child may be published in any print or electronic media or on the internet that could directly or indirectly identify the child, unless the court determines that such publicity will not harm the child's interests. Needless to say, when a child is not tried at a children's court, this provision is not complied with. As a result, it not only contravenes the protections outlined in the Children Act but also raises significant concerns about the treatment and rights of children within our legal system.

Our High Court Division (HCD) and Appellate Division (AD) of the Supreme Court play a crucial role in protecting children's rights and overseeing the juvenile justice process in the country. In numerous cases, the Supreme Court has actively contributed to the development of children's rights and ensured awareness of the judicial process. In *Ridoy* v *State* (Criminal Appeal No. 7533), the HCD, presided over by Justice Enayetur Rahim and Justice Mostafizur Rahman, identified several conflicting legal provisions between the Children Act 2013 and other significant legislations. These conflicts pertain to the cognizance, trial procedures, and bail hearings. Recognising the critical need for a coherent legal framework, the HCD recommended amendments to the Children Act 2013 to eliminate these contradictions and ensure the protection and fair treatment of minors. The HCD also issued seven directives for magistrates and children's courts to follow until the recommended legislative amendments are enacted to protect children's rights in the judicial system and highlight the judiciary's proactive role in advocating for legal reforms to improve child justice in Bangladesh.

In *The Children Act 2013: A Commentary,* Honorable Justice Imman Ali observed, *"No child shall be arrested or detained under any law relating to preventive detention".* At first, as per section 44(3) of the Act, the real age of the child needs to be determined. The same provision also mentions that no child shall be hand-cuffed. Section 52 of the 2013 Act highlights the need for special care and treatment of minors and outlines specific provisions for granting bail to children. If a non-adult is produced before the children's court, the court has to release him on bail or order his custody/detention in a safe home or a Child Development Centre.

The rights and legal safeguards guaranteed under the 2013 Act and the CRC are there for a reason. When these principles are violated, it serves as a stark reminder that even the most well-crafted laws are powerless without genuine commitment to their enforcement.

The writers are both graduates from Department of Law, University of Dhaka.

RIGHTS AND REMEDIES

Revisiting the Quota Reform Movement and police powers

BIBSWAN DEB BISWAS NIR

Amidst the turbulent circumstances arising from the recent Quota Reform Movement, a significant number of allegations were brought against the actions of the police forces. Along with the reports of deaths and injuries, overwhelming number of arrests and detentions without prior explanation, stops and searches, and custodial tortures were reported this time, while the authorities consistently branded such actions as countermeasures to internal political turmoil.

Bangladesh's legal system guarantees transparency, accountability, and preservation human rights, including the prohibition of torture and the protection of privacy. However, the police conduct reveals a gap between the law and its enforcement, emphasising the vital need for reform to preserve fundamental rights and uphold the rule of law.

Firstly, Section 54 and 167 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (CrPC) gives wide powers to the police to arrest anyone without warrant or even prior explanation, on reasonable suspicion concerning a cognizable offence. However, Article 33(1) of the Constitution contradicts (and prevails over) that by putting a condition that an arrestee should be informed of the grounds of arrest in the shortest time possible.

In the landmark *BLAST v Bangladesh* (2003) case, the High Court Division pointed out these nuances between provisions of the Code and the Constitution. The court further addressed the vague ambit of 'concerned' cognizable offence under section 54 of the Code, which in turn gives unhindered power to a police officer to arrest any person under arbitrary suspicion, even potentially going against the fundamental rights of life and liberty. The court also chalked out guidelines for the police including necessitating disclosure of identity while making arrests, explaining grounds of arrest and letting the accused to consult a suitable lawyer.

In *Saifuzzaman v State* (2004) the court further scrutinised arresting powers by emphasising on expressions such as 'reasonable suspicion' and 'credible information' and providing guidelines on documenting the arrest to stop harassment of the citizens. Therefore, the recent instances of indiscriminate arresting are not lawful as not only they were against the demonstrators' constitutional right to life, liberty, as well as peaceful assembly, but also the relevant laws hold the police accountable for their deeds.

Secondly, there has been complaints and reports against the police and its detective branch regarding torture on the detained demonstrators. In fact, police here have a long-standing vile culture of inflicting third degree method on detainees. Not only does the law not empower them to do so, but also the law condemns such actions punishable under the Bangladesh Penal Code.

Our nation has both domestic and international obligations to condemn custodial torture. Article 35(5) of our Constitution prohibits torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment or treatment to any person. Bangladesh has also ratified the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) on 5 October 1998, which codifies an absolute prohibition of torture. While Article 2(2) of the CAT prohibits every kind of justification of torture, despite the existence of exceptional circumstances such as war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, Article 13 of the same empowers the victims to such torture with the right to complain and fair trial before competent authorities.

Furthermore, despite the protection provided by Section 197 of the CrPC to public officials like the police from getting convicted for their offences committed in an official capacity, Section 12 of the Prevention of Torture and Custodial Death Act, 2013 renders such excuses for torture inadmissible. This provision is in conformity with Article 2(2) of the CAT. Further in compliance with the CAT, the act prescribes trial and punishment for the delinquent officers under Sections 14 and 15. Ultimately, the plea of a superior's order or internal political unrest is not a defence for delinquent officials liable for custodial torture.

Thirdly, albeit the practice of stop and search being a commonplace for police all over the globe and statutes like The Police Act 1861, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance 1976, the Penal Code 1860 and even the Digital Security Act 2018 in fact vest the police in Bangladesh with such power, police operating phone searches on students and pedestrians is a gross misuse of this power and violation to the constitutional right to privacy.

Article 43 of our Constitution provides safeguard against forceful house entry, search and seizure and ensures privacy of correspondence and other means of communication. Article 17 of the ICCPR also enshrines this right. Although reform to police search and seizure is still a long overdue in Bangladesh, constitutional remedy is available to the victims under Articles 44 and 102 of the Constitution.

Bangladesh's legal system guarantees transparency, accountability, and preservation human rights, including the prohibition of torture and the protection of privacy. However, the police conduct reveals a gap between the law and its enforcement, emphasising the vital need for reform to preserve fundamental rights and uphold the rule of law.

The writer is student of law, University of Dhaka.

LAW OPINION

ICJ's Advisory Opinion on Israel's Presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

ARAFAT IBNUL BASHAR

On July 19, 2024, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued its advisory opinion in Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The proceeding was initiated by the General Assembly of the United Nations, under the Resolution A/RES/77/247 adopted on December 30, 2022.

ICJ was requested to render an opinion regarding the legal consequences arising from the ongoing violation by Israel of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, from its prolonged occupation, settlement and annexation of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, and regarding how the policies and practices of Israel affect the legal status of the occupation, along with the legal consequences that arise for all States and the United Nations from such status. ICJ was of the opinion that Israel's continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is unlawful, that Israel is under an obligation to bring to an end its illegal presence in the occupied territory as rapidly as possible, that Israel is under an obligation to cease immediately all new settlement activities, and to evacuate all settlers from that territory, and that Israel has the obligation to make reparation for the damage caused to all the natural or legal persons concerned in that territory.

ICJ put the responsibility upon the General Assembly and the Security Council to determine the modalities required to ensure an end to Israel's illegal presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and ensure the full realisation of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. A corresponding duty was placed on all states to cooperate with the United Nations to put such modalities into effect. While it is not for other states to solve this conundrum, they are now under an obligation to cooperate to bring an end to this crisis through lawful means, and also not to render any aid or assistance to Israel that may help maintain the unlawful situation. This position is consistent with the court's previous observations in the *Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius* opinion and the *Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* opinion. Again, the court has called upon the states to distinguish in their dealings with Israel between its own territory and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, i.e., the obligation to abstain from treaty relations, or entering into economic or trade dealings, or establishing diplomatic missions with Israel, or to take steps to prevent trade or investment relations that assist in the maintenance of the illegal situation created by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory or a part thereof.

State cooperation to promote and ensure self-determination in this case, might require that the UN put forth the modalities for such purpose through the General Assembly and the Security Council. And the major obstacle behind this is the veto politics in the Security Council. However, in the past, the Security Council did prohibit aid or assistance in maintaining the illegal apartheid regime in South Africa and Portuguese colonies.

States could, however, halt and prohibit economic and trade activities that occur in the occupied territory. Some recent official documents procured from the Dutch Foreign Ministry expressed doubts that almost every Israeli business has a connection to the illegal settlements. Thus, through necessary implications, it can be understood that sanctions and countermeasures, including economic restrictions, arms embargoes and the cutting of diplomatic and consular relations, should be the immediate response of the states if Israel fails to immediately and unconditionally withdraw armed forces and close military administration in the occupied territory. In recent times, cases have been filed in Netherlands and Germany regarding export of arms and military equipment. The Dutch Appeals Court already ordered the government to block the delivery of parts of fighter aircrafts to Israel over concerns of violation of International Law. Pursuant to the observation of this advisory opinion, states must do their part to bring an end to this prolonged illegal occupation.

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Much depends on how we act today

Nation expects a lot from the interim government

We extend our heartiest welcome to the interim government that begins its journey during an extraordinary time in our history. The swearing-in of advisers last night comes days after a student-led mass uprising overthrew the iron-fisted government of Sheikh Hasina, creating a power vacuum that led to a massive disruption in law and order, civil service, and not to mention, public life. We expect things to get back to normal now that the interim government has taken over the reins, and chief adviser Nobel laureate Dr Mohammad Yunus' first message after landing in Bangladesh on Thursday was one of hope, reconciliation, and peace—exactly what citizens need at this moment.

Given the unprecedented violence that occurred both before and following Hasina's fall on Monday, the first order of business for the government would be to de-escalate any potential for further violence. Dr Yunus, too, stressed that restoring law and order will be his first priority. For that, it is crucial to ensure that the 2-lakh-strong police force are back on active duty, resolve the complications facing them, and operationalise all police stations destroyed or damaged in post-uprising attacks. Overhauling and depoliticising the force should also be on the agenda. Moving ahead, we would like to see police in control of regular law enforcement activities, without needing to depend on the army or other security forces.

The last four weeks of deadly clashes and vandalism have also caused massive economic losses, disruptions, and reputational damage for Bangladesh. The economy was already in a tough spot before the start of all this, so putting it back on a path of recovery will be a top priority. Two crucial sectors disrupted by the recent events are import-export and garment industry, which must be resumed in full swing. The government should also focus on containing the inflation, stabilising exchange rates, and bringing down prices of food. As things stand, our economy is disastrously unbalanced, with persistent inequalities and a stagnant private job sector. These too must be addressed.

The education sector is another main victim of the recent unrest. What the students have done in recent weeks will be remembered for generations, but as future nation builders, we need them back in classrooms. We urge the new administration to ensure that all schools, colleges and universities are reopened immediately. But it is vital that the crippling influence of party-based student politics is not tolerated again, especially in public university campuses and dormitories. The government should also focus on ensuring good governance. Which means unravelling the politicisation of key institutions like the civil service, judiciary, and electoral system, and establishing a culture of professionalism and accountability. On the diplomatic front, the government should signal to all our partners that all bilateral and multilateral relations will be normalised without delay.

Finally, we should start the process of establishing justice for the over 500 people who died in recent weeks. We need closure but also reconciliation so we can move ahead as a nation. It is time for an international independent commission headed by the UN to conduct thorough and impartial investigations into each of the killings. In the end, however, it should lead to us mending the flaws in our political system. Otherwise, the huge sacrifices that went into making this uprising successful will have been for nothing.

A tragic assault on our history

We must collectively protect our cultural, historical assets

The recent torching of Bangabandhu's historic residence, destruction of many archaeological sculptures, statues, and murals, and attacks on cultural hubs are distressing, to say the least. After the resignation of Sheikh Hasina and amid nationwide protests on Monday, a mob decided to take their rage out by vandalising various structures, including Bangabandhu's house turned museum. With the burning down of this historic building, the country lost a great deal of artefacts of national significance.

We understand that people experienced a range of emotions after the end of Awami League's 15-year-long authoritarian rule. Many were nursing pent-up anger and resentment for the injustices done to them. But to direct their anger at objects and memorials that had nothing to do with their suffering is unacceptable, especially when they are of such great value. Moreover, Bangabandhu's house in Dhanmondi was not a symbol of AL; it signified our nation's independence struggle, which we must not dishonour. Similarly, the Shadhinata Sangram Bhashkarjo at Fuller Road, the sculpture of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin in Mymensingh, and the Mujibnagar Liberation War Memorial Complex in Meherpur were all symbols associated with peoples' struggle for independence, equality and justice. As we begin a new journey in pursuit of the same objectives, the loss of these national assets is a tragedy indeed.

Alongside these, miscreants also damaged or destroyed the Madhusudan De Smriti Sculpture in front of Madhu's Canteen in Dhaka University, the 144-year-old Venus sculpture in front of Shashi Lodge, and many other structures. They also attacked Joler Gaan frontman Rahul Ananda's home, a once vibrant cultural hub, and looted and burnt the place. Fortunately, Ananda and his family were left unharmed. However, the destruction of his collection of over 3,000 musical instruments, which he had designed and made over the years, is a huge loss. These attacks have truly dampened the celebratory mood of the country, and risks pushing it back towards the same senseless violence that the students sought to save us from.

We condemn all such attacks disrespecting our nation's culture and history. We hope that the people will once again come together to prevent any more national and cultural assets from being damaged or destroyed. And we hope that once the interim government starts working, those responsible for these attacks will be held accountable. Meanwhile, we urge the law enforcement authorities to step up their efforts to prevent any further acts of vandalism.

The main duty of this interim government is to hold the election, but before that reforming our state institutions is necessary. PHOTO: ZIAUDDIN SHIPLU

The opportunity to reform Bangladesh must not be wasted

Anu Muhammad
is former professor of economics of Jahangirnagar University.

ANU MUHAMMAD

We Bangladeshis have a special strength, which enables us to form mass uprisings and put up resistance. There is a saying that rebellion against injustice is justified. In Bangladesh's context, we can also say that rebellion against injustice is irresistible. Time and again, our people have risen against injustice, bringing victory. Then again, what is worrying is the defeat of the purpose that follows. We saw this in 1971, in 1990, and it is a matter of concern even now.

This movement was definitely a mass uprising. Though students started it, we saw everyone taking part in it—from children to the elderly. Parents of the students joined in, their teachers joined in; journalists, lawyers and ordinary citizens in the cities as well as remote areas joined in, coming out to the streets. This is a remarkable feat. A key characteristic of this uprising was that it was not led by any political party, unlike the movements in 1969, 1971 and 1990. Political parties did support the movement. The left democratic parties expressed support from the beginning. The BNP said they supported the movement a lot later on. But none of them were the leaders. This movement was truly led by the students, under the banner Students against Discrimination. This name is beautifully significant. The fascist government had spread its roots so deeply that no other political party deemed it possible to remove it. The strength that was displayed by these inexperienced students to make it possible, I think, is the inherent strength of Bangladesh.

In every country, whenever an autocracy falls, severe uncertainty follows. This is because they ruin the state institutions and the democratic system. Then different groups emerge and try to fulfil their own agendas. We witnessed this on August 5 as well. When we learnt at around 2pm that Sheikh Hasina was leaving, the leaders of Students against Discrimination could not be found for a few hours. This created a situation of vandalism, looting, and communal violence, which continued well into the night. There was no leadership, no direction. The military assumed authority, but it didn't seem like they had any preparation to deal with a situation like this. As a result, we witnessed events that marred this victory.

The presence of the leaders of Students against Discrimination, who later that night called for stopping the violence, destruction, and communal violence, is very important. The Bangladesh that we dream of is where our state institutions function properly, a democratic system is in place, and everyone plays their roles responsibly. Ensuring this is critical.

During the 90s, we know that the three coalitions each had an outline, none of which was realised. Jamaat-e-Islami was also in the movement with Awami League and BNP, after which it became a partner of BNP. We now know how many actions took place against our national interest. In 1991, under Prof Rehman Sobhan, a task force was created in which a lot of influential thinkers participated and planned how the future of Bangladesh would be. I had written a book in Bangla with a summary of it. None of this was paid heed to by the subsequent elected political parties. The path created by military dictator Ershad was followed by the same parties that brought him down. Neither the education and health goals nor the national interests were realised.

Whenever the people, whose power is needed and used to bring down an autocracy, are deprived of their power and rights, it leads to an accumulation of powers who work for their own benefits. This includes both national and international groups. We experienced this in the 1990s and should remember that now.

Now, the Students against Discrimination are a key stakeholder. Along with them, the Left Democratic Alliance, the teachers' network, journalists, lawyers, writers, artists, and singers all participated. I believe all of these groups need to play an active, united role now. Otherwise, our state will be occupied again. Now is the time to prevent that occupation.

Already signs of occupation are visible. We were all surprised to see the meeting at Bangabhaban with the president, the current legal head of the nation, where there were no representatives from the Students against Discrimination. Instead, political parties who had nothing to do with the movement, and already have accusations of wrongdoing, participated in the first crucial meeting. It was said that meetings would be held with the political parties, but the Left Democratic Alliance, which has always been active in this movement, has not been called to these meetings. I believe these deviations are a reason behind the unwanted events that occurred across the country.

There were three kinds of attackers. The first were those who have suffered over the past decade and more. They have been outraged for a long time. The state should have given them hope that those who had done them wrong would be brought to justice. The second kind were opportunity seekers. They look for any opportunities to loot and gain monetary benefits. We see them even when there is a road accident. Some people go forward to help any victims, and there are some who go to steal. The third were communal attackers who committed heinous crimes on vulnerable communities that sent a wrong message to everyone about the movement, those who participated in the movement, and about Bangladesh as a whole to the international community.

The student leaders have spoken out against it. We, from the Bangladesh University Teachers' Network stood up, and later on, some political parties also sent positive messages. I am assuming that no further events that can stigmatise this movement will take place anymore.

The prime minister has resigned, the ministers' cabinet has been dissolved. The president has dissolved the parliament. He will now give another election. According to the constitution, he is the main person, the last resort. To support him in doing this, for the time being, he can form a government. The constitution does not have any restriction against that. This interim government is very important for changing the future of Bangladesh. The main duty of this interim government is to hold the election. But there are some requirements that need to be fulfilled before that, which are reforming our state institutions. Our government agencies are flooded with corruption. Even the court is now dysfunctional.

The constitution itself needs reform. It has become autocratic, power-centralised, and communal. Anyone who comes to power with this constitution will turn into an autocratic government. So, to reform the constitution, a national consensus needs to be created. Then there are the megaprojects and mega-development trends in the financial sector. It is a centre of mass corruption. Our rivers, water bodies, forests, and hills are occupied. In the name of development, there were many projects such as Rampal and Rooppur power plants that are just bad for us and our future. Wealth has been centralised. A small segment of the population has accumulated a massive amount of wealth. All of this should be investigated. At the very least, the pathway must be created to change the trend of all our economy, resources, and political power going into the hands of a few. We cannot go back to the same place we just came from. We cannot allow a repeat of all of this considering the hundreds of students and innocent people who have given their lives to get us this opportunity now. So reforming the state institutions, the constitution, and the policies needs to be done.

But I do believe that the aspiration that was behind this movement cannot be fulfilled without the active participation of Students against Discrimination and everyone who stood beside them. If the ordinary citizens stop their own active participation, thinking that some people are going to go forward and develop and reform the country, that will be a mistake. This thought has doomed us in the past. Awami League, BNP, Jatiya Party—everyone has shown that when in power, they completely forget the people's interests. So we have to be alert to ensure it ourselves.

Those who want to gain personal benefits and want wealth centralisation actually want an autocratic government in Bangladesh. It becomes easier for them to deal with this government for the sake of their own financial gains. This type of government benefits some foreign parties too. We know India has multiple projects in Bangladesh that are harmful to us, such as Rampal and some projects by Adani. Russia has given us loans for Rooppur. We cannot even properly fathom what kind of catastrophe we are heading towards because of this. The US has multiple contracts about oil that don't go in our favour. China's big contracts with Bangladesh lack clarity. So, for these national and international groups, it is better if there is no democratic system in place in the country. No matter how much these countries preach about democracy, when it comes to other nations, they will always prioritise their own financial benefits over democracy.

Among the powerful stakeholders in the Bangladesh government, we find brokers for China, the US, India, and Russia.We just don't see a person truly representing Bangladesh's interests. Now is the time to truly find people who will negotiate with all these parties with Bangladesh's interests in mind over everything else. We have to work towards this and ensure it ourselves. These are long-term objectives. For the interim government, the first thing to ensure is the security of the nation's citizens, especially all the minorities including Hindus, the Indigenous groups, and even the Muslim minorities such as Ahmadiyyas.

No one should come under attack because of their identity either. Just because someone is a police member, does not mean that attacking them is justified. It doesn't mean they are a wrongdoer. Just because someone is a member of the Awami League doesn't mean they are a bad person. Those who have committed crimes, of course, need to be brought to justice. The police who have shot at the students, of course, need to be tried in court. But based on the identity of the police or Awami League, they cannot be attacked outside of the law. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's statue or his museum should not have been vandalised. This was not the goal of the movement. The goal was to remove the autocracy and the torture of a corrupt system. It is the responsibility of us all to ensure the movement isn't tarnished by actions like these.

This is a big responsibility on the shoulders of the students. The 2018 Road Safety Movement by students of schools and colleges was an amazingly joyous event for us to witness. The disciplined manner in which the students conducted the movement and the courage that they showed us then truly gave us faith in them. They have grown up since then, and a lot of them are now here in this movement. A lot of the seniors that we had before had perhaps given up, sold themselves, turned into fossils, let go of themselves. It is now the rest of us seniors' duty that this youth doesn't lose track. We should guide them with whatever resources we have and the organisations that are in place to support them. We should stand beside them to make sure that the blood that has been shed by the youth, and the friends that they saw die beside them, is not wasted by destroying the opportunity they have created by sacrificing so much.

In every country, whenever an autocracy falls, severe uncertainty follows. This is because they ruin the state institutions and the democratic system. Then different groups emerge and try to fulfil their own agendas. We witnessed this on August 5 as well. When we learnt at around 2pm that Sheikh Hasina was leaving, the leaders of Students against Discrimination could not be found for a few hours. This created a situation of vandalism, looting, and communal violence, which continued well into the night. There was no leadership, no direction.

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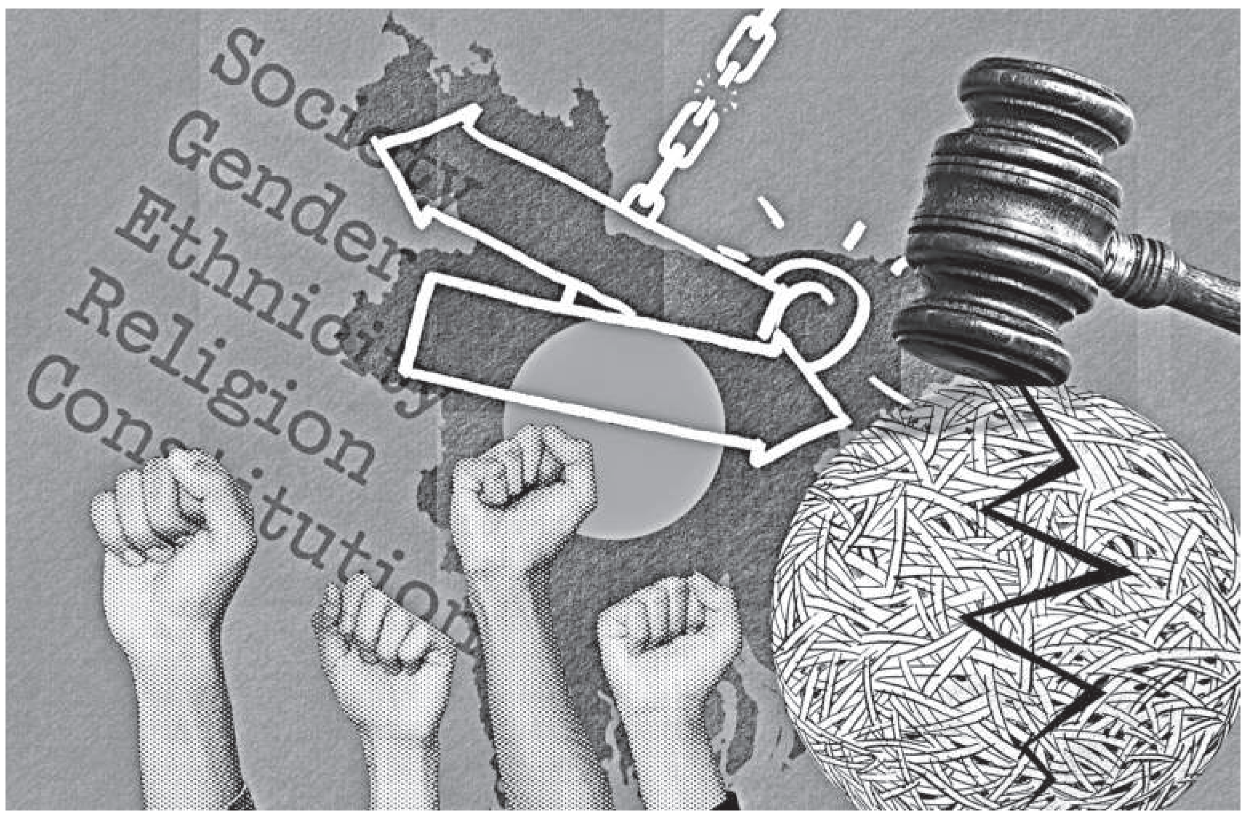

VISUAL: **ANWAR SOHEL**

How to get out of the constitutional gridlock

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PSYMHE WADUD

Bangladesh witnessed arguably the largest student movement since its independence and as an outcome, the government led by the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is no more in power. However, in the face of what we can term as "lack of objectively suitable conditions for dialogue," the transition is not going to be plain sailing. The lack of forethought for a smooth transition has also brought forth further violence, mayhem, and terror. Indeed, the process of transitioning into a new order is hanging in the balance. The interim government is expected to hold general elections for a smooth democratic transition. There is also this "academic" debate going on, on having a constitution-making or constitution-amendment episode—I seek to address both.

One of the motivations behind the discussion on a new constitution-making episode is the fact that the "interim" government will have to operate beyond the constitutional scheme since the current one does not endorse an interim or caretaker government. Indeed, an interim government will have to be seen as a revolutionary breach of legal continuity. However, installing an interim government will potentially be a difficult, if not impossible, academic and judicial exercise. In any case, in order to come out of the gridlock, I do not see a new constitution-making episode as a solution, particularly because, among others, there was no such demand emanating from the movement to begin with. With the parliament now dissolved, there is no possibility of forming an interim government with members of the parliament either, as was suggested by some scholars.

Social movements are now a growing area of study within the paradigm of constitutional law. Particularly, in studying constitutionalism in Asia, social movements are relevant more than ever. Such movements often frame their strategies based on the texts of the constitution or to address the disharmony between the constitution and the lived realities of citizens at large (the Indian movement against 2019 Citizenship Amendment Act and the 2004 South Korean sex workers' movement are illustrative here). At times, social movements call for instating or redefining new structures or institutions within the constitution (the 1993 Indian movement for recognition of local self-government is an example). At other times, movements call for new and different interpretations of the texts of the constitution; differently again, certain movements call for revision or annulment of constitutions as well.

Ours was not a movement that explicitly relied on the texts of the Constitution of Bangladesh, although it did touch upon equality clauses. The hasty (judicial and executive) outcome of the movement has not really been a reflection of substantive equality (as it gravely fell short on protecting rights of women, Indigenous minorities, persons with disabilities, and gender-diverse populations). However, the initial demands did not call for something that goes or operates beyond the constitutional scheme. Later claims were political in nature (including the last one calling for the resignation of the then incumbent prime minister); however, those too did not call for remaking the constitution or challenging its basis.

It is reductionist to try to underscore an "essentialised" or "one true" purpose underlying social movements. Just as social movements are discursive bottom-up instances of mobilising, so are the purposes for social movement actors' engagement. However, at least the demands that surfaced were not ones that disregarded the constitutional framework. The movement certainly made certain "academic" discussion points to come to the front (including constitutional provisions to ensure firmer checks and balances among different institutions and limiting prime-ministerial/political term limits). These may in the longer run prove to be immensely useful to prevent perpetuation of power; however, whether they require a new constitution-making episode is an important question to ask.

Indeed, bringing in a new constitutional framework for a society divided along multiple axes (including religion, ethnicity, sex, and gender) requires time, labour, and massive efforts. In the current world order, wider public involvement is also deemed key to a legitimate constitution-making effort which can prove to be immensely cumbersome in the present context in Bangladesh. Also, in the shifting geopolitical reality, it may also prove to be difficult to withstand the pressure of interested international actors. Any haste would only prove to be counterintuitive in the longer run, particularly for failing to adequately address and accommodate concerns and needs of the non-dominant voices and minority communities.

The interim government may decide to go for substantive constitutional amendments for a smoother transition into and functioning of democracy. However, in such cases, there will be legitimate constitutional questions as to how an unelected "interim government" can exercise "derivative constituent power" and go on to amend the constitution. To stretch the revolutionary breach of legal continuity to such a point may also fail to withstand the constitutional test of time. Therefore, it would ideally be wiser to leave the task of amending the constitution to the next government. Alternatively, the interim government may formulate certain principles to potentially guide the constitution amendment episode by the next parliament.

In any case, for an inclusive society, I would want a steadfast commitment to secularism and as a feminist, commitment to equal rights between men and women in all spheres of life—instead of "in all spheres of state and public life" as appears in Article 28(2) that (unknowingly perhaps) calls for a rather conservative interpretation of women's right. However, for these changes in particular, amends need to be brought to the entrenchment of the basic structure doctrine (i.e., unamendability of certain provisions and parts of the constitution)—the process of doing so is the subject of a different constitutional discourse altogether.

We also need to be mindful to one of the core demands of the movement: of bringing an end to the culture of impunity and expediting the adjudicating processes for the brutal killings committed over the quota reform movement. Any attempt to bring in a new constitution would inevitably delay the process of serving justice to all those who were killed and tortured—both at the hands of the state apparatus and at the hands of other political elements at play.

Polities need to have certain non-negotiable ideals and values to stand by—the overwhelming deaths, including of children, over the quota reform movement, made me realise this the hardest way. Experiencing two nights without a government with news of condemnable brutality against police personnel, vandalisation of Hindu minority houses, and arson violence on Bangabandhu's historic Dhanmondi 32 residence, made me internalise it. My major scholarships have so far only critiqued our constitution. Nonetheless, the constitution we have does seem like a document that we should stand by firmly. Let's not lose out on the "constitutional moment" we had in 1971; because indeed, creating one is not as easy as we may theoretically assume. Also, a constitution can only do so much—we need a system that works.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Will the interim government be truly anti-discriminatory?

Muktasree Chakma
is an Indigenous feminist working in the women and Indigenous rights sector internationally.

MUKTASREE CHAKMA

The state reform that is being undertaken now needs to ensure recognition of Indigenous populations. The Indigenous populations have been involved in liberation struggles from long before, whether it was the Liberation War of 1971 or the fight against the British or even before the British empire came into existence. They were also a part of the movement against authoritarianism. For ages, Indigenous populations and their contributions have been invisibilised. We do not want to go through such invisibilisation again. We want to be recognised by our identity and for our achievements.

At this critical juncture of this country, we need to ask if the 2024 protests are truly respectful of differences and anti-discriminatory, or if this is turning into a majoritarian movement. In 2018, we saw that with the abolishment of the quota system, the quota for Indigenous populations was wholly cancelled as well by the former prime minister. Then, in 2024, we saw that the 5 percent quota reserved for ethnic minorities was reduced to 1 percent by the court.

In addition, another matter worrying the Indigenous people is the upsurge of violence directed towards minorities since the resignation of the former prime minister. We urge the student movement to be cognisant of the insecurity facing minorities in the country and provide support.

One of the convenors, Asif Mahmud, used the words "*khudro nigoshti*" when describing indigenous communities. We expect our convenors to understand the politics behind words such as *prantik jonogoshti*, *upojati*, tribal, and other such terms to describe ethnic minorities, and we expect them to realise that the use of such terms is not befitting of any group that claims to be anti-discriminatory.

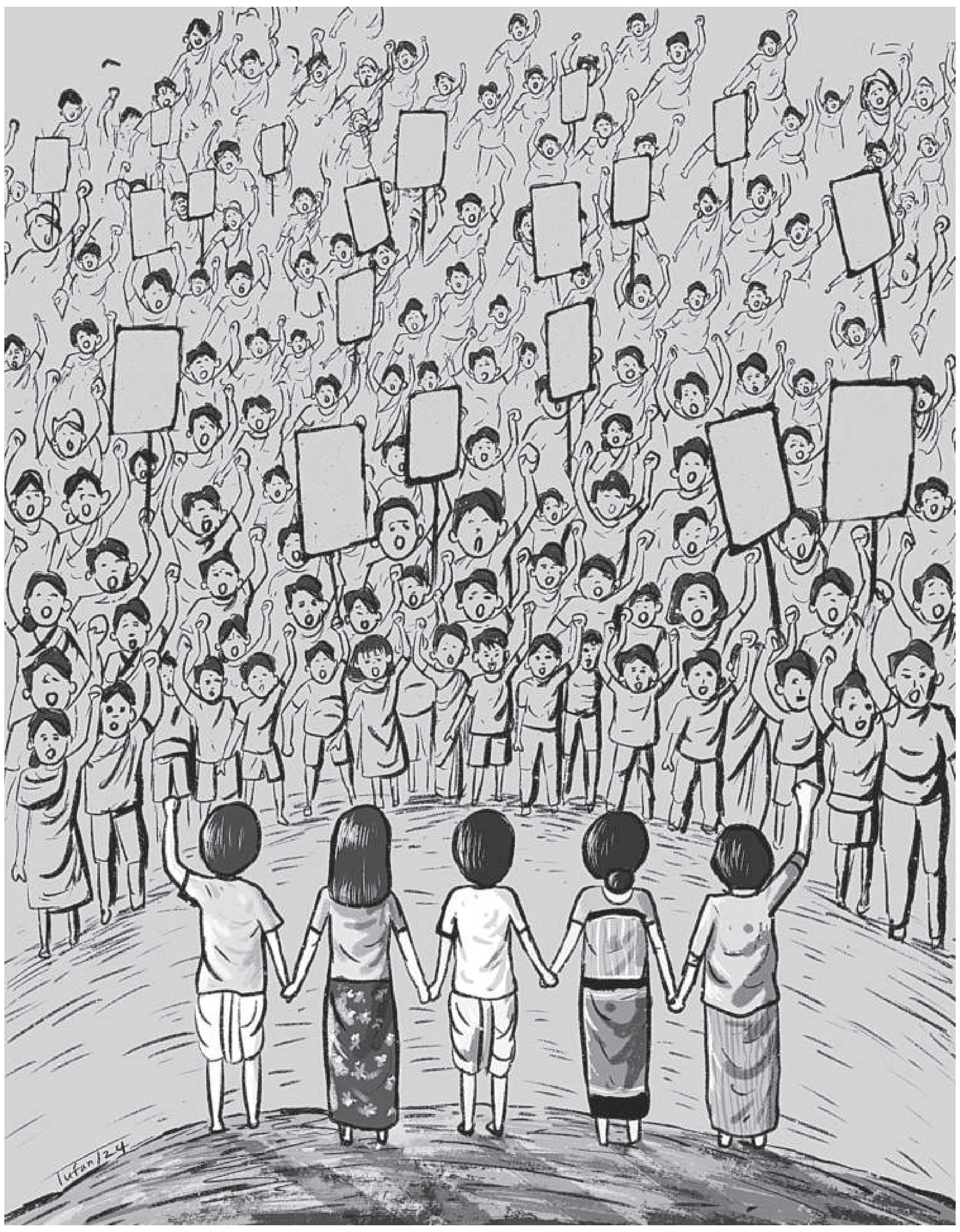
Another grievance among ethnic minorities has been the fragmentation in our regional parties since August 5. As many may know, in Chittagong's JSS (Jana Samhati Samiti)-backed Hill Women's Federation, two women have been kidnapped allegedly in the presence of the army. We can thus see that at each point, the repercussions of student politics deserves our attention. We need to ensure that this does not devolve into a majoritarian movement that is not inclusive in reality. Student politics is clearly showing us the direction of state reform, and when discussing state reform, we need to ensure that all groups are represented regardless of their positionalities. Under no circumstances can this be a state for one ethnicity, one language, and one religion.

We expect that those who form the interim government will respect difference–be it of gender, religion, ethnicity, or language. I also hope that instead of being swayed by popularity, the interim government acknowledges and appoints the people who have actually worked for different communities and brings their concerns forward. There are many different lists currently making rounds on social media. Some of those people have played a significant role in militarisation of hill districts. Moreover, there are also people in those lists who have attempted to enforce Bengalisation. We do not want such people. In my view, people who cannot value differences should not be in the interim government.

Another matter that I believe requires emphasis is freedom of speech. In the myriad mediums for expressing our thoughts, whether on social media, a conference, or any form of gatherings, we would often engage in self-censorship. I expect the interim government to give us the space to speak, show our stories and share about our lives, livelihoods, and experiences, even if we are in disagreement.

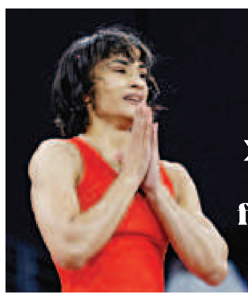
We saw a massive corrosion of freedom of speech under the past regime. Under no circumstances do we want this from the interim government. At the very least, give us the platform to speak. It is not necessary for us to always be in agreement, nor do we accept the interim government or any government to always accept our demands. We do not want any erosion in the opportunities for speaking. We have seen that it was not only the government restricting freedom of speech, but also workplaces that required employees to not post on social media regarding certain matters. We do not want such monitoring and surveillance, and we wish for the interim government to take steps to ensure this.

Lastly, I want the interim government to be inclusive, so that each group has representation, whether it is women or the students, the disabled community, or the Indigenous populations.



The importance of giving Indigenous people a platform cannot be understated.

ILLUSTRATION: **TUFAN CHAKMA**



"Mother wrestling won against me, I lost. Your dreams and my courage are shattered," India's Vinesh Phogat wrote on social media platform X on Thursday as she announced her retirement from wrestling, a day after being disqualified from the women's 50kg competition at the Paris Olympics for being overweight for the final.

Jayawickrama charged over match-fixing approach

REUTERS

Sri Lanka spinner Praveen Jayawickrama has been charged with three counts of anti-corruption code breaches for failing to report an approach to fix matches and obstructing an investigation, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said on Thursday.

Jayawickrama, 25, was approached to fix international matches and was asked to approach another player to fix matches in the 2021 season of the Lanka Premier League.

"Reportedly, the Sri Lanka bowler was found to have deleted messages related to the approach for conducting corrupt practices," the ICC said in a statement. "Jayawickrama has 14 days from 6 August 2024 to respond to the charges."

Sri Lanka Cricket and the ICC have agreed that the ICC will take action concerning the charges.

Jaywawickrama made his international debut in April 2021, taking 11 wickets in his first test against Bangladesh. He has not played for Sri Lanka since June 2022.

Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and pacer Khaled Ahmed look on as right-arm quick Nahid Rana holds on to a catch during a practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Even though the national team's official training camp for the upcoming two-Test tour of Pakistan later this month is yet to begin, Shanto joined training with players in and around the national team and the 'A' team, who will be leaving for Islamabad tonight for a series against Pakistan 'A', including two four-dayers and three one-day matches this month. [Bottom] Anamul Haque Bijoy, who was named Bangladesh 'A' captain for the longer format matches against their Pakistani counterparts, and Zakir Hasan, part of the 'A' team, also trained with the squad yesterday.

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

Tigers hopeful of beginning practice from tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national cricket team's official practice session was deferred to Saturday, a Bangladesh Cricket Board official told The Daily Star yesterday.

The training camp was initially scheduled to begin yesterday but that did not stop a few of the players from turning up for individual sessions. Test skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto was amongst the few who trained alongside members of the Bangladesh 'A' team.

"We will take a break on Friday and hope to begin practice on Saturday. There were no security concerns. The national team stars and A team players for the second four-dayer practised together today [Thursday]," a BCB official told The Daily Star.

The national team's panel of foreign coaches, including head coach Chandika Hathurusingha, did not attend the session as BCB exercised caution before beginning the official training camp.

While the national team's foreign coaches were unavailable, Richard Stonier, Bangladesh U-19s' strength and conditioning coach, oversaw the players' training session at Mirpur's Academy Ground.

Several embassies had advised their nationals to limit their movement due to the current unrest in the country following Sheikh Hasina's resignation as prime minister.

Bangladesh 'A' vow to keep focus on cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

As the country deals with the aftermath of the fall of the Awami League government, the Bangladesh 'A' team have the difficult task of blocking out all outside noise and focus on their upcoming tour of Pakistan.

"Our job is to play cricket. The players, the coaching staff are all professionals. We are more focused on our matches than anything else," Bangladesh 'A' coach Mizanur Rahman Babul told reporters in Mirpur on Thursday.

The first batch of Bangladesh 'A' team contingent, which consists 15 cricketers and nine support staff, will leave Dhaka today to play two four-day and three one-day matches against Pakistan A, scheduled to be held at the Islamabad Club.

They were initially scheduled to travel to Islamabad on August 6 but after Sheikh Hasina resigned as prime minister on August 5 in the face of widespread protests, their travel plan as well as the fixtures had to be deferred.

According to the revised schedule, the first four-day game will begin on August 13 and the second one on August 20. The red-ball matches will be followed by three one-dayers on August 26, 28 and 30 respectively.

Players like Mushfiqur Rahim, Mominul Haque and Mahmudul Hasan Joy, who are expected to feature in Bangladesh's upcoming two-Test series against Pakistan later this month, will also accompany the team as they will feature in the opening four-day match.

The remaining members of the second four-day squad and one-day side will travel to Pakistan next week.

Although Bangladesh 'A' team's last phase of preparation was hampered quite a bit by the unrest, Babul claimed that they are well-prepared for the tour.

"We were waiting for a tour like this for a long time. We were in Chattogram for a long time, preparing for this 'A' team tour. We practiced there and played two practice matches.

"I don't think the current situation will affect us too much. Everyone is ready for these matches. Everyone is eager for it, the players were always asking when they will leave for the tour, the BCB has always said that the tour will happen. So, we are ready for the tour," Babul said.

Meanwhile, Anamul Haque Bijoy, who will lead Bangladesh 'A' in the four-day series, sees the team's tour as an opportunity for the national team players to prepare for their upcoming Test series against Pakistan.

"This tour will be followed by our national team's tour. I think the preparation will help the national team a lot. We know that the wickets in Pakistan mainly help the batters. Both teams get equal opportunity. Bangladesh are going to play Tests after a long time. I hope we will achieve fruitful results from the series," he concluded.

SHORT CORNER

Sacked for helping protestors, Bithi gets reinstated

Former cricketer and coach, Arifa Jahan Bithi, confirmed that she has been reinstated as the manager of the women's cricket team in the Rangpur division. Bithi was dismissed from her position after helping the students in their anti-government movement that led to the fall of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who fled the country after resigning on August 5. "Alhamdulillah, I have been given back my post as the manager of Rangpur divisional women's cricket team with dignity," Bithi confirmed through a Facebook post on Wednesday.

Messi to miss fifth consecutive match for Miami

Lionel Messi will miss a fifth consecutive match for Inter Miami on Thursday when the defending champions host Toronto in a Leagues Cup knockout-round opener. The 37-year-old striker suffered a right-ankle injury in Argentina's victory over Colombia in last month's Copa America final. Miami coach Gerardo Martino said on Wednesday that Messi had continued to improve but had not practiced with his Inter teammates since suffering the injury and would not be in the lineup against the Canadian club.

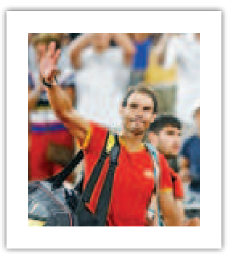
Read full stories on The Daily Star's website

Rafael Nadal to skip US Open

REUTERS

Rafael Nadal has decided not to participate in the US Open due to concerns about his fitness, the Spaniard said on Wednesday while adding his next event will be the Laver Cup in late September.

For Nadal, who won the most recent of his four US Open titles in 2019, this marks the second consecutive year he has sat out the year's final Grand Slam.



"Writing today to let you guys know that I have decided not to compete at this year's US Open, a place where I have amazing memories," the 38-year-old said in a post on X.

"I will miss those electric and special night sessions in NYC at Ashe, but I don't think I would be able to give my 100% this time."

Nadal added that his next event will be the Sept. 20-22 Laver Cup in Berlin.

The 22-times Grand Slam winner competed at the Paris Olympics where he lost to eventual champion Novak Djokovic in the second round of the singles competition and reached the quarterfinals of the doubles with Carlos Alcaraz.

"Rafa is a tremendous champion and he will be missed during the 2024 US Open by the fans and all those associated with the tournament," US Open Tournament Director Stacey Allaster said in a statement.

"We wish him all the best and look forward to having him back at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center."

The 38-year-old former world number one has fallen to 159th in the rankings after struggling for two years with injuries and against Djokovic at the Olympics, suffered one of his worst losses.

Sabina, Maria excited for WCL journey

SPORTS REPORTER

Having completed the official formalities with Royal Thimphu College (RTC) FC of Bhutan, four of the country's top female footballers are poised to make history in the inaugural AFC Women's Champions League (WCL).

More Bangladeshi female footballers could have participated if local clubs had entered the competition, but Sabina Khatun, Maria Manda, Monika Chakma, and Ritu Porna Chakma earned an unexpected chance to play due to their strong performances in recent FIFA friendlies against hosts Bhutan.

Ahead of their scheduled departure on August 12, Bangladesh captain Sabina and her deputy Maria expressed their excitement about participating in the AFC WCL, vowing to give their best for RTC FC.

"Firstly, I want to thank the RTC team for giving us the opportunity to play in the AFC Women's Champions League," Sabina told The Daily Star yesterday. "It's a great moment for us to be part of such a prestigious tournament. We will do our best for them," she added.

For Maria, get the chance to play in this tournament has been "a significant achievement" in her career after making the cut in the national side.

"For Monica, Ritu, and me, this is our first time going abroad to play for a club. It's an amazing feeling to get such an opportunity outside the country.

"I had hoped to play abroad, and some of us once received offers from Indian teams, but we couldn't make it happen due to international commitments," said the midfield orchestrator.

In the preliminary stage of the competition, RTC FC will play their Group D opener against Bam Khatoon of Iran on August 25 before taking on Kitchee SC of Hong Kong on August 28 in Thimphu.

Maria is expected to pair with Monica at the heart of the midfield, replicating the chemistry they've developed while playing for the national team over different age levels.

"We definitely have a good understanding, but RTC will decide who plays where. Both of us will try our best to be in the starting eleven and put on a good show for RTC," said Maria.

Initially, Bangladesh's football authorities were reluctant to release the four players for RTC, preferring they focus on preparations for the upcoming SAFF Women's Championship in October. However, they eventually agreed, allowing their key players to gain valuable experience ahead of the regional women's football extravaganza.

In light of SAFF Championship preparations, Sabina said, "Only four of us will play in the Champions League, but we have to think about the whole Bangladesh team. I think we should play at least three or four practice matches ahead of the SAFF Women's Championship."

Real Madrid's most sought-after player in recent times, Kylian Mbappe joined Los Blancos' training session for the first time on Wednesday since being presented as the club's new number nine at the Santiago Bernabeu in mid-July. It was the reigning La Liga and Champions League winners' second training session of the pre-season, in which, according to the club's statement, the full squad had reported to training with the return of the players who had taken part in Euro 2024 this summer.

PHOTO: **REAL MADRID**

CITY EDITION

Star SPORT
DHAKA FRIDAY AUGUST 9, 2024, SRABAN 25, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

SPORTS 18-1
Paris Olympics
Live from 11:30 am
T SPORTS
The Hundred
London Spirit vs Manchester Originals
Live from 11:30 pm
GT20
Brampton vs Montreal
Live from 9:00 pm
Mississauga vs Toronto
Live from 2:00 am (Saturday)

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

MARATHON SWIMMING
Men's 10km
11:30 pm
SPORT CLIMBING
Men's Boulder and Lead
4:35 pm
CANOE SPRINT
Women's Double 500m Sprint
4:40 pm
WOMEN'S KAYAK
Double 500m
5:00 pm
MEN'S KAYAK Double 500m
5:20 pm
MEN'S CANOE Single 1000m
5:40 pm
Rhythmic **GYMNASTICS**
Individual All-Around
6:30 pm
Diving
Women's 3m Springboard
7:00 pm
TABLE TENNIS
Men's Team Match
7:00 pm
WEIGHTLIFTING
Men's 89 kg
7:00 pm
MEN'S FOOTBALL
France vs Spain
10:00 pm
ATHLETICS
Women's 4 x 100m Relay
11:30 pm
Women's Shot Put
11:37 pm
Men's 4 x 100m
11:47 pm
Women's 400m
12:00 am (Saturday)
Men's Triple Jump
12:13 am (Saturday)
Women's Heptathlon 800m
12:25 am (Saturday)
Women's 10000m
12:57 am (Saturday)
Men's 400m Hurdles
1:45 am (Saturday)

Indonesians celebrated their country's first Olympic gold medal in a sport other than badminton, won by Veddriq Leonardo in the inaugural men's speed climbing event in Paris on Thursday. Veddriq climbed to a personal best time of 4.75 to beat Chinese rival Wu Peng by just two hundredths of a second on the 15-metre wall. PHOTO: AFP

New Zealand's Lisa Carrington led her women's kayak four crew to the gold medal at the Vaires-sur-Marne Nautical Stadium on Thursday, increasing her personal Olympic tally to six golds and one bronze with another stunning performance. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rouwendaal dedicates gold to her pet dog Rio

AFP, *Paris*

Sharon van Rouwendaal of the Netherlands made a late surge to win gold in the women's 10k marathon swimming at the Paris Olympics on Thursday.

Van Rouwendaal won with a time of 2hr 03min 34.2sec, with Australian Moesha Johnson taking silver 5.5 seconds behind and Italy's Ginevra Taddeucci claiming bronze.

The race took place on the River Seine with the Eiffel Tower in the background after water pollution levels were deemed sufficiently safe for competition.

It was the third straight Olympic medal in the event for Van Rouwendaal, the gold medallist in Rio in 2016 and silver medallist in Tokyo, who made her move past Johnson around a pilon coming under the Pont des Invalides bridge.

The 30-year-old Dutchwoman, who was also world champion in Budapest in 2022, never looked back as she powered her way to the finish.

Van Rouwendaal said her victory was dedicated to the memory of her pet dog Rio, who died in May.

"Swimming is my everything, but so was he. When there were complications in May, he died shortly afterwards. Then my world stood still and I wanted to swim for him one more time," she said.

"My father said: swim one more time and do it for him. And that's what I did," she added.

It was a crushing blow for Johnson who had led from the half-way mark onwards and was out front with the top three having broken well clear of the field going into the final lap.

But the Australian said she had no regrets about her approach to the final stages when victory slipped from her grasp.

Formidable Spain aim to deny France

AFP, PARIS

Thierry Henry's France are hoping a home crowd at the Parc des Princes can drive them on to win Olympic men's football gold but an impressive Spain side will attempt to deny them in Friday's final.

Henry, a France legend as a player, has led his country to the brink of their second football gold medal, 40 years after they won the title in Los Angeles.

That victory over Brazil came just a few weeks after the full French national team lifted their first major trophy by beating Spain on home soil in the final of Euro 84.

Just like then, the nations will meet at a packed Parc des Princes on Friday when a hostile home support will try to spur France on to victory.

They have already effectively fulfilled their objective by being guaranteed a medal, with Henry succeeding in moulding together a cohesive team after initially being met by a series of rejections from clubs unwilling to release their players.

They won all three group games without conceding a goal, before seeing off Argentina 1-0 in a fiery quarter-final and then showing great character to come from behind and beat Egypt 3-1 after extra time in the last four.

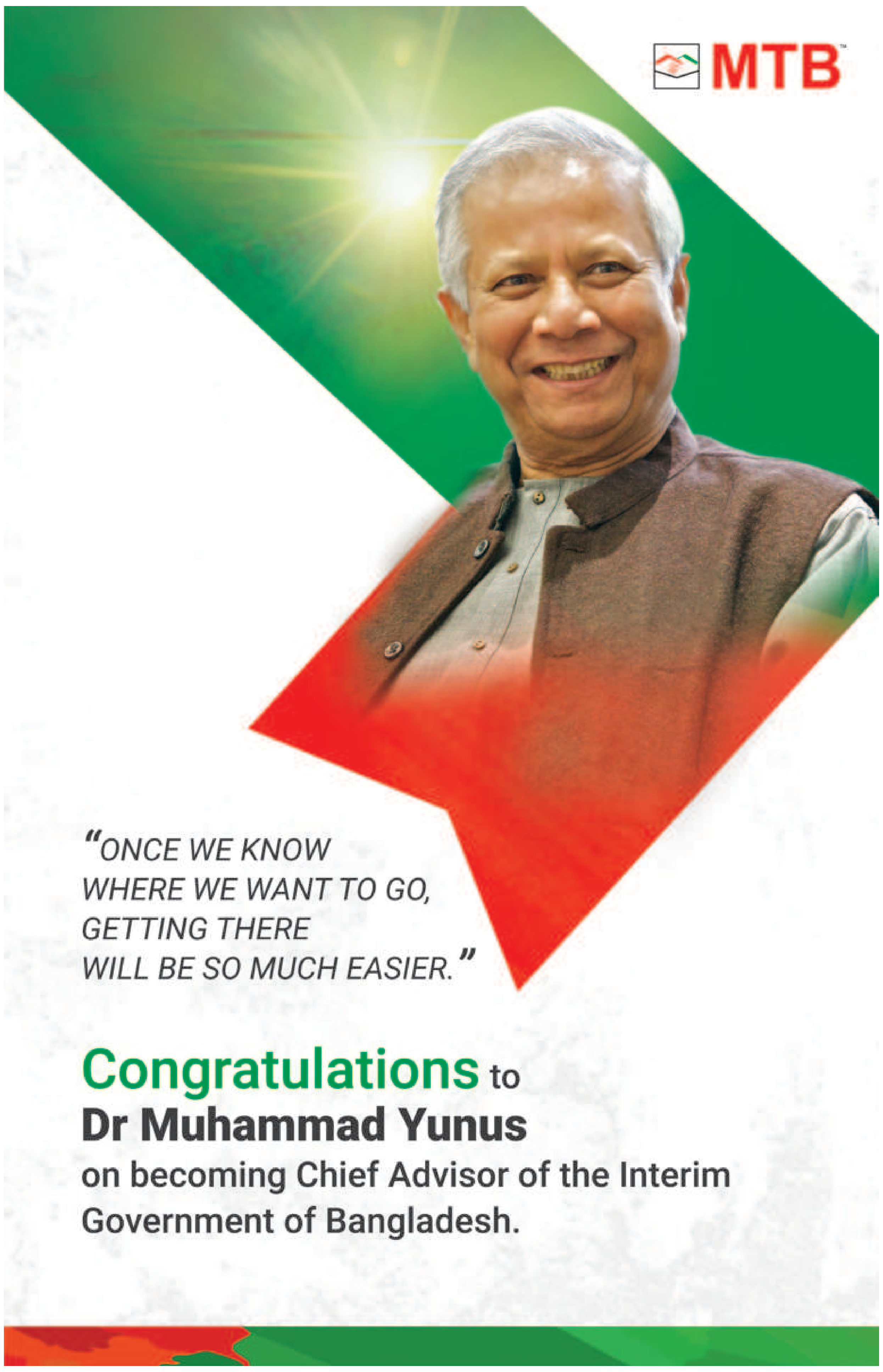
This may be the Paris Games, but so far Henry's team have played all their matches elsewhere around the country, in Marseille, Nice, Bordeaux and Lyon.

Spain, meanwhile, began their campaign with a 2-1 win over Uzbekistan in Paris. After easing past Japan in Lyon in the last eight, they had to come from behind to beat Morocco 2-1 in their semi-final in Marseille.

That victory in front of a hostile crowd, achieved thanks to goals by the outstanding Barcelona midfielder Fermin Lopez and the substitute Juanlu Sanchez, will give Spain confidence that they can handle the crowd and the pressure in the French capital.

Coached by the former Atletico Madrid defender Santi Denia, Spain are aiming for a second men's football gold after triumphing in Barcelona in 1992 with a squad including Pep Guardiola and Luis Enrique.

They were silver medallists in Tokyo three years ago, but Spain's record more recently across the board in international football is remarkable.



MTB
"ONCE WE KNOW WHERE WE WANT TO GO, GETTING THERE WILL BE SO MUCH EASIER."
Congratulations to
Dr Muhammad Yunus
on becoming Chief Advisor of the Interim Government of Bangladesh.

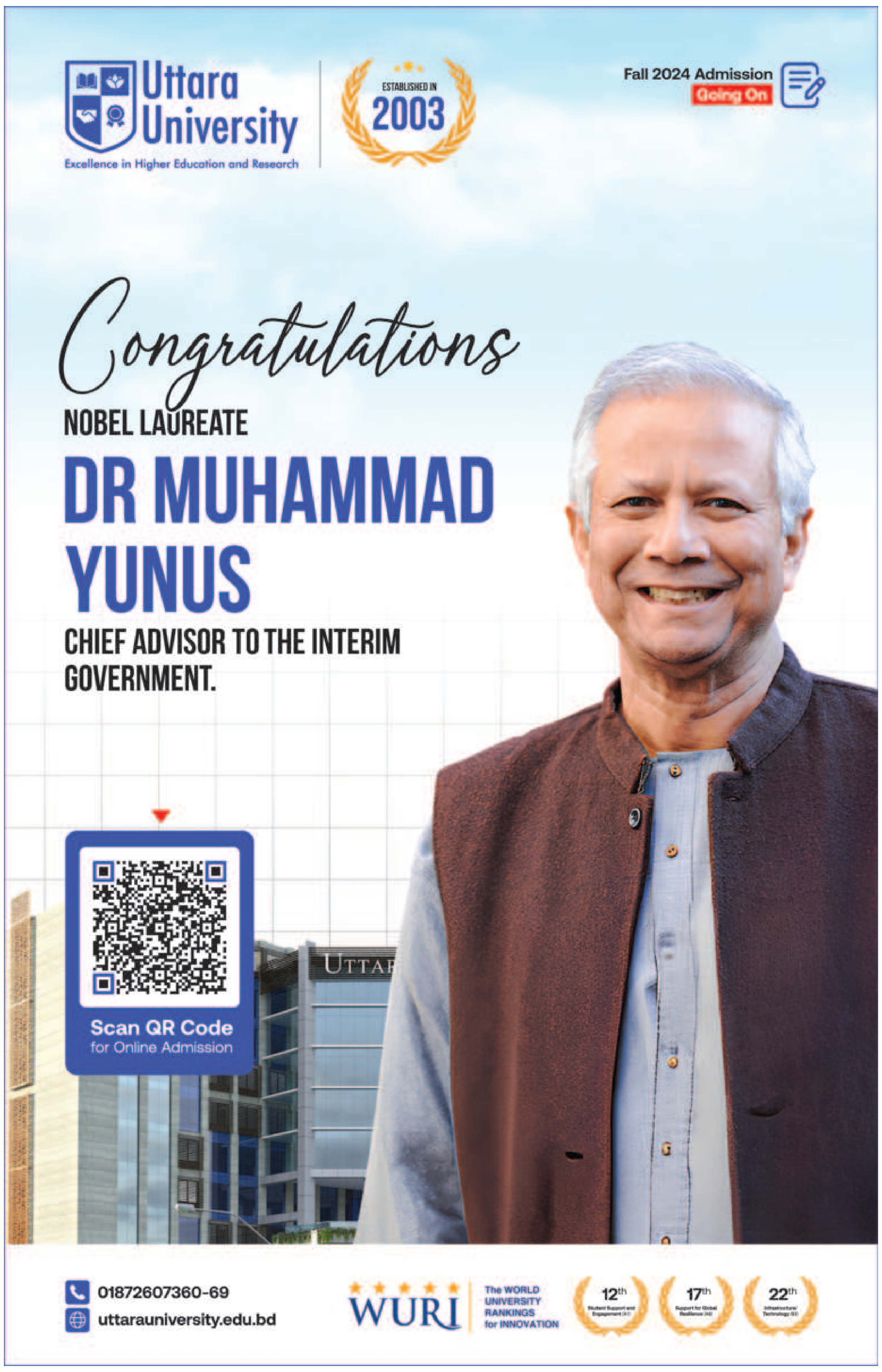


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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Two female students stop a biker for violating traffic rules and driving without a helmet near the foreign ministry building in the capital yesterday afternoon.

Modi offers best wishes to Yunus

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has offered best wishes to Bangladesh's newly sworn-in interim government chief Prof Muhammad Yunus.

"We hope for an early return to normalcy, ensuring the safety and protection of Hindus and all other minority communities," he said in an X post yesterday, minutes after the oath-taking ceremony of the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Stern action to be taken to end anarchy

Decide chiefs of 3 services, police, Rab in meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As only a handful of policemen returned to work, the chiefs of police and Rab yesterday met the chiefs of three services and discussed making all police stations operational within 24 hours with the help of army personnel.

Despite a call by newly appointed inspector general of police to join work, only a small number of police personnel reported to duty yesterday. Many were waiting for security assurances before returning to their posts.

Yesterday's meeting decided to take strict measures to stop anarchy, arson, and destructive activities across the country, according to the ISPR.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Nahid, Asif make history

Never before students became interim government members

MUNTAKIM SAAD *and* **RAFIUL ISLAM**

History was made yesterday when two university students in their mid-20s were sworn in as the youngest ever advisers to an interim government.

Nahid Islam and Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, both aged 26, are students of Dhaka University. They are also involved in student politics.

The two brave young men along with a few other determined students led the quota reform protests since July 1. The protests soon spread across the country and eventually turned into a mass upsurge. It forced Sheikh Hasina to resign as prime minister and flee the country on August 5.

However, continuing the movement was an uphill task for them as they had to endure torture after being picked up by law enforcers last month.

Nahid and Asif along with four other protest organisers were taken into custody by the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police. They started a hunger strike at

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Artists repair damaged Zainul sculpture

P5

The opportunity to reform Bangladesh must not be wasted

P12

40 Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes across Gaza

P6

অভিনন্দন
অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকার

এক নতুন বাংলাদেশ গড়ার প্রত্যয়ে শপথ নিলেন অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের মাননীয় প্রধান উপদেষ্টা ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস ও তাঁর উপদেষ্টা মণ্ডলী।

আল-আরাফাহ্ ইসলামী ব্যাংকের পক্ষ থেকে নতুন এ সরকারকে জানাই আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন ও শুভকামনা।

আল-আরাফাহ্ ইসলামী ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
aib Al-Arafah Islami Bank PLC.

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এই শুক্র ও শনিবার আমাদের নেটওয়ার্কে
সবার জন্য ইন্টারনেট ফ্রি
ভোর ৬টা থেকে সন্ধ্যা ৬টা পর্যন্ত
• কোনো রিচার্জ লাগবে না • শুধুমাত্র ৯-১০ আগস্ট ২০২৪ এর জন্য প্রযোজ্য

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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Students' reps to work with ministries

Decides first meeting of advisers

BAHARAM KHAN

The interim government led by Prof Muhammad Yunus plans to engage more student representatives to assist the advisers and make efforts to immediately improve the law and order situation.

The students are likely to be appointed as "assistant advisers" or something similar, officials said, adding that the details of their involvement in the government would be finalised later.

"The student representatives of the movement will be involved with the advisers in carrying out ministry duties," Syeda Rizwana Hasan told reporters after an unscheduled meeting of the advisory council yesterday, the first day of the government.

"Everyone wants reforms to the system. But people from all walks of life must be consulted before doing that. We will discuss the matter with representatives from all professions, including journalism," said the adviser to the environment, forest and climate change ministry.

The meeting was held in the afternoon at Chief Adviser Prof Yunus' current residence, the state guest house Jamuna in the capital. Earlier in the day, the cabinet division distributed portfolios among the chief adviser and advisers.

Nahid Islam, who was given the charge of telecommunications ministry, said, "The decision to engage more students has been made so that the students can give input and know what the ministries are doing.

"The students have a voice now and they are advocating for state reform. We believe the general public will continue to have faith in young leaders."

The 26-year-old Dhaka University student said the student protests culminated in a mass uprising, resulting

KEY PRIORITIES

- Immediately restore law and order
- Proper trial of all killings
- Review Cyber Security Act

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Chief Adviser to the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus along with his advisory council members pays tributes to the martyrs of the Liberation War by placing wreaths at the National Memorial in Savar yesterday.

PHOTO: **PID**

Police back to stations partially

STAR REPORT

A total of 361 out of 639 police stations in the country partially resumed operations yesterday after a three-day halt, thanks to the assistance of the armed forces and Border Guard Bangladesh.

General diaries were filed and some internal works were completed at the police stations. However, police did not start patrolling and managing traffic as of yesterday.

The police stations that were vandalised and set on fire during the recent violence across the country have not yet reopened.

Yesterday, many cops were concerned about further violent retaliation from the civilians for opening fire on the protesters under Sheikh Hasina's regime. The Awami League government was toppled on August 5 through a mass uprising, leading to then prime minister Hasina fleeing the country.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Cabinet Division unveils portfolios of advisers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In less than 24 hours after the formation of the Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim government, its sworn-in advisers received their portfolios.

The Cabinet Division published a gazette notification in this regard yesterday morning, announcing the ministry or ministries assigned to each adviser.

The portfolios of the advisers to the interim government are as follows:

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

AFTERMATH OF AL GOVT'S FALL

Minorities faced 205 attacks in 52 districts

Say two organisations of minority communities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two organisations of minority communities reported yesterday that there have been at least 205 incidents of attacks on members of minority communities in 52 districts since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5.

Thousands of Hindu families have become destitute and many temples have been attacked and burned. Numerous women have faced assaults, and there have been murders in several places. Other minorities have also suffered during this period, according to data compiled by the two organisations.

Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council and Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad presented the data in an open letter to Muhammad

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BB governor steps down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdur Rouf Talukder

Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder resigned yesterday, according to an official aware of the development.

The central bank chief sent his resignation letter virtually to the official concerned at the finance ministry. He stepped down citing health reasons, the official said.

The development came four days after

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

UNITED COMMERCIAL BANK PLC | UCB

A new era has dawned, born from unwavering unity and unconditional sacrifice, carrying the promise of peace, hope, and progress. United Commercial Bank PLC extends heartfelt congratulations to all the advisors of the Interim Government led by Nobel Prize Laureate **Professor Muhammad Yunus.**

We are really proud and delighted to become a part of this amazing journey.

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অভিনন্দন

বাংলাদেশের অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন
সরকারের নবনিযুক্ত
মাননীয় প্রধান উপদেষ্টা
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ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস এবং
উপদেষ্টামন্ডলীকে
পূবালী ব্যাংকের
পক্ষ থেকে আন্তরিক

অভিনন্দন ও
শুভেচ্ছা

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No doubt elections will be fair: Khasru

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming the fall of the Sheikh-Hasina-led government a "second independence", BNP's Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday said that there is no doubt that the next election will be free and fair.

"We've achieved independence for the second time with strong support from the people and the international community, especially the United Nations," Khasru told reporters after a meeting with UN Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis at the BNP Chairperson's office in the capital's Gulshan.

After the meeting, Gwyn Lewis told reporters, "The United Nations will continue to assist in the development of Bangladesh under this new interim government until the next election."

She also emphasised investigating all incidents in the last few weeks to understand what happened.

Army deployed in 58 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Army has been deployed in 58 districts and set up 206 camps across the country to provide overall security to lives, properties, and important government installations.

Two teams of law enforcement agencies, led by the army, intercepted escaped prisoners from Jamalpur Central Jail and Chattogram Central Jail on Thursday and yesterday and recovered looted arms and ammunition kept in the jails, said a press release issued by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday.

In addition to preventing multiple incidents of vandalism and looting in different areas of the country, the army thwarted an attack by miscreants on a temple in the Noakhali district to ensure the safety of minorities, the release said.

Additionally, army personnel have been deployed to provide security in the camps of forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals located in Cox's Bazar and are conducting joint patrols with other law enforcement agencies, the release added.

The army has already been deployed in 417 police stations across the country, including 29 police stations in the capital, which will expedite the operation to recover the lost arms of the police, it stated.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

SAVE HINDUS
SAVE BANGLADESHI

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Hundreds of demonstrators gathered in front of the National Press Club yesterday to protest the recent spate of attacks targeting Hindu properties across the country. They urged all conscious citizens to come together to end the violence against Hindu community and help build a nation united in peace and communal harmony.

22 killed as Israel launches fresh assault into Khan Younis

AGENCIES

Israeli troops yesterday launched a new assault into the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, as American, Qatari and Egyptian mediators renewed their push for Israel and Hamas to reach a ceasefire deal.

IDF attacked some 30 sites after issuing new evacuation orders for exhausted residents who have already been displaced multiple times.

Thousands of Palestinians have begun fleeing areas in Khan Younis since Thursday, carrying essentials like small gas cylinders, mattresses, tents, backpacks and blankets.

Officials from Israel and the United States have said they believe Yahya Sinwar, Hamas' newly named top leader, could be hiding in tunnels under Khan Younis.

The military said yesterday its warplanes struck 30 Hamas targets in the city, including fighters and weapons storage sites. It said troops were searching for Hamas tunnels and other infrastructure while engaging in combat "above and below ground."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office confirmed later on Thursday that it would send negotiators to talks that mediators have called for on August 15, to be held in either Qatar's capital of Doha or Egypt's capital of Cairo.

There was no immediate response from Hamas, which announced Tuesday that Sinwar, the group's leader in Gaza, would replace Haniyeh as the group's top leader.

More than 39,700 people have been killed and 91,722 wounded in Israel's offensive in Gaza. The toll includes 22 deaths in the past 48 hours, according to the Gaza health ministry figures.

Three newspapers halt publication following attacks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Publication of three daily newspapers and a news portal, owned by Nayeemul Islam Khan, press secretary to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, have been suspended for an indefinite period following vandalism at the offices on August 5.

The broadsheets and the portal are daily Amader Notun Shomoy, daily Amader Orthoneeti, daily Our Time and amadershomoy.com. Nayeemul is their emeritus editor.

Saleh Biplob, executive editor of Amader Notun Shomoy and coordinator of the three other organisations, yesterday announced the temporary closure."It is uncertain as to when these will reopen," he said.

The offices located at a building in Tejgaon were attacked and ransacked on August 5, hours after the resignation and departure of Sheikh Hasina.

Biplob said it was not possible to keep the organisations running because of the damage done to the equipment and financial constraints.

Nayeemul was appointed as the press secretary to Hasina on June 6.

Jubo Dal leader hacked to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Jubo Dal leader was hacked to death in the capital's Demra area last night. Abu Saeed, 32, was the convener of ward-67 unit of Jubo Dal.

The duty doctors declared him dead around 11:00pm after Saeed's relatives brought him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Apel Mahmud, uncle of the deceased, said Saeed was a businessman by profession and used to live in Bahirtengra Amtala area in Demra with his wife and one and a half year old son.

"While returning home after a procession in the area this [yesterday] evening, some miscreants attacked Saeed in front of Saruliya Oriental School. They hacked him with sharp weapons," he said, quoting witnesses.

DMCH police outpost Inspector Md Bachchu Mia said there were several stab wounds in Saeed's body. The body was kept at the morgue for autopsy.

Minorities faced

FROM PAGE 1

Yunus, who was sworn in as the chief adviser of the interim government on Thursday.

The letter was unveiled at the Nasrul Hamid Auditorium of Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU).

Nirmal Rosario, one of the three presidents of the unity council, said, the situation was deteriorating and urged the interim government's chief to resolve the crisis by giving it top priority and putting an end to the violence.

"We seek protection because our lives are in a disastrous state. We are staying up at night, guarding our homes and temples. I have never seen anything like this in my life. We demand that the government restore communal harmony in the country."

The open letter welcomed Yunus as the leader of a new era born from the unprecedented student- and public-led mass uprising aimed at establishing an equitable society and reform.

The organisations also offered condolences for the deaths and injuries that occurred during the uprising and demanded that the interim government ensure that the families of the victims receive the necessary support.

"When people's victory is advancing towards its destination, we, with sorrow and heavy hearts, observe that a vested quarter is hatching a conspiracy to tarnish this achievement by carrying out unprecedented violence against minority communities," the letter said.

The ongoing communal violence that started on August 5 has caused widespread fear, anxiety, and uncertainty among minorities in Bangladesh. This unrest has also resulted in international condemnation, the letter added.

"We demand an immediate end to this situation."

The letter said the organisations have tried to inform the president, army chief, protesting student leaders, and political party leaders about the situation, who have also called for an end to such violence.

"But it's a sad truth that the situation has deteriorated further in the last three days."

The letter was signed by Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council General Secretary Rana Dasgupta and Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad President Basudev Dhar.

Kajal Devnath, a presidium member of the unity council, said, "One does not leave their home, temple, or Tulsi tree unless compelled. Many Hindu community members are now taking refuge in others' homes.

"I, too, am forced to stay at a friend's house," he said.

"Those involved in attacking minorities must be brought to justice. If a minority individual is attacked for political reasons, it is still unacceptable. Anyone who commits a crime should be judged, but burning homes and looting will not lead to justice," he added.

Replying to a question, Kajal said the exclusion of readings from other religious texts at the swearing-in ceremony of the interim government's advisory council members contradicts the spirit of the constitution, the Liberation War, and anti-discrimination values.

"We hope that in future state functions, readings from all major religious texts will be included," he added.

Another presidium member, Subrata Choudhury, said, "We've heard about ending attacks on minorities many times before, but we have not seen any effective measures.

"Our national heritage and assets are being destroyed, which is unacceptable."

The event was also attended by another president of the unity council, Professor Neem Chandra Bhowmik, and presidium member Ranjan Karmakar, among other members of the Puja Udjapan Parishad.

DEMOS IN THE CAPITAL

Meanwhile, hundreds of people staged demonstrations in the capital yesterday, demanding that all attacks on minority communities be stopped and the perpetrators be held accountable.

They also demanded that a ministry be formed to establish a minority protection commission and that 10 percent of parliamentary seats be reserved for minorities.

One of the demonstrations was held under the banner of "Conscious Sanatani Citizens of Bangladesh" in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the morning.

Later in the afternoon, several thousand people from another group of minority communities gathered at the Shahbagh intersection to demonstrate.

STUDENTS MEET HINDU LEADERS

A team from the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement visited Dhakeshwari Temple in the capital yesterday and met some leaders of minority groups.

"We spoke with the leaders of the Hindu community and heard their demands," Sarjis Alam, a coordinator of the student movement, said in a statement.

"It is our responsibility now to convey their demands to the interim government."

Cabinet Division unveils portfolios of advisers

FROM PAGE 1

PROF MUHAMMAD YUNUS
Cabinet Division, defence ministry, armed forces division, education ministry, road transport and bridges ministry, food ministry, housing and public works ministry, land ministry, textiles and jute ministry, agriculture ministry, science and technology ministry, railways ministry, public administration ministry, power, energy and mineral resources ministry, shipping ministry, water resources ministry, women and children affairs ministry, disaster management and relief ministry, information and broadcasting ministry, expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry, commerce ministry, labour and employment ministry, cultural affairs ministry, civil aviation and tourism ministry, liberation war affairs ministry, Chittagong hill tracts affairs ministry, and primary and mass education ministry

SALEHUDDIN AHMED
Finance ministry and planning ministry

ASIF NAZRUL
Law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry

ADILUR RAHMAN KHAN
Industries ministry

AF HASSAN ARIFF
LGRD and co-operatives ministry

TOUHID HOSSAIN
Foreign affairs ministry

SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN
Environment, forest and climate change ministry

SHARMEEN MURSHID
Social welfare ministry

BRIG GEN (RETD) M SAKHAWAT HUSSAIN
Home ministry

AFM KHALID HOSSAIN
Religious affairs ministry

FARIDA AKHTER
Fisheries and livestock ministry

NURJAHAN BEGUM
Health ministry

NAHID ISLAM
Posts, telecommunications and information technology ministry

ASIF MAHMUD
Youth and sports ministry

Students' reps to work with ministries

FROM PAGE 1

in the fall of an autocratic regime -- something the political parties failed to do.

At yesterday's meeting of the advisers, it was decided that cases filed against the student protesters and the politically motivated cases would be reviewed.

They also discussed holding trials in a transparent manner for the killings during the movement so that no such incident would recur in the future, Rizwana said.

"There was a long discussion on how to quickly improve the law and order situation. Everything may not be fixed overnight, but maximum effort is being made to this end," Rizwana said.

The home affairs adviser has been working to normalise the situation in consultation with the inspector general of police and other officials, she added.

Minority communities are still being attacked in some places. Religious groups and locals are being engaged to stop this.

"We all should stand by the police. A force cannot function with a broken morale. Our student representatives, advisers, and police will meet soon."

The chief adviser will bring the family members of the victims of violence during the mass uprising to Dhaka and talk to them.

"The government will assist the families bear the expenses for treatment of the injured," she said, requesting information on such victims.

Prof Yunus, Nahid and Asif will go to Rangpur's Pirganj upazila today to visit the family of Abu Sayed, who was killed in police firing during the quota reform protests on July 16.

She promised necessary measures to resume activities of the judiciary as soon as possible in consultation with senior judges and lawyers.

She said the government would discuss making legal amendments, including to the Cyber Security Act, so that such laws cannot be used to suppress dissent and freedom of expression.

She said educational institutions would be reopened as soon as the law and order situation reaches a satisfactory level.

Resuming the HSC exams will be considered after the reopening.

The meeting also discussed resuming financial activities, bringing changes to the top positions in the sector, and making sure businesses can function in full swing.

Asked about the interim government's tenure, she said they would first need to identify the kind of reforms to be made.

"This interim government will take as much time as it needs to prepare for the beginning of a democratic journey."

Talking about the challenges facing the government, Nahid said the students and the general public need to be united in order to rebuild and reshape Bangladesh.

"The system has largely collapsed. It can be rebuilt if the general people work alongside the administration. These challenges can be overcome quickly."

Earlier in the day, Prof Yunus and other advisers placed wreaths at the National Memorial in Savar and the Central Shaheed Minar.

Police back to stations partially

FROM PAGE 1

Police personnel did not show up for work since August 6 as the chain of command in the force broke down after cops were attacked by protesters and mobs during clashes.

Meanwhile, a meeting between senior police officials and the cops staging demonstrations to press home their 11-point demand ended abruptly at the capital's Rajarbagh Police Lines yesterday afternoon after a ruckus broke out.

During the meeting, police personnel expressed their anger and frustration as they put forward their demands, said sources.

The ruckus broke out when newly appointed Inspector General of Police Md Mainul Islam started speaking. At one stage, the IGP and senior officials left the meeting venue.

The protesting policemen said they would not resume work until their safety was ensured. They also called for reforms to the police force, including changing its name and uniform, and demanded the police high-ups apologise to the people for the previous mistakes.

Rab Director General AKM Shahidur Rahman and DMP Commissioner Mainul Hasan, among others, joined the meeting.

Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain, home affairs adviser to the interim government, was supposed to be present at the meeting. However, he could not join.

More than 400 people, including police personnel, were killed in violence centring the Anti-discrimination Student Movement. Videos showed that law enforcers shot unarmed people dead at close range.

The newly appointed inspector general of police on Wednesday asked all police personnel to return to their posts within 24 hours. This call was repeated by the armed forces on Thursday afternoon.

Yesterday morning, 29 out of the 50 police stations in the Dhaka metropolitan area resumed operations.

Visiting Kafrul Police Station around 3:00pm, this correspondent found army personnel were guarding the entrance. The officer-in-charge and several other policemen were present.

"We have started working on a limited scale. We will resume full operations soon. Many of our colleagues, who reside in nearby areas, will join work soon," said an officer.

Three GDs were filed at Tejgaon Police Station until 1:00pm after it resumed work yesterday morning in the presence of army personnel.

Tejgaon Police Station OC Mohammad Mohsin said, "We should remember that many of our colleagues are no longer with us. Now my heart is heavy. I have been serving the police department for 23 years. Just a few days ago, we were working together at this police station. But now they are no more."

He said the entire police family is traumatised.

"We work to meet the people's needs. However, on many occasions we cannot explain our failure to the people. We have rejoined work today to meet the needs of the people."

Mohsin urged the people to have faith in police. "We will not deny that the current situation is a result of our mistakes and failures. My colleagues and I will try to continue providing services so we can overcome this situation and our force can truly work for the people."

HM Azizul Haque, deputy commissioner (Tejgaon Division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said three of the six police stations under Tejgaon Division were operating at full capacity. The stations that were attacked are working on a limited scale, he added.

Shahbagh Police Station OC Mustafizur Rahman said all their members have joined work. He said several GDs were filed yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Inter-Services Public Relation (ISPR) Directorate in a statement said army personnel have already been deployed to 417 police stations across the country, including 29 in the capital. This will expedite the operations for the recovery of the police's lost arms.

Operations of 21 police stations in the border areas under Rangpur and Khulna ranges resumed yesterday under the supervision of the Border Guard Bangladesh, according to a BGB press release.

Services in 14 of the 16 police stations under Chattogram Metropolitan Police resumed yesterday on a limited scale.

Five police stations in the CMP area were vandalised and set on fire by mobs on August 5.

Services of all police stations and the offices of the deputy commissioners under Rangpur Metropolitan Police resumed yesterday, reports our district correspondent.

In Dinajpur, 12 police stations resumed partial operations yesterday, said Dinajpur SP Shah Iftekher Ahmed. He said they were hopeful of starting the activities at full capacity in a couple of days.

Police stations in Bogura, Natore, Satkhira, Gaibandha, Sirajganj, Pabna, Gazipur, Nilphamari, and Kushtia have also resumed partial operations.

In Bandarban and Kushtia, a section of police personnel boycotted work to press home their 11-point demand, including not using police to implement political agenda, ensuring the security of cops and punishment for those who killed and wounded cops.

Policemen are gradually rejoining their workplaces. The photo was taken at Hatirjheel Police Station in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

‘May peace come back to my golden land at any cost’

Says Rahul Ananda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Even a week ago, the 140-year-old house in Dhanmondi, named “Bhangabari,” was surrounded by greenery and innocuous paraphernalia. There, you could hear birds sing at will.

Lanterns with wicks, hurricane lamps, old letterboxes, plants, and various artworks hung on the long veranda.

In another corner of the veranda of the single-story house, there were various artistic items made of brass and wood.

A dotara also hung there.

All of this is now history.

Rahul Ananda, the frontman of the popular folk band Joler Gaan, had been the tenant of this house for many years, which, until the morning of August 5, was a haven for his wife, son Tota, and his bandmates.

Rahul’s house was torched by mobs on the afternoon of August 5. Around three thousand musical instruments in his home were reduced to ashes.

Actor Farhana Hamid, who is also the business partner of Rahul Ananda’s wife Urmila Shukla’s “Khut”, posted regarding the incident yesterday. The post was also shared on Joler Gaan’s verified Facebook page.

According to her, “The fire was not set with the intent to harm Rahul Ananda’s home, nor was there any looting or vandalism directed at it. The fire was set at a location within the Dhanmondi 32 area, specifically targeting the Bangabandhu Museum and its future expansion plans.”

She also said, “The fire at Rahul da’s house had nothing to do with his religion, ethnicity, caste, or culture. Therefore, I urge everyone not to spread such rumours. In the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Former JU VC Prof Anwar attacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, Prof M Anwar Hossain was attacked on August 5 near Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, the day Sheikh Hasina resigned from her position as prime minister amid student protests.

Prof Anwar was the vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University from 2012-2014.

In a press release issued yesterday, Ayesha Hossain, the ex-VC’s wife, demanded protection from the interim government, saying that the attack was carried out by right-wing religious activists around 4:00pm.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Engineer Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah, who led the movement to protect the country’s oil, gas, and mineral resources, is no more.

He died in cardiac arrest in Texas, US, at Bangladesh time 7:15 am yesterday at his son’s residence, said his elder son Shamim Mahmood. He was 93.

Shahidullah led the movement to ensure the use of Bangladesh’s gas, minerals, and other resources for industrialisation and to the benefit of the nation.

He was the convener of the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power & Ports, backed by left-leaning political parties and organisations.

A follower of Maulana Bhasani, Shahidullah led several long marches in Bangladesh to create

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 10

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-41	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-44	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Some relief in kitchen markets

Aside from onion, prices of essentials drop due to supply increase

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* **MD ABBAS**

Prices of daily essentials, aside from onions, have started falling in the capital’s kitchen markets over the last three days due to an increase in supply.

The prices of rice, pulses, potatoes, oil, flour, and other goods that need to be imported remain unchanged.

However, consumers hope that the current government will break all the syndicates in this sector and bring the prices of all daily essentials to a tolerable level for low, middle, and fixed-income people.

Ifran Hossain, a private service holder, while speaking to this newspaper at Ibrahimpur Kitchen Market, said the main failure of the Sheikh Hasina-led government was that they could not control the prices of daily essentials.

“We expect that the current government will do everything, including waiving the taxes for imports of essential goods, to bring down the prices of daily essentials, considering the low, middle, and fixed-income people,” he said.

Additionally, prices for all types of vegetables, fish, chicken, and eggs have gone down in the capital’s kitchen markets.

This was the picture this newspaper saw when visiting the Shewrapara, Kazipara, Ibrahimpur, and Karwan Bazar kitchen markets yesterday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

IFIC

ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস-এর নেতৃত্বাধীন
অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারকে
অভিনন্দন
ও
শুভকামনা
আপনাদের নেতৃত্বে
শান্তি-সমৃদ্ধি-সমতার পথে
এগিয়ে যাক নতুন বাংলাদেশ

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Students transforming Bagerhat town

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bagerhat*

Like elsewhere in the country, students armed with shovels, sacks and brooms have taken to the streets to clean up key areas such as Market, Sadhana Mor, and the Bus Stand in Bagerhat town.

They have also taken up the role of traffic management in absence of police.

Over the past few days, their efforts have paid off, as the once cluttered and dirty areas have been transformed.

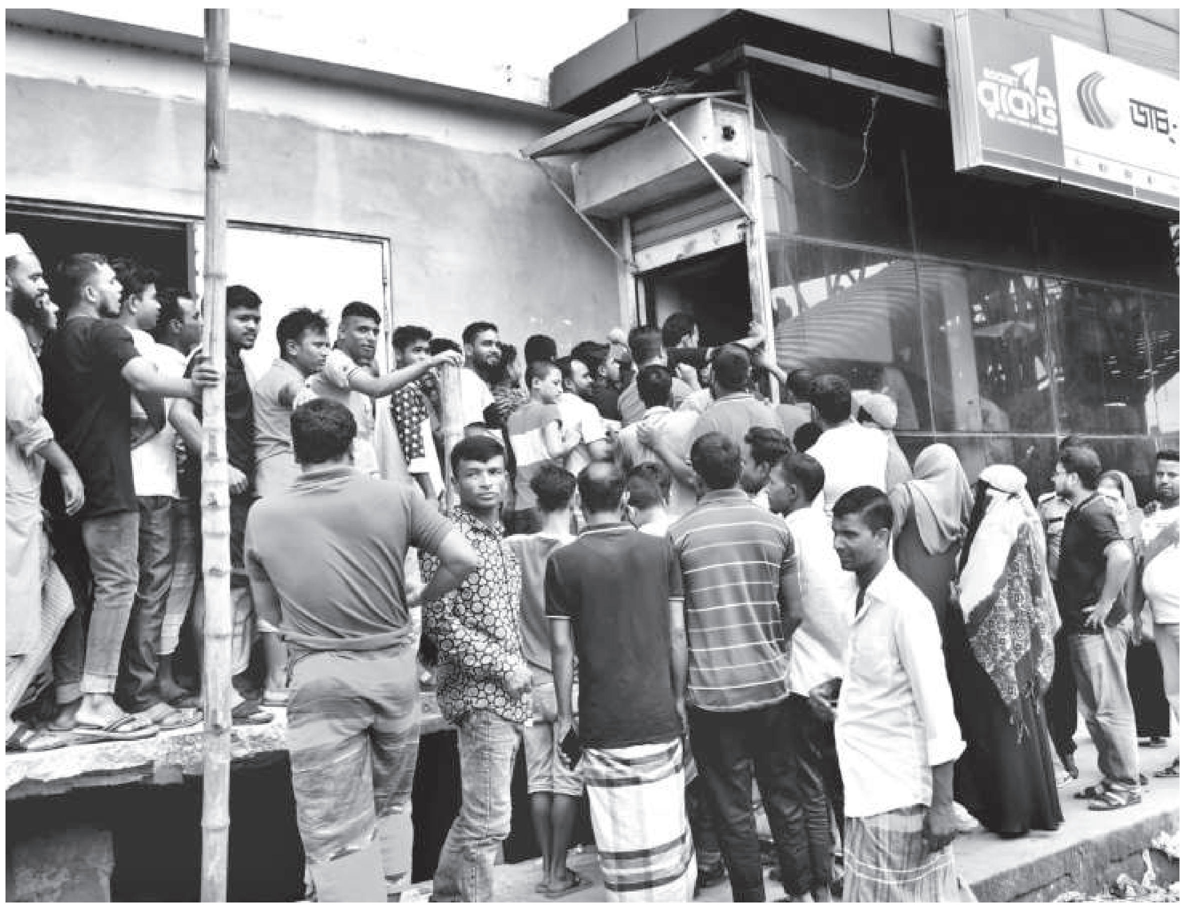
Gone are the heaps of trash that once littered the streets, and in their place is a cleaner, more organised environment. Local residents have taken notice, with many expressing their gratitude and admiration for the students' hard work.

Shahid Sheikh, a local, could hardly contain his amazement at the changes. "It feels like we are in a foreign country. The students are changing the face of our town," he remarked.

Hasib Sheikh, a rickshaw puller, echoed this sentiment, praising the students' conduct and dedication. "Their behaviour is exemplary. The country is safe in their hands," he said. However, he also voiced concerns about ongoing fears of robbery at night.

The students themselves are motivated by a deep sense of civic duty. One of the volunteers said, "We believe that by cleaning up our town and ensuring the safety of our community, we are contributing to a better future for everyone."

"We also patrol the streets at night to protect our community from robberies," said another student.



People swarm an ATM booth of a bank in Savar's Hemayetpur area as all other nearby machines are closed. For the last two days, many could not withdraw money from ATMs as they had all run out of cash. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

CCC restarts cleaning operation in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Much to the relief of the residents, conservancy workers of Chattogram City Corporation have restarted waste removal activities in the port city following a four-day break on Thursday.

According to CCC sources, about 10,000 tonnes of garbage were accumulated in the city in four days between Sunday and Wednesday as CCC conservancy workers were unable to work.

CCC Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Muhammad Touhidul Islam supervised the activities at the field level by going to different wards along with CCC acting Chief Conservancy Officer Abul Hashem, said sources.

"We have not been able to work at full pace for the past few days, for which around 10,000 tonnes of garbage have accumulated in the city," said the CCC CEO.

"We are facing challenges in cleaning operations, as every ward office has been affected in one way or another," he said, adding, "The equipment used in cleaning activities are kept in the ward office and about half of those were vandalised and torched."

"A total of 12 ward councillors' offices were vandalised on Monday, while 12 CCC vehicles, including four from the conservancy department, were damaged," said Tauhidul.

"However, our manpower is intact. We are working with the equipment we have left. We expect to be able to clean the city within a few days," he added.

In a meeting with heads of various CCC departments, instructions were provided to ensure the presence and performance of CCC employees, said Tauhidul, adding that steps were being taken to speed up CCC's activities.

Meanwhile, residents in different areas of the city felt relieved as the cleaning operations restarted in the port city.

"The city corporation's workers have finally started cleaning activities after four days. It has brought massive relief to us, as we faced difficulties in walking through the roads with piled up garbage," said Tahmina Begum, a resident of Askar Dighir Par area.

Nazrul Islam, a resident of the city's Battery Goli area, also expressed satisfaction as the CCC conservancy workers started cleaning activities.

"We could not walk on the road, as malodour used to come from the garbage accumulated by the road. Now most of the garbage has been removed from the area," he added.

Meanwhile, CCC Mayor Rezaul Karim Chowdhury was not present at the office on Thursday as well.

He could not be contacted over the phone as his cellophane was found to be switched off.

Earlier, the CCC CEO said as there is no security provided by police at CCC, the mayor is not coming to office.

The city corporation's workers have finally started cleaning activities after four days. It has brought massive relief to us, as we faced difficulties in walking through the roads with piled up garbage.

TAHMINA BEGUM
A resident of Askar Dighir Par

Implement a roadmap for state reform

TIB urges interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday called upon the interim government to develop and implement a strategic roadmap for state reform towards a "new Bangladesh".

This will enable to build a well-governed country that is distinguished by transparency, accountability, justice, and the protection of human rights, it said in a press statement.

TIB wished to give its full cooperation in this endeavour. It urged the public and students to serve as protectors of minorities, maintain communal harmony, and preserve the historical monuments and memories of the Liberation War.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, said, "Fearless students and ordinary citizens have defeated the force that was unaccountable, blinded by the arrogance of power, and threatened the dream of a society based on human rights and non-discrimination through unprecedented sacrifice. A magnificent opportunity has emerged to reconstruct Bangladesh in the spirit of the Liberation War, and the new government is likely to take this chance."

He said it is imperative to quickly improve the law-and-order situation, which requires a thorough restructuring of police force's management and infrastructure for a more people-friendly force.

All state institutions were continuously used as tools for the misuse of power by the fallen government, the statement said. However, this does not justify the abhorrent acts of random killings and violence against law enforcement and government personnel, which have to end right now.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman said, "Despite the night vigils of students and the general public, attacks continue on the homes, businesses, and temples of minorities. Similarly, attacks are taking place on monuments and structures that symbolise the nation's hopes and inspirations. This is really inappropriate behaviour."

"Everyone must step up and fulfil their responsibility in ensuring that genuine criminals are prosecuted in accordance with the law."

Using photo of Yunus in media ads prohibited

Chief Adviser's Office issues directive

BSS, *Dhaka*

Using photograph of Chief Adviser to the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus in advertisement of different media including newspapers or any other publicity has been prohibited.

The Chief Adviser's Office issued this directive yesterday, said an official handout.

The interim government led by Prof Yunus took oath on Thursday night, four days after the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina amid a mass upsurge led by students.

Sheikh Muhammad

FROM PAGE 3

awareness and put forward the demand to protect gas and other national resources.

He was at the forefront of the movement to protect the Sundarbans by raising voices against the construction of a coal power plant near the world's largest mangrove forest. He also led the movement against open-pit mining of coal at Phulbari in Dinajpur.

Several parties, including the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and Ganasamhati Andolon, expressed condolences over his demise.

"Bangladesh lost one of its best souls. The nation will remember him for his role in protecting national resources," said CPB.

"His contribution to the progressive movement in Bangladesh is enormous," it added.

In a Facebook post, Ganasamhati Andolon said, "We are deeply shocked. You (Shahidullah) will live in the people's struggle for freedom, emancipation, and protection of national wealth."

During the Liberation War, Shahidullah was arrested by the Pakistani military for supporting the nation's independence struggle, said Firoz Ahmed, a leader of Ganasamhati Andolon, in a Facebook post.

Shahidullah left four sons and three daughters.

Born in Khulna's Daulatpur, Shahidullah will be buried in the US, said his son Shamim.

Some relief in kitchen

FROM PAGE 3

Vegetables were being sold for at least Tk 10-40 less compared to last week.

Bitter gourd and long beans are now available at Tk 70-80 per kg, down from Tk 100-120 per kg. Pointed gourd, ladies' fingers, radish, snake gourd, and luffa are now being sold at Tk 30-50 per kg, compared to Tk 50-80 last week.

Each piece of gourd is being sold at Tk 50-60, down from Tk 80-100, and papaya is now available at Tk 30 per kg, down from Tk 50-70 per kg.

Meanwhile, the price of onions has increased by Tk 10 per kg.

Onions are now available at Tk 120-130 per kg, up from Tk 110-120.

Several traders attributed the good supply of products in the markets to the lifting of the curfew, which has brought about some stability in the country.

Additionally, the prices of all types of fish have decreased by Tk 20-200 per kg within one week.

Sukkur Ali, a fish trader at Karwan Bazar, said that the supply of fish was not adequate in the markets due to the imposition of a curfew and unrest in the country.

"As the curfew has been lifted and the situation is improving, the supply in the markets has increased. Most importantly, it is the season for some fish, especially hilsa, which has led to the decrease in prices," he said.

Furthermore, the prices of chicken and eggs have decreased by Tk 10-20 per kg within one week.

Broiler chicken is now being sold at Tk 170-180 per kg, down from Tk 180-200 per kg, while Sonali chicken is available at Tk 260-290 per kg, down from Tk 280-300 per kg.

A dozen eggs are now being sold at Tk 150-155, down from Tk 160-165.

Stay vigilant against AL's

FROM PAGE 5

political forces, including BNP, for all heinous crimes.

Fakhrul specifically pointed out that an identified quarter is exploiting social media platforms and news channels from a neighbouring country for this purpose.

He stated, "Places of worship and assets belonging to Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian communities have been deliberately targeted. Their current plan is to sow discord and incite communal riots. They are also determined to create divisions among all the victorious forces and the people."

He expressed hope that the interim government, the administration, and all citizens are vigilant regarding these issues.

"Our party, the BNP, is already taking every possible step to address the situation," Fakhrul said.

He also warned that strict organisational and legal action will be taken against anyone who engages in such malicious activities under the BNP's name.

"Sensing the gravity of the current situation, I want to alert all relevant local and foreign supporting forces, as well as the country's citizens, about this conspiracy being orchestrated by the deposed dictator and its allies," Fakhrul said.

He also urged the members of the minority communities to raise social awareness and resist this conspiracy from their respective positions.

The BNP leader also called upon the country's people, the interim government, the patriotic Armed Forces, as well as the administration, police, BGB, and Ansar forces to support the minority communities with an aim to build a democratic Bangladesh.

May peace come back

FROM PAGE 3

current situation in the country, any rumour can take on a dangerous form. Let's stay vigilant."

This incident left many cultural activists and people devastated.

"Rahul da and his family are shaken and have taken shelter in a secret place known to only a few," said Saiful Islam Jarnal, one of Joler Gaan's founding members, to The Daily Star on August 6. "It wasn't even his house; it was a rental he had been living in for decades."

Ziaur Rahman, the bassist of Shironamhin, wrote on Facebook, "Where do I hide this shame! An artist's home was attacked. Instruments that were created and nurtured over a long time were all looted. I saw many of these instruments being made right before my eyes. We will not forget this injustice."

Musician Arnob wrote, "I just can't accept it! We are truly sorry. Rahul, we stand with you."

In September last year, French President Emmanuel Macron visited Rahul's "Bhangabari", making the vintage house the talk of the town. It even made headlines in international media, crossing beyond the borders of Bangladesh.

Mentionable, following the state of lawlessness during a power vacuum triggered after Sheikh Hasina's fall, reports of attacks on minorities and cultural heritage started coming from various places across the country.

Contacted, Rahul told Prothom Alo on August 5 , "May yet peace come to my golden land, at any cost. If that cost is the ashes of my golden home or the burnt remains of my musical instruments, I have no regrets. I love Bengal and the people of Bengal; I sing in Bangla."

"I'm not in any state to speak. Almost three thousand musical instruments have been reduced to ashes. They were like my children. I was able to bring out one child alive. The rest have burned or been looted."

Former JU VC Prof Anwar attacked

FROM PAGE 3

According to the press release, Prof Anwar had been highly critical of the government's indiscriminate attacks on students, which led to the loss of hundreds of innocent lives. This stance had made him a target.

Describing the attack, Ayesha said, "On Monday afternoon, my son decided to go to Shahbagh, where students had gathered, to join his friends and colleagues. We decided to join him. My husband wanted to witness the unprecedented mass uprising of the students."

As they reached the airport, an unknown man, around 40 years old, approached Prof Anwar and began shouting, "I have recognised you. You're the professor who was against Jamaat [Jamaat-e-Islami] at the tribunal [International Crimes Tribunal]. We saw you on television."

The man attempted to drag Prof Anwar down a narrow lane opposite the airport, but family members intervened. Almost immediately, three or four more people surrounded them, shouting "Naraye Takbeer".

One of them threatened, "You spoke against Jamaat. We're going to slit your throat." They attacked him with various objects, shouting, "Hit him on his head. Kill him."

The attack continued for several minutes, during which Ayesha, her son, and her daughter-in-law shielded Prof Anwar with their bodies, sustaining injuries themselves.

Eventually, they managed to drag him across teh Airport Road towards an army barricade with the help of two civilians. He received emergency treatment after entering the airport premises.

Ayesha Hossain expressed concern over the lawlessness and anarchy engulfing Bangladesh in the absence of a stable government. She said vested interests, including far-right extremists, have taken advantage of the chaos to unleash indiscriminate, targeted attacks on religious minorities, individuals opposing religious extremism, and symbols of the Liberation War.

She also termed the destruction of murals commemorating freedom fighters, the statue of Themis at the Supreme Court, and Rabindranath Tagore, as well as the arson attack on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's residence at Dhanmondi 32, an ominous sign.

In the press release, she said, "We waited to release this statement until the formation of the interim government led by Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus, with the hope that it shall now take immediate steps to protect my husband and my family from further attacks."

Ayesha also urged the government to ensure the safety, security, and human rights of all who have been attacked and remain at risk, saying "Too many people have sacrificed their lives in recent weeks. We demand justice for all."

Waste piles up across Khulna

FROM PAGE 5

Local households are also dumping waste in various KCC areas, which remain uncollected for days.

KCC reports that approximately 1,200 tonnes of waste are produced daily across 31 wards, with only 800 to 850 tonnes collected. The remaining waste stays on the streets.

Visits to spots including PTI mor, Nirala mor, Notun Bazar, and Boyra mor, this correspondent saw half of the main roads are piled with garbage.

Professor Anwarul Kadir, an educationist and civic leader, emphasised the necessity of consistent waste management services, regardless of political unrest, to prevent increasing suffering.

Md Anisur Rahman, Chief Conservancy Officer of KCC, said they are ready to resume work. "We are being attacked, but if given a chance, we will clear the waste immediately," he said.

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A student managing traffic in Jatrabari area yesterday. For the fourth consecutive day, students have been managing traffic all across the country in absence of law enforcers.
PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Waste piles up across Khulna city

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN
Waste piles up on a road in Khulna city.

Heaps of waste are piling up in various corners of Khulna city as the city corporation's conservation workers have stopped working following the power vacuum after Sheikh Hasina's fall.

Authorities said KCC trucks and vans have ceased operations due to vehicles being vandalised by agitators. Several vehicles have already been damaged while collecting garbage.

Meanwhile, a massive pile of garbage has made the KDA Avenue, stretching from Shibbari intersection to MM City College Junction, unbearable. At least four garbage spots were noted along the two-kilometer stretch. It is one of the busiest roads in Khulna and hosts over a dozen bank branches, commercial establishments, and Rasheda Memorial Hospital.

Locals and business owners, including Akbar Hossain, a mobile shop salesman, and Abul Fazal, a resident of ward-6, said they are suffering due to the stench.

Fazal said people are using alternative routes and keeping their windows closed due to the nuisance created from unattended wastes.

Rafiqul Islam, a KCC worker, said garbage from wards 19 and 20 is typically dumped at a designated point on KDA Avenue. However, due to political unrest, they have been unable to clear the waste.

Sheikh Shafiq Ahmed, a garbage van driver, said agitators have attacked and thrown bricks at garbage collectors, preventing them from performing their duties.

The situation is similar at 26 Secondary Transfer Station (STS) plants.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Stay vigilant against AL's blueprint for revenge

Says Fakhrul

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday called upon everyone to remain vigilant as the autocratic Awami League, which was ousted in the face of a student-led movement, is now active with a blueprint of revenge.

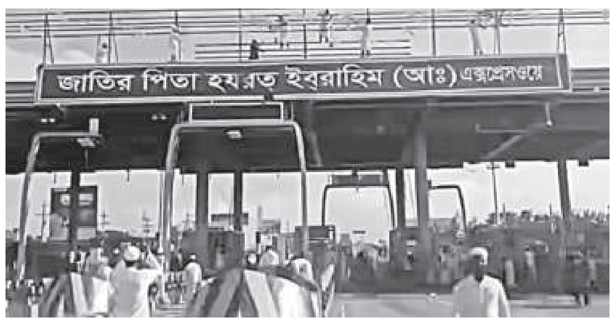
In a statement, he said, "We have learned from various reliable sources that the deposed regime and its allies are active in the field with a blueprint to exact revenge on the interim government and the victorious students."

At the same time, Fakhrul said social media is being widely used to tactfully unfairly blame all the democratic

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

DHAKA-MAWA EXPRESSWAY

Madrasa students replace nameplate



OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Munshiganj*

A group of local madrasa students removed the nameplate of the "Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Expressway", commonly known as the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway, at the Dhaleshwari toll plaza in Munshiganj.

They replaced it with a banner reading "Father of the Nation Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) Expressway."

Eyewitnesses reported that the group broke the plaque on Thursday noon.

Maulana Obaidullah Kashemi, vice principal of Jamia Islamia Halimia Madhupur Madrasa and a Hefajat Islam leader, confirmed the act, saying they plan to rename another toll plaza in Bhanga.

Munshiganj Road and Highway Executive Engineer Dewan Abul Kashem Mohammad Nahin Reza said names of state infrastructures cannot be changed without a government gazette.

Toll collection has been halted since August 5, and the damaged toll plaza is expected to be repaired within four to five days if the law and order situation improves, he added.

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A group of students making sure that daily essentials are not being sold at high prices yesterday. The photo was taken at Mechhua Bazar in Mymensingh.
PHOTO: STAR

Three Jubo Dal leaders expelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Lalmonirhat*

Three Jubo Dal leaders from Lalmonirhat have been expelled from the party for violating party discipline.

The Lalmonirhat District Jubo Dal confirmed their expulsion in a notice yesterday.

They are Maidul Islam Abbas, joint convener of Aditmari Upazila Jubo Dal; Shah Alam Mandol, president of Panchagram Union Jubo Dal; and Saidul Islam, senior vice president of Panchagram Jubo Dal.

Lalmonirhat District Jubo Dal President Anisur Rahman Anis said swift action was taken due to their actions against party rules during the ongoing situation of the country.

BNP's Rangpur Divisional Organising Secretary and Lalmonirhat District BNP President, Asadul Habib Dulu, said the party is working to maintain peace in the region.

Protect human rights in Bangladesh: HRW

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's interim government, led by Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, should urgently act to protect human rights, said Human Rights Watch on Thursday.

Soon after Hasina resigned and left, tens of thousands of Bangladeshis celebrated the end of her repressive rule. However, celebrations turned violent in some places, with hundreds killed or injured as demonstrators sought reprisals against those perceived to have supported Hasina's government, said Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy director of the New York-based global rights watchdog's Asia division.

"Rioters burned down historical structures and targeted members of Hasina's Awami League party. In several districts, members of the Hindu community, which is generally considered to have largely backed the Awami League, were violently attacked, their homes torched, temples vandalised, and shops looted. There were also reports of attacks against the Ahmadiyya Muslim community and ethnic minorities," she added.

In many places, Muslim clerics, students, and community leaders came out to protect Hindu temples and Christian churches, while political leaders, as well as protest organisers, called for calm.

Rioters have frequently targeted and attacked police members, who are widely disliked for repeated abuse of human rights over the years.

However, the new Inspector General of Police Mohammad Mainul Islam publicly apologised for "unprofessional officers" who "did not follow the accepted principles of applying force and violated human rights".

Authorities should ensure minorities are protected and the rule of law is respected. They also need to ensure that the police and other law enforcement agencies do not escalate or contribute to the violence, stressed Meenakshi.

"The interim government should take up the UN offer to establish an independent investigation to identify and prosecute those responsible for past human rights violations as well as violations during the recent violence."

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

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Commonwealth Scholarships in the United Kingdom (UK) tenable from September/October -2025

1. Applications are invited from Bangladeshi nationals for higher study under the Commonwealth Scholarships for MS/PhD in the United Kingdom (UK) tenable from September/October -2025 by following the mentioned terms and conditions below. **Please read all the terms and conditions carefully and fill up the Application Form as directions.**
2. **Category:** (a) One year Taught Masters (MS) course. (b) Doctoral (PhD) degree of up to three year's duration.
3. Applications are invited under six themes (mentioned below) for MS/PhD Program:
   (i) Science and technology for development (ii) Strengthening health systems and capacity (iii) Promoting global prosperity (iv) Strengthening global peace, security and governance (v) Strengthening resilience and response to crises (vi) Access, inclusion and opportunity.
4. Candidates must mention the Broad Subject under the Six Themes (The Broad Subject means on which the applicant has obtained his/her first degree (Hons./Bachelor)/terminal degree (Master).
5. **(a) Qualification for Master's program:** Holding a first degree (Honours) of at least upper second class (2:1) honours standard/CGPA, or a second class degree (2:2) honours standard/CGPA and a relevant postgraduate Master's degree (terminal degree) in the same condition. **(b) Qualification for PhD program:** Holding a first degree of at least upper second class (2:1) honors standard/CGPA, or a second class (2:2) honours standard/CGPA degree and a relevant postgraduate qualification (a Master's degree) in the same condition.
6. **(a) For Master's Application:** Not have commenced and be currently registered for a Master's Degree or equivalent course leading to MPhil or PhD in the home country or abroad. **(b) For PhD Application:** Not have commenced and be currently registered for a PhD, or an MPhil leading to a PhD, in the home country or elsewhere.
7. Applicant/s must mention total and obtained marks/GPA/CGPA at the time of filling the Application Form. (If the result of any degree of an applicant is Distinction, Excellent, Very good, Good and Passed etc, the applicant must mention the total number and the obtained number with the percentage in the form)
8. Candidates for Medicine or Dentistry must show the year of passing of each prof/part of MBBS/BDS , marks obtained, total and average marks with percentage in the Application Form.
9. Only Short-listed candidates will be eligible for interview in person. Any attempt of persuasion regarding the Commonwealth Scholarships in the UK tenable from September/October – 2025 will disqualify the applicant automatically.
10. The applicant must submit the Unconditional Offer Letter from the United Kingdom Universities with the Application Form. The applicant having Conditional Offer Letter related to Language Proficiency or Finance will be eligible to submit the Application Form. In this regard, if anyone of the applicants is short listed for Interview, the applicant must show and submit a copy of Language Proficiency Certificate/Result Sheet (e.g. IELTS, TOEFL etc.) at the Interview Board. University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh will check the authentication of the Offer Letter/s.
11. All the information (Direction/s, Application Form/Short list/s, Interview date/s, Selection/s or nomination/s, result/s and other relevant information etc.) regarding the mentioned Scholarships will be uploaded at UGC website (www.ugc.gov.bd) under the heading of **"Notice Board/International Collaboration, Scholarship and Fellowship Box"** timely. The applicant must check and collect all the information from the UGC website by his/her own responsibility. No communication will be done with the applicant/s from UGC side.
12. The Application Form is editable and must be typed (not hand written) in the prescribed directions. Additional papers can be attached with the Application Form for the description of the publications (if necessary).
13. The applicant/s in service must submit the Application Form through proper channel or with the prior approval of the concerned authority (proper channel means the concerned authority who will permit the study leave to the applicant if the applicant is nominated for the mentioned scholarships).
14. Copies of certificates, mark sheets of examinations passed result sheets, Language Proficiency Certificate (e.g. IELTS, TOEFL etc. if needed) examination, Offer Letter/s and 1 (one) copy of passport-size attested photograph must be enclosed with the Application Form.
15. Incomplete, faulty and shortage of any documents attached with the Application Form will be rejected automatically.
16. **Completed Application Form (Only Hard Copy) must be submitted to "The Secretary, University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207" within 18 September, 2024.** No Application Form will be received after the last date of submission. Name of Scholarship with category must be mentioned on the envelop and drop i into the Application Drop Box kept in front of the reception of UGC.

Dr. Ferdous Zaman
Secretary, UGC

GD-140

BRAZIL PLANE CRASH

All 62 on board killed

REUTERS, *Sao Paulo*

A regional turboprop plane carrying 62 people crashed near Sao Paulo in Brazil yesterday, killing all on board, local officials near the crash site said.

Video shared on social media showed what appeared to be the ATR-made plane spinning out of control as it plunged down behind a cluster of trees near houses, followed by a large plume of black smoke.

City officials at Valinhos, near Vinhedo, said there were no survivors and only one home in the local condominium complex had been damaged while none of the residents were hurt.

Airline Voepass said the plane, which had taken off from Cascavel, in the state of Parana, bound for Sao Paulo's main international airport, crashed in the town of Vinhedo, about 80 km (50 miles) northwest of Sao Paulo.

The unlisted airline said it could not provide further information on what caused the plane, which had a PS-VPB registration, to crash.

The aircraft was listed by flight tracker FlightRadar24 as an ATR 72-500 turboprop. ATR is jointly owned by Airbus AIR.PA and Italian aerospace group Leonardo LDOF.MI.

ATR did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Multiple attacks target ship off Yemen: agency

AFP, *Dubai*

A series of attempted attacks using missiles and a sea drone targeted a merchant vessel off areas of Yemen held by Iran-backed Houthi rebels, a maritime security agency said yesterday.

A rocket-propelled grenade exploded Thursday near the ship off the city of Mokha, which overlooks the strategic Bab al-Mandeb Strait linking the Gulf of Aden to the Red Sea, it said.

A missile also exploded close to the same vessel, which later reported an attempted attack by an uncrewed surface vessel that was shot down by armed security team on board.

Displaced Palestinians leave an area in east Khan Yunis towards the west, after the Israeli army issued a new evacuation order for parts of the city, in the southern Gaza Strip.

PHOTO: **AFP**

CROSS-BORDER OFFENSIVE

Ukrainian drones strike Russian airbase

AFP, *Kyiv*

Ukraine pressed on with a major cross-border incursion into Russia yesterday, also launching a significant air attack on a Russian airfield hundreds of kilometres behind the front lines.

The Ukrainian offensive into Russia's western Kursk region, launched Tuesday, appears to be the most significant attack on Russian soil since Moscow invaded in February 2022.

Russia said around 1,000 Ukrainian troops and more than two dozen armoured vehicles and tanks were involved in the initial attack, though it has since claimed to have destroyed many more pieces of hardware.

Moscow said yesterday it was moving more troops and weapons to the Kursk region.

Kyiv has not officially taken responsibility for the operation, but Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in his evening address on Thursday that Russia needed to "feel" the consequences of its invasion.

Moscow transfers reserves to western Kursk region, issues evacuation orders

Ukraine said yesterday it had carried out a massive air strike on a Russian military base in the Lipetsk region, around 280 kilometres (175 miles) from the Russia-Ukraine border.

The local Russian governor Igor Artamonov reported a "massive" drone attack overnight and Russian state news agencies said the airfield was on fire.

"Last night, the Ukrainian Defence Forces attacked the Lipetsk airfield," Ukraine's General Staff said in a post on Telegram.

It said it had struck "warehouses containing guided aerial bombs and a number of other facilities" and that a "massive fire broke out" with "multiple detonations."

Artamonov cancelled several public events in the region and issued evacuation orders for districts close to the air base.

Russia's defence ministry said it destroyed 75 Ukrainian drones overnight, including 19 over the Lipetsk region and seven over Kursk, where Ukraine's four-day incursion has focused.

Trump, Harris to debate on ABC Sept 10

REUTERS, *Detroit*

US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump and Democratic opponent Kamala Harris will debate on September 10 on ABC, setting up the first face-to-face match-up between the rivals in what polls show is a close race.

In a news conference, Trump said he wanted additional debates on September 4 and September 25 that would air on Fox and NBC. Harris said in a post on X that she was looking forward to the September 10 debate after Trump "finally committed."

She told reporters after a campaign stop that she was open to discussing more debates, but a campaign official reiterated their position that a Sept 4 Fox debate is off the table.

UK 'on high alert' for more far-right rallies: PM

AFP, *London*

Prime Minister Keir Starmer warned yesterday that UK authorities must "stay on high alert" in the coming hours and days, amid fears of further far-right riots in English towns and cities.

His comments followed consecutive nights of relative quiet across England, after a week of near daily unrest in more than a dozen places in the wake of a deadly knife attack that killed three children.

Disturbances have continued unabated in Northern Ireland, however, where police have blamed pro-UK loyalist paramilitaries for fuelling nightly violence in Belfast.

Speaking during a visit to the headquarters of London's Metropolitan Police, Starmer said "swift justice" dispensed on rioters by police and the courts in recent days had acted as a deterrent to more disorder in England.

"I'm absolutely convinced that having the police officers in place these last few days, and the swift justice that has been dispensed in our courts have had a real impact," he told UK broadcasters.

"But we have to stay on high alert going into this weekend because we absolutely have to make sure that our communities are safe and secure."

PHILIPPINES COURT

Rappler wins appeal to overturn shutdown order

REUTERS, *Manila*

Philippine Nobel laureate Maria Ressa's news website Rappler won an appeal to restore its corporate licence after a court overturned a regulator's decision to shutter the media company.

The Court of Appeals, in a July 23 decision made public yesterday, had ruled the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) overstepped its authority in ordering Rappler's shutdown in 2018.

"Like a bull seeing red, the SEC ... plowed through law and jurisprudence to reach its mark – the death of Rappler," the court said in its ruling.

The SEC declined to comment, saying it has yet to receive a copy of the decision. Ressa had welcomed the decision, saying it was a "vindication after a tortuous eight years of harassment".

"Journalists are not the enemy," Ressa told a news conference hours after the ruling went public.

Rappler's operating licence was rescinded in 2018 for violating foreign equity restrictions on media firms when it sold depositary rights to a US-based company.

Int'l community ready to work

FROM PAGE 12

The EU, which imports products worth $24 billion annually, looks forward to engaging with the new administration.

It also pledged to support this critical transition which should be part of a peaceful and inclusive process underpinned by good governance, democratic values, and respect for human rights, Borrell said.

China also welcomed the interim government.

Beijing values its relations with Bangladesh, and stands ready to work with Bangladesh to promote bilateral exchanges and cooperation in various areas and further advance the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, said Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson during a press briefing yesterday.

"China strictly follows the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs," the spokesperson said.

He said China respects Bangladesh's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and the development path independently chosen by the Bangladeshi people.

"We stand firmly by our policy of good neighborliness and friendship with all people of Bangladesh. The friendship between China and Bangladesh runs long and deep."

The UN in Bangladesh is encouraging the process of making sure that Bangladesh's transition to democracy on the ground is peaceful.

In a briefing in New York on Thursday, UN Secretary-General's Deputy Spokesperson Farhan Haq said they made it clear they want to make sure that the violence that has been occurring in Bangladesh in recent weeks is tamped down.

"Certainly, we stand against any racially based attacks or racially based incitement to violence," he said.

The UN earlier had said it was ready to send a fact-finding team in the wake of massive violence and killings.

Asked on that, Farhan Haq said, "We'll see what kind of formal request we get from any new government that is formed. We, of course, stand ready to support the government and people of Bangladesh in any way that they deem is necessary."

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif offered heartiest congratulations to Prof Yunus and wished him great success in guiding Bangladesh towards a harmonious and prosperous future.

"I look forward to working with him to deepen cooperation between Pakistan and Bangladesh in the days ahead."

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee offered sincere congratulations and best wishes to Prof Yunus and those who have taken up their duties in Bangladesh.

"Hopefully, our relationship with them will improve," she wrote on X.

She wished for Bangladesh's development, peace, progress, and betterment of people from all walks of life.

"Hopefully, the crisis will end soon, peace will return. Let peace come back to this world of love of yours and mine. If our neighbouring states are doing well, we will be doing well too."

UK High Commissioner Sara Cooke said she was privileged to witness the oath-taking ceremony for Prof Yunus and members of the interim government of Bangladesh on Thursday night.

"The start of a new chapter for the country to chart a peaceful, prosperous and democratic future in the interests of all Bangladeshis," she wrote on X.

German Ambassador to Bangladesh Achim Troester congratulated the interim government and offered best of success.

"Germany will support its well-chosen priorities: restoration of security, full investigation of all crimes, re-establishment of the rule of law, structural reforms and smooth transition to real democratic representation," he said in an X post.

Bangladesh origin UK MP Rupa Huq wrote on X, "Good luck Muhammad Yunus back in Bangladesh from exile having assembled a diverse cabinet, including students and women."

"Would have never believed this earlier this year when he addressed MP and peers in Westminster. Hopefully genuine elections on the way."

US Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi urged all government officials, the new administration and police chief, and the people of Bangladesh to do all they can to end the violence that has emerged across the country, including the brutal targeting of the country's Hindu minority, their homes, businesses, and their temples.

"The violence must stop and those responsible must be brought to justice to help the people of Bangladesh move forward as a nation. I will continue to closely monitor developments in Bangladesh in coordination with the US State Department," he said in an X post.

BB governor steps down

FROM PAGE 1

Sheikh Hasina resigned as prime minister and fled the country in the face of an uprising.

On Wednesday, more than 100 BB officials staged protests in front of the governor's office demanding his resignation.

Rouf, the 12th governor of the central bank, has been absent from his office since then.

The Daily Star could not reach the governor over the phone for comments as he did not respond to calls.

A former senior secretary at the finance ministry, Rouf joined as the central bank governor in July of 2022 when Bangladesh was facing the challenges of rising inflation, falling forex reserves and depreciation of taka.

His team had been unsuccessful in arresting the fall in the forex reserves, stopping the depreciation of taka, containing the increase in defaulted loan and above all fighting inflation, which hit 9.7 percent in the FY24, the highest in 12 years.

Economists said this was because of the central bank's failure to timely let the market forces to determine the interest rate and exchange rates.

Rouf, who was close to the former prime minister, faced criticism from different quarters after he had taken the initiative to merge weak banks with strong ones in a bid to salvage the vulnerable lenders and improve the image of the banking sector which was suffering from confidence crisis because of high defaulted loans, irregularities and weak governance.

He came under criticism again a few months ago when he imposed restrictions on the entry of journalists to the central bank.

The BB relaxed the restrictions after the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government.

'Hasina did not resign'

FROM PAGE 12

challenged in court".

Wazed also said Hasina's Awami League party would contest the next election, which he said must be held within three months.

"I'm confident the Awami League will come to power. If not, we will be the opposition. Either way is fine," he said.

He said he was encouraged by a recent statement from Khaleda Zia, chief of the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and a Hasina foe, that there should be no revenge or vengeance after Hasina fled.

"I was very happy to hear Mrs Khaleda Zia's statement that let bygones be bygones," Wazed said. "Let's forget the past. Let us not pursue the politics of vengeance. We are going to have to work together, whether it's a unity government or not."

He said he was "willing to work with the BNP ... to have democratic elections in Bangladesh and restore democracy and to work with them to ensure that going forward, we have peaceful democracy where there will be free and fair elections".

"I believe that politics and negotiations are very important," he said. "We can argue. We can agree to disagree. And we can always find a compromise."

Asked whether he would be the Awami League's prime ministerial candidate, he said: "My mother was going to retire after this term anyway. If the party wants me to, maybe. I will definitely consider it."

He said his mother was ready to face trial back home, as demanded by students who led the uprising.

"The threat of arrest has never scared my mother before," he said. "My mother has done nothing wrong. Just because people in her government did illegal things, did not mean my mother ordered it. That does not mean my mother is responsible for that."

He did not say who in the government was responsible for allowing the shooting of people during the protests.

"A government is a big, big machinery," Wazed said. "Those who are responsible, they should be brought to justice. My mother absolutely did not order anyone to commit violence against the protesters. The police were trying to stop the violence, but some police officers used excessive force."

"Our government immediately, and I was part of those conversations, I also told my mother, we need to immediately tell (our students wing) not to attack, stop the violence," he said.

"We suspended the police officers that shot at students. We did everything we could."

He said he would return home when he liked.

"I have never done anything illegal. So, how is anyone going to stop me?" he said. "The political parties are not going anywhere. You cannot wipe us out. Without our help, without our supporters, you are not going to be able to bring stability to Bangladesh."

Interim govt formed

FROM PAGE 12

The Daily Star yesterday.

On Thursday, President Shahabuddin administered oath to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and the advisers to the interim government.

Bhuiyan said the full Appellate Division bench headed by Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan gave the opinion after the president sought it through the law ministry.

The other six judges of the bench are Justice M Enayetur Rahim, Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, Justice Md Abu Zafor Siddique, Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim, Justice Md Shahinur Islam and Justice Kashefa Hussain.

The Appellate Division said in its opinion that the president can form the interim government in the current situation as there is no parliament now and the prime minister earlier resigned from office, SC Registrar General Bhuiyan said.

He also said the Appellate Division's opinion was based on Article 106 of the constitution.

The article says, "If at any time it appears to the President that a question of law has arisen, or is likely to arise, which is of such a nature and of such public importance that it is expedient to obtain the opinion of the Supreme Court upon it, he may refer the question to the Appellate Division for consideration and the division may, after such hearing as it thinks fit, report its opinion thereon to the President."

The SC registrar general said the president sent the reference seeking the SC opinion as there is no constitutional provision on the formation of an interim government.

He, however, did not clarify whether the judges physically or virtually sat on the bench to deliver their opinion to the president.

The functions of the Appellate and High Court divisions of the SC were closed on Thursday.

Six inmates killed

FROM PAGE 12

and inmates, were injured when a clash broke out between them on Thursday. At one stage of the clash, guards opened fire around 1:30pm as the inmates attempted to break out of the prison.

Jail Superintendent Abu Fattah disclosed the deceased's names yesterday, reports our district correspondent.

They are Arman, Shyamal, Jasim, Fazle Rabbi Babu, Raihan Miah, and Rahat Miah.

According to jail sources, the inmates set fire to the prison and held the jailer hostage.

On information, firefighters rushed to the spot and doused the fire. The situation was brought under control around 7:00pm, said Fattah, adding that army personnel surrounded the jail during the incident.

Injured prison guard Rukunuzzaman was sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. The other injured, including five prisoners, are undergoing treatment at Jamalpur General Hospital.

On Tuesday, 104 prisoners fled from the Kushtia District Jail.

On Monday evening, an unidentified number of prisoners escaped from the Satkhira District Jail. However, at least 200 of them surrendered to the authorities a day later, according to jail sources.

The same evening, a mob stormed the Sherpur District Jail, leading to the escape of 518 inmates.

On July 19, at least 826 prisoners fled the Narsingdi District Jail. During the jailbreak, around 85 arms and 9,000 bullets were looted.

However, around 598 prisoners surrendered later, and 51 arms and 1,085 bullets were recovered.

Army deployed

FROM PAGE 2

The release also mentioned that the Bangladesh Army is engaged in the security of various important installations in the country, including Bangabhaban, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Mohakhali Data Center.

"Efforts are underway to create panic among the public by spreading rumours through various social media platforms", the release said, requesting the public not to panic over such rumours and to use their judgment when communicating with army camps.

The Bangladesh Army is, and will always be, by the side of the people and always work for the nation's interest, added the release.

Artistes should question power, not fear it

Celebrities are now emerging from their shells to advocate for the people—a much-needed phenomenon to strengthen the cultural backbone of the nation.

SHOWBIZ DESK

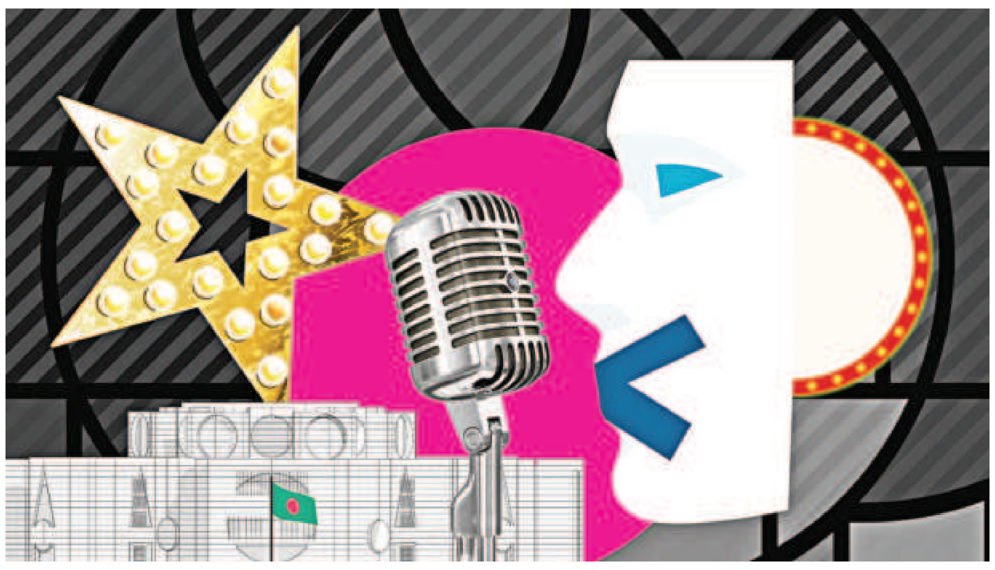


ILLUSTRATION: **ANWAR SOHEL**

"We were afraid of the government, but the students gave us courage – so we owe it to them to protest the brutality inflicted upon them," said Cryptic Fate's vocalist, Shakib Chowdhury, on August 3, just two days before former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country amidst a mass uprising led by students in Bangladesh. The irony lies in the fact that many of these students were inspired by Cryptic Fate's "Cholo Bangladesh," as documented by numerous social media edits.

On that very day, the nation witnessed musicians marching towards the Central Shaheed Minar in solidarity with the people—the most unprecedented act of defiance by celebrities since the Awami League came to power. Throughout the quota reform movement, which escalated from July 15 onwards, celebrities cautiously offered their heavily censored condolences with statements such as "We don't want bloodshed" or "Let peace return to the country," all the while ignoring the harsh reality that armed forces were firing upon unarmed students, instead of working to de-escalate the situation.

এই জিত আমার অধিকার!

Once regarded as the beacons and mirrors of society, entertainment stars had, regrettably, been tamed, censored, and coerced into partisan silence over the past fifteen years. It became common knowledge that national honors, film awards, and even relevance in the industry depended on a celebrity's proximity to the ruling party. While many argue that fear was the primary motivator for this silence, one cannot ignore the role greed may have played. Consider the National Film Awards, where merit often took a backseat to how well one could lobby for recognition.

"You've left, but you could have given the national awards to artistes who were oh-so inclined," wrote Sadia Ayman, a young actress who had vocally supported the student-led uprising while senior celebrities remained silent. She referred, of course, to a recent government-backed all-star biographical film that seemingly guaranteed accolades for its participants, regardless of the quality of their performances. Sadia also spoke out when a select group of cultural elites visited the BTV premises on August 1, lamenting over the vandalized building while hundreds of students had already lost their lives. "Shame on you," she wrote in a Facebook post.

As the student movement reached its zenith, actress Zakia Bari Mamo resigned from Actors' Equity Bangladesh in protest of their statement, which contradicted the students' demands. "We are a free nation; anyone is free to support any political party, but blind devotion leads nowhere," she asserted.

On August 1, several bands boycotted the annual Joy Bangla Concert, held on March 7. "There is no question of performing in the Joy Bangla Concert after what has transpired in the past two weeks," Nemesis announced on their social media platforms. The band had been vocal on behalf of students since the 2018 Road Safety Movement, and this time was no different. Their songs, "Gonojowar" and "Joyoddhoni," flooded social media and graffiti across the country. Furthermore, they were seen cleaning the streets in the days following the mass uprising.

Celebrities are now emerging from their shells to advocate for the people—a much-needed phenomenon to strengthen the cultural backbone of the nation. It would be remiss not to mention the iconic stance taken by Prince Mahmud, who wrote, "It takes time for the culture of fear to end. Not all forms of protest are the same. We should welcome the culture of asking questions."

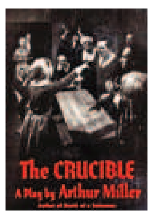
Cultural figures, some without even being directly involved in the movement, fueled the protest with their music, art, and philosophy. As the fire of resistance raged on, the veil of fear was lifted, and more voices joined in. We can only hope that today's celebrities learn to question power rather than remain subservient to it.

Plays depicting uprising

Mary Stuart
Friedrich Schiller

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui
Bertolt Brecht

The Crucible
Arthur Miller



Kobor
Munier Chowdhury

Chaka
Selim Al Deen

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
The Umbrella Academy (Season 4)

Prime Video
The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE RINGS OF POWER

HBO Max
Industry

max
INDUSTRY
OFFICIAL TEASER

Disney plus
Star Wars: Young Jedi Adventures

JEDI ADVENTURES

Apple TV+
Lady in the Lake

WHAT'S ON THE GRAM

Azmeri Haque Badhan

Actress Azmeri Haque Badhan, who has been an ardent supporter of the student-led quota reform protest since its inception, recently shared this photo on Instagram.

She joined in the merrymaking associated with welcoming a new Bangladesh and expressed her joy at seeing the students' demand for the former prime minister's resignation being met.

In a recent interview with TV9 Bangla, she emphasised the need to join forces with everyone for a secular and harmonious nation. She stated, "The students who are making the crucial decisions today, regarding the appointment of Muhammad Yunus to lead the interim government, are our future. They are advocating for a reformed system, and rightly so."

TV TALKIES

'Shōgun' delivers a gripping tale of power and intrigue in Feudal Japan

The series ***Shōgun*** is visibly an impassioned storytelling material, taking place against the backdrop of Japan's looming civil war in 1600. Created by Rachel Kondo and Justin Marks, it ambitiously and respectfully brings James Clavell's iconic 1975 novel of the same name to the screen.

Considering that the original book spans over 1,000 pages, it's remarkable that they've successfully distilled it into just 10 episodes. The outcome is a visually striking and captivating series.

Shōgun has been in development for several years, first being announced in 2018 has proven to be deserving of the wait.

The story centers on English sailor John Blackthorne (Cosmo Jarvis) arriving in feudal Japan, where he allies with Lord Yoshii Toranaga (Hiroyuki Sanada), who is vying for power. Their paths intersect through Mariko (Anna Sawai), an outcast and Blackthorne's translator. These intertwined narratives of political intrigue form a tightly woven tale of ambition.

The series is mainly in Japanese, with some English for Portuguese scenes, but it's surprisingly easy to follow. However, it demands your full attention—one can't casually multitask with this one.

Keno

Shironamhin's latest single, ***Keno,*** is a haunting reflection of the current turmoil in Bangladesh. The track captures the nation's anguish and confusion amid ongoing violence.

The lyrics evoke powerful imagery, questioning the senselessness of suffering and the inevitability of chaos. The melancholic blend of instruments—bass, cello, violin, and guitar—paired with emotive vocals, intensifies the song's impact. Part of their upcoming album ***Batighor***, ***Keno*** stands as a moving tribute to the students and lives lost, urging listeners to confront the unsettling realities of our time.

Penned by Ziaur Rahman and music by Kazy Ahmad Shafin, the song asks, *"Why are the birds of this city flying aimlessly like the blind all night? In the scorching heat, why does the red sun still burn in the sky, turning everything to ashes?"*

[শিরোনামহীন]
SHIRONAMHIN

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Stern action vital to prevent robberies

Residents in many areas are having to spend nights in fear

We are worried about the surge in attempted robberies in recent times, with the residents in many neighbourhoods in Dhaka spending sleepless nights. According to a report by this daily, there has been a marked increase in such incidents in the capital's Uttara, Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Basila, Adabor, Mirpur, Zigatola, Gulshan, Badda, Jatrabari, Old Dhaka, etc. Since Monday, when a mass uprising ousted the Sheikh Hasina government, each night came with robbery alerts on social media as well as reports of residents, led by students, patrolling their neighbourhoods with sticks in hand and even driving away criminal gangs wielding knives and machetes. Many robbers were also held.

This is but one fallout of the breakdown of law and order that was caused by the widespread attacks on police, and police stations, both before and following the government's fall. The resultant panic led to the entire police force vanishing from the scene, with its ripple effects also felt in traffic and fire services. However, attempts to restart all closed police stations and resolve the issues brewing within the force have begun to show results, especially after the interim government finally took over the reins, ending a four-day power vacuum. In Dhaka, 29 police stations resumed their services yesterday. Officers are returning to duty. But many stations still remain shut. Clearly, residents are not out of the woods yet.

They will expect a dramatic improvement given the toll this protracted uncertainty over security is taking on them. This is further underscored by another report that says that, in the past two weeks, there have been over 100,000 complaints of theft, robbery, and looting across the country. In many areas, people are relying on mosque announcements and grassroots vigilante efforts to protect themselves from criminals. The Bangladesh Army, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), and other armed forces have stepped up efforts to provide some measure of security, but those have been insufficient in the face of the huge tide of criminal activities. That said, restoring law and order completely will not be possible with law enforcement measures alone. We need the political parties and community leaders to help in this regard by sending strong messages of stability and calm.

People in Dhaka—and indeed Bangladesh—deserve better than to live in fear, especially after an uprising meant to protect them from the shackles of lawlessness. They deserve to sleep soundly in their homes, and to trust that their safety is in capable hands. It is, therefore, imperative that the law enforcement authorities take all steps necessary to fully operationalise the entire police force and re-establish rule of law.

Recent jailbreaks call for urgent steps

Authorities should address security lapses, undertake prison reforms

At a time when we are concerned about the overall law and order situation in the country, particularly with most police stations still non-functional and large abstention in the force, the repeated incidents of jailbreak attempts have raised further concerns. The latest incident occurred in Jamalpur jail on Thursday, in which six inmates were killed. Earlier, on Tuesday, a total of 209 prisoners fled from the Kashimpur High Security Jail in Gazipur after holding prison guards hostage during a demonstration. Six inmates were also shot dead then. On the same day, around the same time, at least 94 inmates fled from the Kushtia jail. In both these cases, the army took control of the situation later. But the question remains: why was the security of our jails not beefed up after the first incident of jailbreak in Narsingdi on July 19, in which 826 inmates including nine militants had escaped? Such incidents have also occurred in several other districts, including Chattogram, Sherpur and Satkhira.

Clearly, there are security lapses in our prisons, but an equally worrying development has been the escape of some hardened criminals, including militants and terrorists. For instance, in Narsingdi, inmates belonging to some militant groups escaped. Three of the six inmates who were shot dead were also militants. According to the jail superintendent, militants and ordinary prisoners together started the demonstration that day, demanding their release. This brings to the fore another crucial issue that needs immediate attention: the keeping-together of militants, terrorists, and general inmates in jails. This cannot be allowed because it increases security risks as well as the threat of radicalisation of ordinary prisoners.

Moreover, many of the jails in the country remain overcrowded with prisoners, even after the recent releases following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government. Overcrowding is a long-standing issue in our jails. For example, according to a report published in July, the Chattogram Central Jail has a capacity to house 2,249 inmates, but is having to house twice as many prisoners. Also, hardened criminals and militants are kept in the same wards as general inmates in the prison, increasing its security risks.

We, therefore, urge the authorities to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of security risks in all our prisons, address their vulnerabilities, and increase their security, taking help from other security forces if necessary. Also, urgent measures should be taken to track down the escapees who are still traceless. These recent incidents also serve as a call to undertake prison reforms, which have been long overdue.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Operation Ranch Hand launched

On this day in 1961, Operation Ranch Hand was launched by the US army, which involved spraying approximately 20 million US gallons of defoliants and herbicides in South Vietnam. Sprayed over rural areas, this was done to destroy the food and vegetation covers of the Viet Cong.

The power of education in 'Bangla Bashanta'

BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Dr Shamsad Mortuza
is professor of English at Dhaka University.

SHAMSAD MORTUZA

The latest wave of student-led uprisings in Bangladesh, widely referred to as the "*Bangla Bashanta*" (Bangla Spring), symbolises a profound sociopolitical awakening. This seasonal metaphor, akin to the Arab Spring, represents the blossoming of collective consciousness and the quest for meaningful change. The *Bangla Bashanta* channels the frustrations and aspirations of a generation yearning for educational reform, resistance, and democratic renewal—much like the socioeconomic grievances and demographic pressures that fuelled the Arab Spring.

At the heart of this movement lies a youth bulge—an entire generation of young people who, despite having access to education, find themselves underemployed and dissatisfied with the status quo. These youth, who constitute 28 percent of the population, have become the vanguard of the movement, driven by the paradox of being educated yet unemployable. The frustration is evident: official records indicate that 12 percent of university graduates are unemployed, a figure notably higher than that of individuals with only primary or secondary education. Last year's data estimated that 800,000 graduates were without jobs, unable to enter the informal sector due to the so-called prestige associated with higher education. This stark mismatch between educational attainment and employment opportunities underscores the systemic issues plaguing the nation's education system.

Interestingly, it was a generation whose education failed to prepare them for the rapidly evolving demands of the global job market that spearheaded this revolution—rather than organised political parties led by the educated elite. The movement, although centred at the country's oldest university with its historical track record of successful employment, spread like wildfire across the nation. Students from private universities also joined with revolutionary zeal, despite being less likely to pursue public sector jobs. This widespread discontent is a direct result of years of neglect in the educational sector, where the government, in its pursuit of populist numbers, has compromised on quality, spreading resources thin. While previous administrations have made strides in enrolment and access, the quality and relevance of education have not kept pace, leaving graduates in a prolonged state of "waithood"—a term that encapsulates the limbo between graduation and employment.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

The students of Bangladesh have spoken through their movement, giving us an opportunity to fix the systemic issues in our education system and pave the way for a more prosperous, equitable, and democratic future for the country.

Pervasive inequities and the low quality and irrelevance of education further exacerbate this frustration. Employers frequently lament the basic competencies of graduates, despite years of formal education. This has led many private organisations with an international outlook to rely on expatriate staff, further shrinking the already limited job market for local graduates and putting additional pressure on the national economy. Efforts to replace rote learning with more creative curricula have faltered due to poorly trained teachers, resulting in conflicting education policies that fail to align with the needs of the modern workforce. The overemphasis on securing government jobs—a shrinking sector—has further stymied the potential of the youth, limiting their prospects in an increasingly diversified global economy.

Moreover, the glass ceiling remains a significant barrier for female students, particularly in the tertiary education system. Despite progress, educational inequities persist, with girls and children from disadvantaged backgrounds continuing to struggle with access to quality education. However, it is worth noting that female students, who played a bold and prominent role in the movement, called for an end to the quota system, driven by their confidence in their ability to shoulder equal responsibilities in society. This highlights a generational shift in attitudes, where young women are increasingly demanding the same opportunities and recognition as their male counterparts.

Identity and ideology politics also played an essential role in brewing the *Bangla Bashanta*. The overemphasis on a monolithic history has backfired. Generation Z has actively recycled slogans from the Liberation War to redefine their identity and advance nationalist perspectives that are conscious of protecting sovereignty and freedom of expression. They sought to reclaim and reaffirm the national identity forged in 1971, ensuring that their education serves not just as a pathway to employment, but as a means of preserving and propagating the core values of the nation. This ideological shift underscores the role of education in shaping not only the economic prospects of the youth, but also their cultural and political consciousness.

The *Bangla Bashanta* thus serves as a clarion call for a new educational compact in Bangladesh—one that prioritises quality, relevance, and equity while embracing the identity and ideological dimensions of education. Education should not only be about access, but also about equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the complexities of the 21st century. Drawing from the global discourse on education, Bangladesh must embrace the principles of the Global Compact on Learning, which advocates for a comprehensive approach to education that includes early childhood development, basic literacy and numeracy, and access to relevant post-primary education.

To achieve this transformation, we need visionary leadership and collective action. Just as the Global Compact on Learning emphasises international cooperation, Bangladesh must mobilise its resources—across government, the private sector, civil society, and international partners—to prioritise learning outcomes. This will necessitate not only increased funding, but also the effective use of resources and a commitment to measuring and improving learning outcomes. One hopes that the interim government will increase budget allocations for the organic growth of education. The impressive deliberations by our leaders on talk shows must now be put into action to achieve real change. This change must come with a reassessment of our young generation, for whom education is designed. For a long time, we have underestimated this generation, thinking that they are not equipped to bring about any change, either for themselves or for society. Yet, here we are, learning from their creativity and innovation—from their use of technology and cyber-activism. Incorporating recent experiences into curriculum redesign is crucial to enhancing the overall educational ecosystem.

Advocacy and public opinion will play a critical role in holding the government accountable for these results. Youth have historically led change in Bangladesh, so they must be actively involved in this process to ensure that their voices and needs are heard. The *Bangla Bashanta* is more than just a moment in time; it is a movement that can be used to transform education into a powerful tool for resistance, reform, and democracy.

The students have spoken. The unmet aspirations of youth are now out in the open. By addressing the systemic issues in the education system—quality, relevance, equity, and the integration of identity and ideology—we now have the opportunity to harness the potential of our youth and pave the way for a more prosperous, equitable, and democratic future. The success of this movement will ultimately depend on our collective ability to reimagine education as a catalyst for meaningful and lasting change.

The winds of change

Syed Wasif
is a freedom fighter.

SYED WASIF

As the euphoria and exaltation slowly subside, as the smoke clears over the horizon of a new Bangladesh, people are slowly coming to grips with the grim reality confronting them. A government of 15-plus years dissolved. The head of government has escaped abroad, fearing for her life. A teetering economy, an uncontrolled law and order situation. A witch hunt of political opponents is going on. Killings, burning, looting, vandalising have become the order of the day.

All this came about due to the ineptness of the ruling class in handling a very simple matter: the quotas. Kudos to our young and determined students of universities and colleges who started a simple non-violent protest, which snowballed into a historic revolution and unseating of Sheikh Hasina government, a result mainly of uncalled for brutal force and the barbaric killing of over 400 unarmed people. The resilience, bravery and sacrifices of our gallant students and citizens have written a new chapter in the annals of non-violent protests.

During the latter part of the movement, disparate political party activists joined the students, seeking their own political gains, as said by many. Some speculate that they were the ones who mainly carried out the attacks, vandalism and killings post the government's fall.

Students were seen in the streets directing traffic and returning looted property. Some sense of normalcy in public life has started to return. Students and the army have unanimously selected Prof Muhammad Yunus, a Noble laureate, to lead the interim government, which will oversee public affairs as well as pave the way for a free and fair election.

But what does the nation have in store? Can we expect better governance from the other political parties in the country? Sad to say, their track record is equally unsatisfactory as the AL. Can we expect honesty, integrity, impartiality, from them? Do they have the will and the gusto to build a new, vibrant Bangladesh, free from corruption and dirty politics?

Corruption has eaten up the vitals of our society. It's rampant in all walks of life. The nation needs to do some soul-searching, instead of pointing the finger at Hasina alone. Our politicians, bureaucrats, technocrats, doctors, teachers, business people, shopkeepers, etc—all need to take a solemn vow to uphold honesty at all levels of life. Without honesty, sincerity and morality, we will fail as a nation.

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We can identify the corrupt, but what about the corrupters? Who bribe, peddle influences, and in the process line their own pockets? They, too, must be sought out and meted with exemplary punishment. The anti-corruption authority must be strengthened and be given free rein to identify the corrupt and the corrupters.

The ombudsman system must be installed, which no government has dared to install in the past. People must focus on voting for good, honest representatives. Only then can the dream of Sonar Bangla, for which we fought and sacrificed, can be achieved.

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Vision 2050 for the valiant sons and daughters of the soil

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SYED MUNIR KHASRU

Dear victorious student community of Bangladesh,

The recent triumph of your protests, culminating in Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure, marks a pivotal moment in our nation's history. This watershed event echoes the transformative upheaval of 1990 known as "90's Anti-Authoritarian Movement," reminding us of the power of collective action and the enduring spirit of youth. Your passion, determination, and unwavering commitment to seek fairness and justice have once again proven to be a formidable force for change, placing you in a proud lineage of student activists and leaders who have repeatedly altered the course of our nation's history, starting from the Language Movement of 1952, culminating in the birth a new nation in the map of the world in 1971, i.e., Bangladesh, and then the restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1991.

As we reflect on this momentous achievement, we must recognise a fundamental truth about our national character. We Bangladeshis are emotional people, quick to ignite with passion, but unfortunately sometimes lacking in the sustained effort required for long-term transformation of those noble ambitions and positive aspirations which also brought you in the very first place to the streets as you fought to have a fair opportunity in government jobs. The tragic loss of innocent young lives, who died for a cause whose benefit they will never enjoy, is the ultimate sacrifice one can make for which the nation will remain indebted forever. The challenge that lies before you has now moved beyond the abolition of the quota system. It is time to channel today's emotional energy and patriotism into concrete actions of tomorrow for achieving a lasting positive change in Bangladesh for which you have sacrificed so much in such a short time.

The triumph of the protests led by students, culminating in Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure, marks a pivotal moment in Bangladesh's history.
PHOTO: NAIMUR RAHMAN

Young citizens of the country take up traffic management in Dhaka in the absence of police, who have been missing in action out of fear caused by the violence that erupted following the fall of Sheikh Hasina government. This photo was taken on August 8, 2024.
PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

It is crucial to note that your movement in 2024 stands apart from its predecessors, and in a significant way, as it mostly includes ordinary and non-political students. Unlike 1990, when Chhatra League and Chhatra Dal, the student wings of Awami League and BNP, respectively, played major roles, you have transcended party affiliations to be representative of all students, irrespective of their personal beliefs and political ideologies. You became something larger than life by serving as the conscience and voice of the nation as opposed to representing any particular political camp or ideology. This independence is both refreshing and commendable as it gives us hope to expect greater things to come from you that are driven by genuine love for the country, as opposed to petty partisanship and personal interests only.

Your protest and revolt are a testament to the power of technology in mobilising forces for positive change. Unlike the communication methods available in the 1990s, during the last student movement which led to the ouster of the corrupt and immoral military dictator Gen HM Ershad, you have harnessed social media and digital platforms to amplify your voices and coordinate your efforts. As we look back on the 1990 protests, we must never forget the sacrifice of those who came before you. Approximately 100 lives were lost in the struggle for democracy during that tumultuous period.

Reflecting on the period since 1991, when parliamentary democracy was restored, we see a mixed legacy of progress and missed opportunities for Bangladesh. Our GDP has grown from $31 billion in 1991 to $437 billion in 2023, a testament to our economic resilience. Life expectancy has increased from 54 years in 1991 to 74 years in 2022, reflecting improvements in healthcare and living standards. We have dramatically reduced poverty, with rates falling from 42 percent in 1991 to around 5.01 percent in 2022. Our infrastructure has seen remarkable improvements, with electricity access rising to almost 100 percent by 2022.

Alongside these achievements, we have also fallen short in several critical areas. Our democratic institutions remain fragile, with press freedom deteriorating to the point where Bangladesh now ranks 165th out of 180 nations in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index. Human rights conditions have worsened, and corruption continues to plague our society, with Bangladesh scoring its lowest in 12 years on the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index. Perhaps most concerning for your future is the rise in youth unemployment, which has increased from 5.51 percent in 1991 to 15.74 percent in 2023, despite our economic growth.

The commercialisation of politics has seen the nefarious rise of an elite group of businessmen-turned-politicians as politics has become the best business in town to make quick money with very little genuine entrepreneurial work and hardly any accountability behind it. You have been unfairly deprived of good role models in both politics and business, as is evidenced in the beneficiaries of this malicious culture, some of whom are now desperate to leave the country with their ill-gotten money, both at home and abroad, and stopped in the airports and borders. We have hardly succeeded to provide you with good examples to be inspired from—either in politics or in business. So, set examples, in both politics and business, that puts us to shame and makes your next generation proud of your achievements and successes as well as your character and integrity.

Your role, dear students, extends far beyond this moment of protest. You are the architects of Bangladesh's future, which I would like to label as "Vision 2050," and your responsibilities have only just begun. Engage deeply in policy discussions, pursue excellence in your chosen fields, and hold leaders accountable not just for today, but in the years to come. Let your actions be guided not just by emotion, but by a clear vision of the Bangladesh we can become. Cultivate the skills and knowledge needed to lead our nation into the future, whether in politics, public service, business, technology, arts, culture or sports.

As we look towards 2050, I urge you to envision a Bangladesh that has learnt from its past and boldly faces its future. Aspire to build a nation that stands in the world as a beacon of democracy, prosperity, and social justice. This vision should include a fully developed economy that has diversified beyond the ready-made garment sector, embracing technology and fostering innovation across various industries. Technology must play a central role in this vision. Your protest has already demonstrated how digital tools can be leveraged for social change. Now, imagine how these same technologies can be applied to governance, transparency, and accountability as well as entrepreneurism and enterprise.

To realise "Vision 2050," we must confront the shortcomings that emerged after 1991. Political polarisation, weak institutions, and rampant corruption have hindered our progress. To move forward, we need comprehensive reforms across various sectors. Constitutional changes must strengthen our democracy and prevent power concentration. Significant investment in digital infrastructure is crucial, not only for economic growth but also to enhance governance, transparency and efficiency. Robust anti-corruption measures, backed by stringent accountability systems, are essential.

> **It is crucial to note that your movement in 2024 stands apart from its predecessors, and in a significant way, as it mostly includes ordinary and non-political students. Unlike 1990, when Chhatra League and Chhatra Dal, the student wings of Awami League and BNP, respectively, played major roles, you have transcended party affiliations to be representative of all students, irrespective of their personal beliefs and political ideologies. You became something larger than life by serving as the conscience and voice of the nation as opposed to representing any particular political camp or ideology.**

Strive for an independent judiciary that ensures the rule of law and equal justice for all citizens, regardless of their social or economic status or political ideology. Transparent governance should be at the core of our political system, with robust mechanisms in place to promote accountability at all levels of government. Social equality must be more than just a slogan, with concrete steps taken to eradicate discrimination and ensure equal opportunities for all Bangladeshis, regardless of gender, religion or ethnicity. You fought for meritocracy whose one of the underlying principles is equal and fair opportunity to all, not for the few privileged only. Be vigilant to preserve and protect what you have earned with so much sacrifice.

Our education system demands a thorough revamp to meet challenges of the evolving global knowledge economy. Since the establishment of Bangladesh's first private university in 1992, we have witnessed a proliferation of higher education institutions, with over 100 private universities now operating nationwide. This rapid expansion, averaging more than three new universities annually, has undoubtedly increased access to tertiary education. However, this quantitative growth has not been matched by qualitative improvements. The quality of teachers has gone down at a much faster rate than the quality of students. As a result, the quality of education has, in many instances, deteriorated, failing to equip graduates with skills and knowledge demanded by the modern job market. In the 2024-25 global academic rankings, encompassing 2,250 top universities from over 100 countries, only five Bangladeshi institutions have secured notable positions, reflecting our weak standing in the competitive international higher education landscape and underscoring the need for improvement in the nation's tertiary education sector.

This misalignment between educational outcomes and industry requirements has contributed significantly to the rising unemployment rate among our youth. To address this critical issue, we must pivot towards an education system that emphasises critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy. Our curriculum must be dynamic, continuously adapting to global best practices and anticipating future workforce needs at a time when skill sets have an average shelf life of three years as technology continues to challenge our intellect and abilities at breakneck speed. By fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and practical skills alongside theoretical knowledge, we can better prepare our students to thrive in the 21st century global economy and reverse the trend of increasing youth unemployment. You, the students, deserve much better support from the country and its educational establishments.

In the health sector, while we have made significant strides in family planning, immunisations, and reducing maternal and infant mortality rates, the 2023 healthcare index places Bangladesh at 94th out of 94 countries, highlighting persistent challenges. Urban-rural disparities and systemic issues continue to hinder progress. We must prioritise reforms and investments for improving quality healthcare services accessible to all.

As we progress towards 2050, we must prioritise climate change adaptation and sustainability. Bangladesh, being one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, must lead by example. Envision a future where sustainable practices are not just encouraged, but are the norm. From green urban planning to renewable energy adoption, from sustainable agriculture to eco-friendly industries—let Bangladesh be a model of sustainable development. Remember, a sustainable lifestyle is not just an environmental imperative, but an economic one. By embracing sustainability, we can attract green investments, create new jobs, and position Bangladesh as a leader in the global green economy. Our economic planning must prioritise sustainable, inclusive growth that transcends political cycles and benefits all citizens.

As you embark on this journey, remember that life has a way of challenging our ideals. As you grow older, you may find that the purity of your thoughts is tested by new challenges and adversities, unexpected uncertainties and risks. The fervour of youth may be tempered by the complexities of adulthood. However, just as age is just a number, your youthful energy is more in your mind than in your body. I implore you to keep alive and agile the passion and determination to build a nation great in its humanity and fierce in its ambitions.

Let the idealism and patriotism that fuel you today be the compass that guides you through the challenges ahead. Please remember that everyone loves to be with the winner, which you are today. I have seen how some of the student leaders and heroes of the glorious student movement of 1990 got lured into the trap of greed and lust at the expense of their values and morals. Today, some of them are no less pathetic than the evil forces against which they fought valiantly at some point in their lives that resulted in the ouster of a corrupt and immoral military dictator in 1991, who was subsequently restored by our political parties with their marriage of convenience devoid of values and principles. In the process, they betrayed the likes of well-known protester Noor Hossain and Dr Milon, who made the ultimate sacrifice with their lives during those turbulent days.

Again, salute to you, the students, who time and again have shown the politicians what selfless acts of patriotism look like. However, the irony and lesson of history is that politicians in our country, except a few exceptions, hardly learn and seldom change until they are forced to do what they are supposed to do: love and serve the country selflessly. So, be vigilant and know how to discern between right and wrong, good and bad. Please remember that the choices you make today will shape the future that you aspire for tomorrow. Equally important is not to compromise your dignity for your destiny, as then it is not worth it.

> **As you stand at this crossroads, do not repeat the mistakes of the past that many of your predecessors did. The euphoria of change must be matched with the diligence of nation-building. By 2050, let Bangladesh stand as a model of what can be achieved when a nation harnesses the energy of its youth and the wisdom of its experience. Build a country where democracy thrives, where the economy provides opportunities for all, where education opens doors to success, and where every citizen can live with dignity and hope.**

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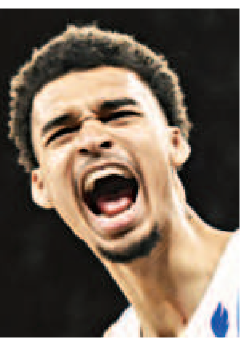
The path to 2050 is long and fraught with challenges, but with your passion tempered by wisdom, idealism coupled with pragmatism, you can build a Bangladesh that not only fulfils the dreams of our Liberation War, but exceeds them. Let this moment be the catalyst for a new era of progress, where the spirit of 1971 is finally realised in a truly free, fair, and prosperous Bangladesh where everyone—irrespective of social, economic, religious or ethnic identity—thrives on his/her merit and hard work, honesty and integrity, character and compassion, and last but not the least, an unflinching patriotism that neither gathers dust nor rots with the passage of time.

The future is in your hands, dear students. Shape it with an unwavering commitment to the greater good of our beloved nation. Your journey begins now, and with it, the promise of a brighter, more prosperous Bangladesh for generations to come. Where we failed, you will succeed for sure. We can't afford any more time wasted, or another generation lost as the euphoria subsidies and reality starts to kick in.

Finally, never be afraid to dream big and aspire for more. Let no challenge make you daunted, have faith in life and the goodness it brings, never shy away from speaking the truth and taking a stand—which you did so bravely. Keep on marching with courage and conviction, character and compassion—the nation is with you in thoughts, spirit, and prayers.

"In our national anthem, we talk about blood. We're willing to spill blood on the court. So, it's no big deal. If it allows us to win gold, I'm offering. Take all of it."



France's **Victor Wembanyama** ahead of their final against USA in the men's basketball final of Paris Olympics

Botswana gets the afternoon off

AFP, *\Gaborone*

President Mokgweetsi Masisi gave Botswana the afternoon off on Friday to celebrate Letsile Tebogo, the country's first Olympic gold medallist and the first African to be crowned 200-metre champion at a Games.

Masisi hailed the 21-year-old sprinter as "Botswana's Sensation" after his outstanding performance on Thursday.

"Botswana's finest sporting moment," beamed the Mmegi newspaper after Tebogo produced a stunning run in the 200m to take gold, leaving pre-race favourite Noah Lyles trailing in third.

To add to his performance, he also set an African record of 19.46sec.

Tebogo's achievement will be "etched in the annals of the history of the republic", the president said.

The Olympic medal is Botswana's third after Nijel Amos won silver in the 800m at the 2012 London Games and the men's 4x400m relay team took bronze in Tokyo in 2020.

Videos shared on social media showed students at the University of Botswana dancing and singing into the night, while people across the southern African nation posted their pride on X and Facebook.

Botswana's Letsile Tebogo poses with his national flag following his stunning victory in the men's 200m final of the athletics event at the Paris Olympic Games at Stade de France on Thursday. (Inset) Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan throws his javelin to a gold-medal winning and record setting distance men's javelin throw final at the same venue.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

ATHLETICS
Men's Marathon
12:00 pm
Men's High Jump
11:00 pm
Men's 800m final
11:05 pm
Women's Javelin Throw
11:30 pm
Women's 100m Hurdles
11:35 pm
Men's 5000m
11:50 pm
Women's 1500m
12:15 am (Sunday)
Men's 4 x 400m Relay
1:00 am (Sunday)
Women's 4 x 400m Relay
1:14 am (Sunday)
GOLF
Women's Individual Stroke Play
1:00 pm
WEIGHTLIFTING
Men's -102 kg
3:30 pm
Women's -81 kg
8:00 pm
SPORT CLIMBING
Women's Boulder and Lead
4:35 pm
CANOE SPRINT
Women's Kayak Single 500m
4:40 pm
Men's Kayak Single 1000m
5:10 pm
Women's Canoe Single 200m
5:40 pm
MEN'S VOLLEYBALL
5:00 pm
RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS
Group All-Around
6:00 pm
Diving
Men's 10m Platform
7:00 pm
WOMEN'S HANDBALL
7:00 pm
TABLE TENNIS
Women's Team
7:00 pm
WOMEN'S WATER POLO
7:35 pm
WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
Brazil vs USA
9:00 pm
BASKETBALL
France vs USA
1:30 am (Sunday)

Nadeem makes Pakistan proud

AFP, *Mian Channu*

Dozens of villagers gathered in front of the modest home of Pakistan athlete Arshad Nadeem to watch the hulking javelin thrower take part in the Olympic Games final late Thursday.

The event was broadcast live by a digital projector onto a screen hanging on the back of a truck in his farming village near the small city of Mian Channu in Punjab province.

As the javelin soared through the sky in Paris to a new Olympic record and a gold medal for Nadeem, thousands of kilometres (miles) away the cheers of the villagers rang into the night.

"He did a great throw and created history. We are proud of him," said Nadeem's 35-year-old brother, Muhammad Azeem.

Men danced to the celebratory beat of a drum and others clapped and chanted slogans as it became clear he had won.

The women, meanwhile, sat crowded around a small TV inside Nadeem's home.

"He had promised me that he would play well, go abroad, win a medal and make Pakistan proud," his mother Raziah Parveen said straightforwardly.

USA go for gold against Marta's Brazil

AFP, *Paris*

A resurgent United States under new coach Emma Hayes are hoping to establish themselves as the leading force in women's international football once again by claiming the gold medal in Saturday's Olympic final against Brazil and their legendary skipper Marta.

The USA came into the Olympics with a rejuvenated squad and a point to prove after a poor showing at last year's World Cup, when they were eliminated in the last 16.

They also performed below par at each of the last two Olympics, finishing out of the medals at Rio 2016 before taking bronze three years ago in Tokyo.

But the arrival of renowned English coach Hayes from Chelsea has given the USA the boost they needed, and they have been inspired on their way to the final by the exciting attacking trio of Sophia Smith, Mallory Swanson and Trinity Rodman.

They have each scored three goals at the tournament, with the USA winning all three group games against Zambia, Germany and Australia before dispatching both Japan and the Germans in extra time in the knockout rounds.

Now they are hoping to add to their women's football record haul of four golds and win the title for the first time since London 2012.

"Emma came in so soon before this tournament, so we knew that was going to be a challenge, but she just came in flying and we absolutely love her," said Smith, the Colorado-born forward who turns 24 on the day of the final.

"She has worked every day to build our trust and show us she cares about us. She is such a great coach and such a great mentor.

"We are a completely different team and a lot of the credit goes to Emma. She has communicated everyone's roles very clearly. We are really excited for her to be our coach for a really long time."

The USA's position as the undisputed global powerhouse of the women's game looked to be gone for some time following last year's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, when a brilliant Spain team led by Aitana Bonmati were crowned champions.

However, Spain missed out in their bid to add Olympic gold to that title and the UEFA Nations League after they were surprisingly beaten 4-2 by Brazil in Tuesday's semi-final in Marseille.

Instead it is the Brazilians who will meet the USA in the gold medal match and they will be attempting to make it third time lucky after losing to the same opponents in the Athens final in 2004 and in Beijing in 2008.

Both of those finals were won by the USA in extra time, and both featured Marta, the Brazilian legend and multiple winner of the FIFA world player of the year award.

Now 38, she is appearing at her sixth and likely last Olympics, and is hoping to sign off with gold to go with her two silver medals.

Marta missed both the quarter-final win against hosts France and the semi-final against Spain due to suspension after being sent off for a reckless challenge in Brazil's final group game, also against the Spanish.

"Now she will be able to finish her Olympics playing in a final, where she deserves to be. I hope she manages to come away with the gold medal," said Gabi Portilho, who scored in both the quarter-final and semi-final.

It remains to be seen if the final will turn out to be Marta's farewell on the international stage for her country, or whether she could be tempted to keep going until the 2027 World Cup which Brazil will host.

"Marta has changed the game of soccer around the world," said Rodman of Marta, who has spent much of her club career in the United States.

Korean shooter collapses at PC

REUTERS, *Seoul*

South Korean Olympic silver medallist pistol shooter Kim Ye-ji, whose cool demeanour and appearance when competing at the Paris Games made her a social media sensation, collapsed at a news conference on Friday, apparently due to stress and exhaustion.

Kim was speaking at the event in Imsil, the county that she represented for seven years in the southern part of South Korea, when she collapsed, a county official said by telephone. Kim regained consciousness and was taken to hospital, he said.

The 31-year-old did not receive CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) as some media reported, the official said.

Kim would stay in hospital for observation until she had recovered fully, he said, adding she was likely suffering exhaustion after participating in the Paris 2024 Olympics.

Kim who won the silver medal in the 10-metre air pistol event has become a social media phenomena due to the futuristic glasses she wears to improve precision and her cool style which earned her the nickname the "smiling assassin" at home.

On Wednesday, Kim thanked Tesla chief Elon Musk for making her famous after he said on his social media platform X that she "should be cast in an action movie. No acting required!"

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Football stuck in a limbo

SPORTS REPORTER

With only 10 days left to complete the players' registration for the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), the participating clubs are facing difficulties to complete the transfer procedure following the recent developments in the country.

Following the resignation of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 6, miscreants vandalised and looted the club offices of Abahani and Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, putting them in no position to complete the players' registration formalities within the timeframe.

"We don't know what to do in this situation. We are waiting for directives from club high-ups," said Abahani football team manager Nazrul Islam.

In light of the recent developments, officials of Sheikh Russel KC, Rahmatganj MFS, Sheikh Jamal and Brothers Union have verbally requested the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to extend the transfers' window, which is scheduled to close on August 19 after getting underway on June 1.

Club insiders informed that they are expecting changes in their respective committees and also have been unable to communicate with donors to secure funds for signing players.

Brothers Union manager Amer Khan said, "We have requested the federation to extend the transfer window because it will not be possible for all clubs to complete the registration within the given time."

Not just the clubs, the BFF is also going through a period of instability with senior vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy stepping down from his post a couple of hours after the Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim government took oath on Thursday.

Members of the BFF executive committee, most of whom known as pro-Awami League organisers, have not turned up to the BFF headquarters since the resignation of Sheikh Hasina and the BFF secretariat has been carrying out the day-to-day activities in their absence.

Bangladesh has a busy schedule ahead in both age-level and senior level football with the men's under-20 and under-17 teams set to take part in separate SAFF Championships this month in Nepal and Bhutan respectively while the national men's and women's teams are supposed to play a few FIFA friendly matches in the coming months.

The BFF elections are also scheduled to take place on October 26. But now, everything seems to be up in the air.

"Some executive members visited the BFF today [yesterday] and majority of the members are expected to come tomorrow [today]. The secretariat is carrying out everything as per the directives. Bangladesh U20 team will fly for Nepal on August 16 and U17 will also fly for Bhutan in a timely manner," said BFF general secretary Emran Hasan Tushar.

"BFF executive committee is supposed to form the election commission in September and we will also hold discussions with the national team coach Javier Cabrera, who returned today [yesterday]."

What to WATCH

SPORTS 18-1
Paris Olympics
Live from 11:30 am
SONY SPORTS 1
Community Shield
Manchester City vs
Manchester Utd
Live from 8:00 pm
SONY SPORTS 2
The Hundred
Southern Brave vs
Trent Rockets
7:30 pm
Welsh Fire vs
Birmingham
Phoenix
Live from 11:00 pm
T SPORTS
GT20
Qualifier 2
Live from 9:00 pm

Momentum, bragging rights up for grabs

AGENCIES

English football's annual curtain-raiser takes place under the famous arch of Wembley Stadium on Saturday as city rivals Manchester City and Manchester United, just 11 weeks after they met in the FA Cup final, return to the iconic stadium to do it all over again in the Community Shield, with bragging rights, momentum and a big shield on the line.

Erik ten Hag's side got their hands on the FA Cup last season, while Pep Guardiola's men celebrated winning their fourth successive Premier League title.

United ended the 2023-24 season on a high by beating red-hot favourites City 2-1 in the FA Cup final, winning the competition for the 13th time and denying the Citizens a domestic double in the process.

While the recent head-to-head result against City might give United some sense of comfort, problems lie for coach Ten Hag as he faces a defensive headache with injuries continuing to plague his side's preparations.

United are set to be without defenders Harry Maguire, Victor Lindelof, Luke Shaw, and Aaron Wan-Bissaka for the game today.

In addition, centre-back Lisandro Martinez only rejoined the squad this week after taking part in Argentina's successful defence of its Copa America crown this summer.

"From individual to individual we will assess them and make a decision whether they start, or come from the bench, or they don't play," said Ten Hag on Thursday.

Big money summer arrival Leny Yoro will definitely miss out after undergoing foot surgery this week for a knock sustained during a friendly and is unexpected to be unavailable for three months.

Meanwhile, a seventh Premier League crown in eight seasons is firmly in City's sights ahead of what could prove to be Guardiola's ninth and final year in charge of the club, but they will first be out for revenge against Man United as they attempt to win their seventh Community Shield today.

Man City concluded their pre-season tour of the United States on August 3 with a 4-2 victory over Chelsea -- coincidently their opponents on the opening weekend of the new Premier League season -- with Erling Haaland netting a hat-trick to help the Citizens register their first friendly win after failing to come out on top in previous matches against Celtic, AC Milan and Barcelona.

It has been difficult to read too much into Man City's pre-season due to the absence of several first-team stars, but some of those could make a timely return on Saturday as Guardiola's side seek to avoid losing English football's annual curtain-raiser for the fourth consecutive year.

This will be the eighth time in the history of the Community Shield that the match has been a repeat of the previous season's FA Cup final.

United will go into the Community Shield this weekend seeking to win the title for a record-extending 22nd time.

Man City have competed in the previous three Community Shield games, but didn't win any of them. Man Utd were the last team to lose four in a row (1998-2001).

Erling Haaland has been involved in nine goals in six appearances against the Red Devils (6 goals, 3 assists).

At the Iconic Mindil Beach in the Northern Territory of Australia, Bangladesh High Performance (HP) unit skipper Akbar Ali [fourth from right] pose for a photo with the other eight participating team captains of the Top End T20 Series 2024, which got underway in Darwin yesterday. Bangladesh HP will play their first match against Melbourne Renegades Academy on Sunday morning.

PHOTO: **BCB**

BCB pushing to keep WC hosting rights

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is trying to make headway in communicating with the relevant authorities of the interim government over hosting the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, slated to be played in October this year.

The BCB has been in communication with International Cricket Council (ICC) over the last 10 to 15 days after the unrest in the country led to serious concerns in the ICC over Bangladesh being able to host the World Cup. ICC has reportedly already looked into alternative options to host the 10-team event.

It is understood that the ICC is in discussion to resolve the matter as early as possible as the cricket's governing body needs adequate amount of time to weigh up alternative options.

Following the fall of the Awami League government last Monday, a new interim government took oath on Thursday. The same day, the BCB wrote to Bangladesh Army Chief of Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman regarding security assurance to host the tournament.

"We had communicated with them [the Army] but by that time the [interim] government had already been formed. Since it has been formed, they will place priority on it as required," BCB chief executive officer Nizamuddin Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We have communicated with them and the sooner we get a response the better we will understand the situation. We had communicated with them very late yesterday [Thursday] and there was very little time for them to go through it," he added.

With many board members absent from their offices, conducting daily activities has become a challenge for the BCB. The board, however, is still hopeful of hosting the tournament, said the BCB chief executive.

ICC is also monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and most likely is doing an independent assessment. An ICC spokesperson has said that they will make an announcement only after a decision has been made.

"ICC had sent us a letter and then we communicated with our Army chief. We will again ask tomorrow [today]. The letter that we had written was also directed to the sports ministry, Air Force, Navy and other relevant parties. So, let's see," BCB umpires' committee chairman Iftekhar Ahmed Mithu said yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh are slated to begin their official training session for the upcoming two-Test series against Pakistan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium today.

Bangladesh 'A' team, which includes many of the national Test team stars, left for Pakistan on Friday and the BCB are willing to send the national team to Pakistan ahead of schedule for the series, which begins on August 21. "We are planning is to send the team to Pakistan as early as possible. We are in discussion with the PCB and if we go early, they will facilitate it and they are happy to host," Nizamuddin informed.

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শান্তিতে নোবেল বিজয়ী অর্থনীতিবিদ
ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূসকে
আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা।

ন্যাশনাল ব্যাংক বিশ্বাস করে ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূসের
যোগ্য নেতৃত্ব ও দিকনির্দেশনায় বাংলাদেশ
বিশ্বের বুকে মাথা উঁচু করে দাঁড়াবে।

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Int’l community ready to work with new govt

UN, EU, US, China, Germany, Pakistan welcome it

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The international community has expressed its readiness to work with the interim government and its chief Prof Muhammad Yunus who took oath on Thursday, three days after the fall of the Awami League government following an upsurge.

Calling for the end of violence at the soonest, it also urged for independent investigation into the killings during the students’ protest demanding quota reform in government jobs.

“We welcome Dr Yunus’s call for an end to the recent violence, and we stand ready to work with the interim government and Dr Yunus as it charts a democratic future for the people of Bangladesh,” State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller told a media briefing in Washington on Thursday.

He said they have communicated with the interim government, and the US embassy Charge De’ Affaires Helen LaFave attended the swearing-in event. However, he could not say if she spoke to Prof Yunus there.

Calling for the end of violence at the soonest, int’l community also urged for an independent investigation into the killings during the students’ protest demanding quota reform protest.

Miller, however, refused to comment on the private diplomatic conversations.

EU High Representative and Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell also welcomed the interim government.

“Bangladesh is now entering a period of transition, and the interim government will have an important task to prepare the ground for democratic elections and ensure accountability for the deaths and violence that have occurred,” he said in a statement.

“This is an important moment for the country’s democratic path and the fulfilment of the aspirations of the people of Bangladesh and its youth.”

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Students paint graffiti on the wall of a police box, depicting the recent quota reform protests. The photo was taken near the Mirpur-1 intersection in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Interim govt formed upon SC nod

Says registrar general of SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Mohammed Shahabuddin sought an opinion from the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court before forming the interim government.

The government was formed after the full bench of the apex court gave its opinion in favour considering the country’s current situation, Supreme Court Registrar General Aziz Ahmed Bhuiyan told

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Six inmates killed during jailbreak bid in Jamalpur

19 injured; guards open fire during clash with prisoners at Ctg central jail

STAR REPORT

Six prisoners died and 19 were injured in Thursday’s shooting at the Jamalpur District Jail.

Meanwhile, prison guards opened fire during a clash with a group of inmates at the Chattogram Central Jail yesterday.

Tensions escalated at different jails as groups of inmates attempted to escape since Monday, the day when Sheikh Hasina resigned and left the country.

At the Chattogram Central Jail, the prison guards opened fire when some prisoners tried to break open the main gate around 2:00pm, our staff correspondent reports, quoting Jail Superintendent Manjur Hossain.

On information, army personnel reached the spot and brought the situation under control, he said, adding that none of the prisoners could escape.

Two injured people were taken out of the jail, said witnesses.

Their identities could not be known immediately.

At the Jamalpur District Jail, six prisoners died and 19 others, including prison guards

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

‘Hasina did not resign’

Claims Joy, says AL willing to work with BNP for democracy

REUTERS, *New Delhi*

Sheikh Hasina had not resigned as prime minister before fleeing this week to India as anti-government protesters marched on her official residence, her son and adviser told Reuters early today.

Hasina has been sheltering in New Delhi since Monday following an uprising that killed about 300 people, many of them students, ending her uninterrupted rule of 15 years in the country of 170 million people.

“My mother never officially resigned. She didn’t get the time,” Hasina’s son Sajeeb Wazed told Reuters from Washington.

“She had planned to make a statement and submit her resignation. But then the protesters started marching on the prime minister’s residence. And there was no time. My mother wasn’t even packed. As far as the constitution goes, she is still the prime minister of Bangladesh.”

He said though the president had dissolved parliament after consulting with military chiefs and opposition politicians, the formation of a caretaker government without the prime minister actually formally resigning “can be

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা

প্রথম বাংলাদেশী নোবেল বিজয়ী এবং ক্ষুদ্রঋণের মাধ্যমে দারিদ্র্য বিমোচনের অগ্রদূত **ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস** বাংলাদেশের অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকার-এর প্রধান উপদেষ্টা হিসেবে দায়িত্বভার গ্রহণ করায় দেশের ৪১টি বেসরকারী ব্যাংকের শীর্ষ সংগঠন বাংলাদেশ অ্যাসোসিয়েশন অব ব্যাংকস (বিএবি)-র পক্ষ থেকে প্রাণঢালা অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা।

আমরা আরও অভিনন্দন জানাচ্ছি দেশের অত্যন্ত সুপরিচিত ও অভিজ্ঞ ব্যাংকার, শিক্ষক, আইনজ্ঞ, মানবাধিকার কর্মী, নিরাপত্তা বিশ্লেষক, বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তিবর্গসহ ছাত্র আন্দোলনের অন্যতম দুজন সমন্বয়ককে, যারা অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকার-এর উপদেষ্টা হিসেবে দায়িত্ব গ্রহণ করেছেন। আমরা বিশ্বাস করি, বহুমাত্রিক বৈশিষ্ট্যমণ্ডিত এই সরকার একটি সুন্দর ও নিরাপদ আগামীর বাংলাদেশ আমাদেরকে উপহার দিবেন।

একই সাথে আমরা ছাত্র আন্দোলনে শহীদ সকল শিক্ষার্থী, ব্যাংকার, আইন শৃঙ্খলা রক্ষাকারী বাহিনীর সদস্যসহ আত্মত্যাগকারী সকলের রূহের মাগফিরাত কামনা করছি এবং তাঁদের শোকসন্তপ্ত পরিবারের প্রতি গভীর সহানুভূতি প্রকাশ করছি।

বাংলাদেশ অ্যাসোসিয়েশন অব ব্যাংকস গৌরবজ্জল অতীতের ধারাবাহিকতায় এবারও এই আন্দোলনে শহীদ ও আহতদের পরিবারের পাশে দাঁড়াবে এবং সংকটময় অর্থনীতি পুনরুদ্ধার ও ব্যবসা বাণিজ্যে গতি ফিরিয়ে আনার লক্ষ্যে এই সরকারের সাথে একযোগে কাজ করবে।

BAB বাংলাদেশ অ্যাসোসিয়েশন অব ব্যাংকস

Star WR
WEEKEND READ
DHAKA SATURDAY AUGUST 10, 2024
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Students take it upon themselves to clean the parliament premises. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Students cleaning the Central Shaheed Minar. PHOTO: STAR

‘We will safeguard our freedom’

Students step up to ensure order

A number of volunteers were also seen collecting valuables that had been looted from Gono Bhaban and the parliament. Some people, who looted the valuables, were seen handing over those to the volunteers, who then returned them to the authorities.

MASHFIQ MIZAN *and*
NAFIS ALMAS SIAM

“Shadhinata orjoner cheye rokkha kora kathin”

This is a saying in Bangla that students learn in textbooks at a very early age, which means “Freedom is harder to protect than to earn”.

But they didn’t memorise the verse just for the sake of it, thousands of Bangladeshi students across the country are now living by it and passing sleepless nights to safeguard the freedom.

In July, Young people like Abu Sayed, Mugdho, Priyo and others were killed by law enforcers and Awami League activists when they took to the streets for a discrimination free Bangladesh.

But students did not back down.

On August 3, they delivered a clear message to Sheikh Hasina: “Quit now”.

Revolution was in the air as people from all walks of life -- guardians with children, rickshaw pullers, workers, day labourers, office-goers, and others -- joined in masses, rallying behind the youth waving the national flag.

On August 4, the streets of Dhaka seemed to converge on Shahbagh, the epicentre of the uprising, as the area turned into a sea of people. By evening, reports of injuries and deaths began to surface.

At one point, bodies were being piled up in front of the Central Shaheed Minar.

Dozens were dying, but in the midst of it all, the students issued a call: “March towards Dhaka” on August 5.

Students barely slept on the night of August 4. They braced for the worst, but they were not afraid.

Defying police, Awami League activists, and the BGB, hundreds of thousands began marching toward Dhaka on August 5.

There were reports of police firing in the morning, but then the winds began to change. Suddenly, law enforcers stepped aside, and the army allowed protesters to march toward Gono Bhaban.

By that time, people sensed freedom -- they knew something big was coming. They cheered, they marched on, singing and dancing in the streets.

And in the afternoon, the announcement came: “Sheikh Hasina has resigned and fled to India”.

The streets, once filled with fear, were now alive with a sense of freedom.

As the day wore on, the atmosphere shifted from one of defiance to one of celebration.

Fear was replaced by joy, and the streets that had once echoed with cries for justice now reverberated with songs of freedom.

People danced, sang, and embraced one another. Strangers became friends, and the city was united in a way it had never been before. Sweets were distributed, and tears of happiness flowed as the young generation celebrated their newfound sense of empowerment. Initially, it was a day of pure, unadulterated joy -- a day when hope triumphed over despair.

But as the celebrations continued, the reality of the situation began to set in.

In the beginning, the scenes of people storming the Gono Bhaban seemed to be entertaining. Then news of vandalising temples, houses and establishments started coming in.

The Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi 32 was burnt to ashes. Cultural heritages came under attack. State infrastructures were vandalised and looted. Police stations were being attacked. People, associated with AL and Hasina, and law enforcers, were being beaten to death.

Police left their post, the country was essentially without a government for 72 hours, and the streets descended into chaos.

The students realised they might have won a battle, but the war for lasting change had only just begun.

There was a renewed sense of purpose among the youth. They had tasted freedom, and they were determined to protect it at all costs.

PROTECTING TEMPLES

Al Mahmud Taha, a recent graduate of Dhaka University, was celebrating when he first heard news of temples being vandalised.

Wasting no time, he mobilised a group of peers and headed for Dhakeshwari temple.

With a group of 25, which included Islamic scholars and imams of nearby mosques, they guarded the place all night.

Similarly, the youth from across the country tried to protect temples near them.

Tasneem Abedin Razu, an activist in the anti-government movement from Mirpur, woke up on August 6 with a sense of urgency. His first action was to visit nearby mosques to mobilise imams, muezzins, and Islamic scholars. He then gathered the activists he knew and formed a team dedicated to safeguarding the temples in Mirpur. Additionally, Razu visited nearby minority homes, providing residents with the contact numbers of young volunteers who could offer assistance.

Similar scenes of students guarding places of worship were seen in front of Ramna Kali Temple and ISKCON Swamibag Temple in Dhaka.

In Chattogram, students, armed with sticks, were seen guarding the Nandirhaat and Fatehabad temples.

In Cumilla, Muslim clerics and students were seen guarding the temples all night.

Locals and students stand guard in Badda area late at night. PHOTO: COLLECTED

RESTORING ORDER, MANAGING TRAFFIC

On August 6, approximately 200 students took on security duties at various police stations, churches, and temples in Mirpur.

“We’ve been stationed at Mirpur Police Station and all churches and temples in Mirpur since 9:00am,” said a student.

The police station had been set on fire by a mob the previous night.

In the aftermath, students found an abandoned firearm, damaged firearms, ammunition, a grenade, and a walkie-talkie, and have requested that the army take custody of these items.

Similar scenes were seen in front of Jatrabari Police Station and beyond.

The same day, students returned 40 firearms taken away by miscreants from the National Parliament on August 5.

They handed over the firearms to the security team at the parliament.

Students also cleaned the premises of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, which was ransacked by a mob on Monday following Hasina’s resignation.

Several photos of students voluntarily cleaning the iconic building were doing rounds on social media. They were seen sweeping the ground and cleaning open spaces of the important structure.

A number of volunteers were also seen collecting valuables that had been looted from Gono Bhaban and the parliament. Some people, who looted the valuables, were seen handing over those to the volunteers, who then returned them to the authorities.

Students also took on the role of traffic management, taking positions at every key intersection in the capital and beyond.

They created separate lanes for different types of vehicles, bringing back the memories of the 2018 road safety movement.

They stopped bikers for not wearing helmets, intercepted rickshaws for plying the wrong direction and urged pedestrians to use footbridges.

Ali Wasif, a college student, said, “This is our country. Our brothers gave lives for this country. We won’t let this country descend into chaos as long as we have life in our body.” He was managing traffic at Panthapath intersection. “We will safeguard our hard-earned freedom.”

Commuters were gladly following their directions. Nahidul Islam, a private job holder, said, “It’s heartwarming that these young people took the duty into their hands in the absence of traffic personnel.”

ROBBERY WATCHOUT

Amid rising concerns of robberies in various Dhaka neighborhoods, including Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Uttara, and Dhanmondi, residents, mostly the youth, have been staying up all night to protect their communities. With police essentially absent, locals are using mosque loudspeakers and social media networks to warn of potential attacks.

“Last night around 2:00am, we heard an announcement from the mosques that robbers had entered the neighbourhood. We then went out onto the streets with sticks,” said Shaheen, a resident of East Shewrapara.

Residents in Uttara and Mohammadpur have also experienced robberies, with locals responding quickly by patrolling the streets.

Many school and college goers were seen playing football and cricket the whole night as a means to guard the streets.

A resident of Mohammadpur mentioned that robbers entered the area from different directions around 12:30am early yesterday, but people came out of their homes with sticks and chased away the robbers.

Residents in Uttara said robberies took place late at night at Sector 7. Afterwards, the mosques made announcements asking everyone to stay alert in Sectors 11, 12, and 14.

Tahmid Islam, a resident of Uttara, said he and many others patrolled the area the whole night.

Meanwhile in Dhanmondi, Kalbagan and Kathalbagan, locals were seen patrolling the area.

STAY-AWAY EXTORTIONISTS

Just a day after Hasina’s resignation, a group claiming to be activists of a party reportedly tried to extort money from traders at Meradia Bazar in Rampura.

According to traders, Ideal School and College students, who had been patrolling the area, quickly intervened and chased the extortionists away.

The students provided their contact numbers to the traders, assuring them of support if any further trouble arose.

Similarly, students launched a Facebook group called “Chadabaji Nirodhon Response Team”, aimed at forming quick-response teams to counter extortionists across Dhaka and beyond. What started with just 100 members quickly ballooned to 87,000 within two days.

Meanwhile, the students of Dhaka University were also guarding different dormitories of the campus to make sure outsiders with different party affiliations do not take over the dormitories and bring back the culture of repression on campuses.

Pavel, a recent graduate, said he and his juniors have patrolled DU streets for the last few nights to ensure no one can further vandalise sculptures and engage in mugging or extortions.

“Enough is enough, we want a safe campus, free from student politics,” he told this correspondent.

From Left, Three students working to preserve a bust after the Shadhinata Sangram Bhashkarjo on Fuller Road was vandalised. A student managing traffic on a road. Students along with Ansar members stand guard in front of Jatrabari Police Station. Students wiping off graffiti from a wall while their parents look on. Students cleaning a road.

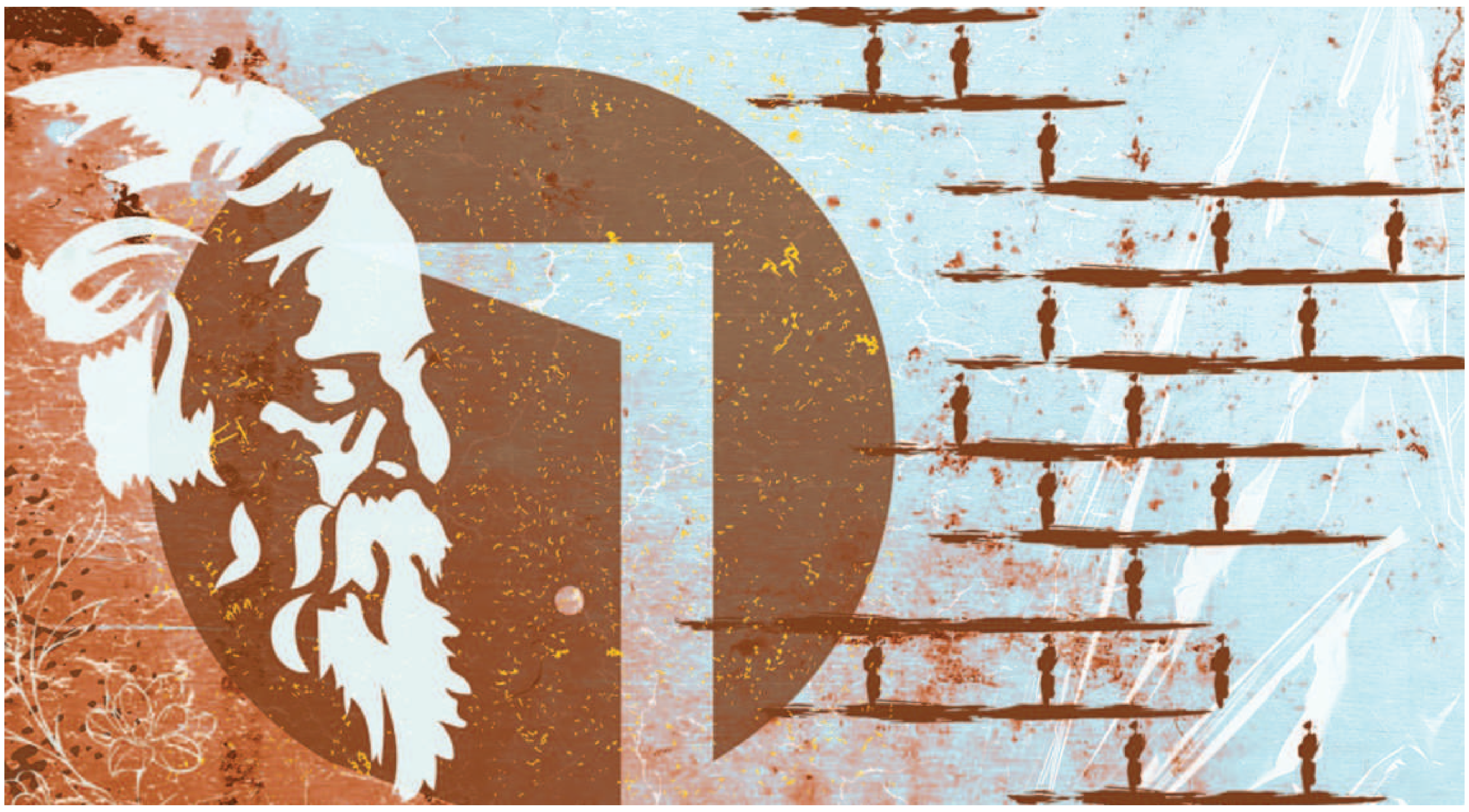


ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

REFLECTIONS

Rabindranath's rebellion

On 'Home and The World's' treatment of revolutionary fervour

SHAHRIAR SHAAMS

Too deftly, Rabindranath shifts gears just as the reader gets comfortable with the turmoil at home. The world bangs on the door incessantly and its calls to be invited in brings about a chaotic development. The turning point, if one has to choose one, is when Sandip asks Bimala for money, funds to carry out the noble work of this fight for freedom, for the country, swadesh.

"The liberation that comes through sorrow is greater than the sorrow," says Nikhilesh, in *Home and the World*. I quote from Penguin's Modern Classics edition, in Sreejata Guha's translation. Tagore's liberal-minded, university-educated zamindar is a disciple of restraint and weariness, yet this line does not sound out of sync from Nikhilesh, whose heartbreak can also speak for the troubled swadeshi protesters he is so against. Re-reading the novel during such a perilous time, I was moved greatly by Rabindranath's trio of protagonists: through Nikhilesh's hesitancies that reflect well the attitudes of his class and their newfound "modernity", through his wife Bimala—egged on to come out to the "world" with him and leave the contours of homes all too familiar to women—and through Sandip, the brash revolutionary and agitator, hanging around Nikhilash's estate (one can almost say squatting) and flattering Bimala enough to win her over with talks of revolution and freedom.

Rabindranath is for every occasion. Nowhere does it feel truer to me than in *Home and the World,* whose backdrop of political turmoil only strengthens the personal dynamic between a zamindar with a sobering "conscience" and his insurrectionary friend, Sandip. Perhaps, it is testament to Rabindranath's power—an effervescent prose which overwhelms all senses—that a reader is often undecided whether the poet's attacks and denigrations are his own or the expected predispositions of the 'bhodro shomaj' who read him with delight.

Home and the World, much like its author, provides multitudes of reflections, analyses, and reactions. The wrecking of Nikhilesh and Bimala's marriage when Sandip makes his mark in the estate seems to often to be washed away under the waves of nationalist fervour that much of the later half of the novel concerns itself with. I went into the novel to dwell on the former, but Rabindranath's treatment of Sandip did in the end force a few words out of me.

Home and the World begins with Nikhilesh encouraging his wife Bimala to step outside into the world, to engage with their enlightened contemporaries and become more of an equal partner to him in the process intellectually. It is a liberal urge that hides the fact that Nikhilesh's idea of equality is strictly on his terms and excludes any real independence for Bimala. This friction occurs when Sandip's charms propels Bimala to adopt ideals Nikhilesh is at unease with. Nikhilesh, meek as he is, outright refuses when Bimala requests they stop stocking foreign cloth in his estate's market. He believes that "the words that Bimala spoke in the name of the country, were coming from Sandip's mouth and not form a greater idea." An insecurity develops. Stumbling upon his wife in the garden later on in the novel, Nikhilesh blurts out, "Bimala, my cage here is walled from all sides—how can I keep you here? You cannot live like this."

Home and the World, then, already succeeds in conjuring up a great many conversations on the extent of ownership of one another in a marriage.

Too deftly, Rabindranath shifts gears just as the reader gets comfortable with the turmoil at home. The world bangs on the door incessantly and its calls to be invited in brings about a chaotic development. The turning point, if one has to choose one, is when Sandip asks Bimala for money, funds to carry out the noble work of this fight for freedom, for the country, *swadesh*. It is the very moment when the home and the world are entwined together significantly. It is also when Sandip stops being a person and becomes, instead, little more than a caricature. A greedy, materialist demeanour is sketched over him. "He had the divine scabbard," Bimala thinks, "but the weapon in it was the devil's." All talk of supposed revolution is set aside as Sandip dreams: "I want to have fifty thousand rupees in my hands and blow it in two days, on my own comforts and a few deeds for the country. I want to shed this poor man's disguise and look at the real me, the rich me, in the mirror just once."

Why does Rabindranath make him so crass later on? Is it so that Bimala's passion has a rude awakening and she returns to the comforts of her household? And if so, why must she have this reality-check in the first place? Rabindranath's own experiences during the movement to boycott British goods had apparently left him horrified. He felt, as Anita Desai wrote in a preface for a 1985 edition, "that the boycott of cheap British goods in favour of expensive and poorly made Indian goods was harming the interests of the poor, to whom Swadeshi was an abstract, distant and meaningless term." This explains his sympathies with a Nikhilesh he feels so attuned with. Rabindranath's rebellion here has been to completely identify with the zamindar against what he saw as misguided, though earnest, attempts at snatching up self-government by force. Sandip's charisma must, at this point, become witchcraft. Though the theft at the heart of the novel starts as a matter of the home, we find Sandip—the pied piper of "the world"—come out of the ordeal as reckless, predatory, almost evil. He is a boogeyman of the bhodrolok, who must hold him up to discredit an entire revolutionary spirit. Most other revolutionaries of this movement must be discounted as such, too, for Sandip serves satisfactorily as a representative figure. They must defame and deny Sandip the compassion and sentimentality that Nikhilesh is offered easily. Ultimately, *Home and the World*'s Sandip is a brute with no serious vision for nation-building. All too often, and perhaps too close for comfort, we have seen a similar denial of humanity, the rebuffing of dignity, and a refusal to truly see contemporary revolutionaries with good intentions. They are shown to be people you cannot trust. Similar to Sandip, the powers that be paint them as the liberal's favourite kind of vulgarity—a radical.

Shahriar Shaams *has written for* Dhaka Tribune, The Business Standard, *and* The Daily Star. *Find him on instagram: @shahriar.shaams.*

POETRY

There was complete silence around the time of your birth

RAIAN ABEDIN

the way there was complete silence when
you lied for the first time. You opened your eyes
scared that the ants
would hunt them down—egg-white and so
in love with the hurricane lamps your mother
would bring out for your father to fill
with kerosene. You were born
like a waterlogged city, you were
born with silence in your mouth. You lied
like a city still holding on to the rain,
soaked lamps and the monsoon gods
bleeding. Over time, it will become
a part of you—*that's what the rain*
does, your father tells you one day,
drenched on his way home, his shadow
now touching yours, the closest you have been, *it lingers*.
And then your eyes—egg-white and so
in love with this silence
finds you as
you tell yourself
that this, your eyes and the rain,
must be love.

Raian Abedin *is a poet, a student of Biochemistry, and a contributor to* The Daily Star.

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

POETRY

Dawn of new (?) air

SNATA BASU

Do you need water? I have water!
He opens his chest to a row of searing bullets,
he dies like a raven...we wield fists in their memory,
voices escape blood canals. We bundle
like fleets of flies in the woods of a distant free world
where vigils are carried on the shoulders of our heads,
and shoulders of their bodies, pealing in our ears
like a scene from the cinema–a scene from an abattoir.
A scene where houses are torched to the ground
because there used to be an altar there,
where someone once sank to their knees asking after a god,
a prayer plant in each corner
where the sun looped in a dozen pleats.
For two days I don't eat a morsel,
and my skin collapses by the bones,
I start losing my face—I look as cold as a corpse,
as this city solvates in silence and hoots,
sometimes on the streets and sometimes at our doors.
Teetering in between the time I spent on the comfort
of my bed the last few days, trying to heal reading
Didion's narratives, shedding a tear every time she says 'father',
a gaping lacuna of promises sails by,
the last few days are all I keep.
I remember that there is a Hindu family by our windows
whose calls of *shankho* trumpet the moving air
during pray-hours, and someone asks
'Well, hell! Do they have to be so loud?'

DESIGN: **MAISHA SYEDA**

and I say, *yes, because this is their house.*
And you might not have seen
the light of our homes glittering in the horizon
during Dashera,
on Kali Pujo,
when the floors turn floral,
and there's music everywhere.
You might not have read about the pillaging
of our long legacies that the wrath of faith has eaten,
of tribe ingestion of preservers,
of the torchings of Devi Maa's hull,
but talks of harmony flood your nose.
Harmony, harmony, harmony—you want it so bad,
and so you put words in our mouths—
speak this and speak that! This is for the loving of our land.
The joining of our hands.
There's a reason we collapse time and time again,
our hearts ransacked by the crisscrossing of treachery,
leaving behind lesions you will never heal
or carry
or live through.
You hail this spirit of new light that is your own,
as a new dawn of incongruity nears,
you let it sink through
simply because you can.

Snata Basu *is a writer based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Her poetry has appeared on numerous literary platforms including* The Opiate, Visual Verse: An Online Anthology of Art and Words, *and* Small World City.

The Long March but Short Flight

New political party 'Afsos league' announced by former AL supporters

MESSENGER LURKER

A section of former Awami League supporters, who consider themselves free thinkers, progressives, etc. and who also joined the students in demanding resignation of Hasina, have now decided to open a new political party, the Afsos League.

In a press conference held on the streets of Lalmatia at 2:30am, while patrolling for dacoits, they informed reporters "is this the freedom we wanted?"

Supreme convener of the party Manushua Babir spoke at length with reporters about the rationale behind starting the party.

"Immediately after Hasina fell, we rejoiced so much because we didn't want a fascist leader either. But then I soon found out that this was all a CIA plot to make this into an extremist and fundamentalist state," says Babir, who had also joined the Long March to Dhaka.

"How is this a free country? I can't sleep at night fearing that BNP-Jamaat will come back, that I will have to hide my tattoos. Hasina, while she killed many people, at least kept the extremists at bay," they added.

The leaders of the Afsos League also spoke at length about how the toppling of the regime was an outside act and how some former staunch supporters of AL knew about this before and warned them. But they were too quick to judge Hasina for the atrocities she unleashed on her own people -- killing at least 450 people in a matter of weeks.

They also questioned that if the revolution really was for better days, then how could another equally rotten political party immediately get so much limelight.

The correspondent who filed this report was also very, very worried and has no answers to the above questions.

Last reported, the correspondent is considering joining the Afsos League, because they don't want another tyrannical regime after toppling one.

Meanwhile, an anti-student movement has started because their revolution has not solved all the problems the country faces, like, immediately. Activists of the movement began marching through the streets yesterday morning with a banner reading "Was this the plan?"

Activists said things like, "What do these pipsqueaks know. The traffic was much better before they took over. Was this the plan?"

All of the members of this new group are middle-aged men.

Tyrant wakes up after 15 years, becomes good person

WORRIED CORRESPONDENT

A tyrant who was on a drip of liquefied sleeping pills for the last 15 years because another tyrant had usurped him, woke up on August 7 and became a good person.

Wandering out with puffed up eyes, he came out of his balcony to see thousands of people, who had come to see him because a mass uprising had sent the other tyrant flying out of the country.

Knowing that he was on the cusp of becoming a tyrant again, he smiled, and opened his playbook.

"There will be no violence," he said to the crowd, and muttered "for now" under his breath.

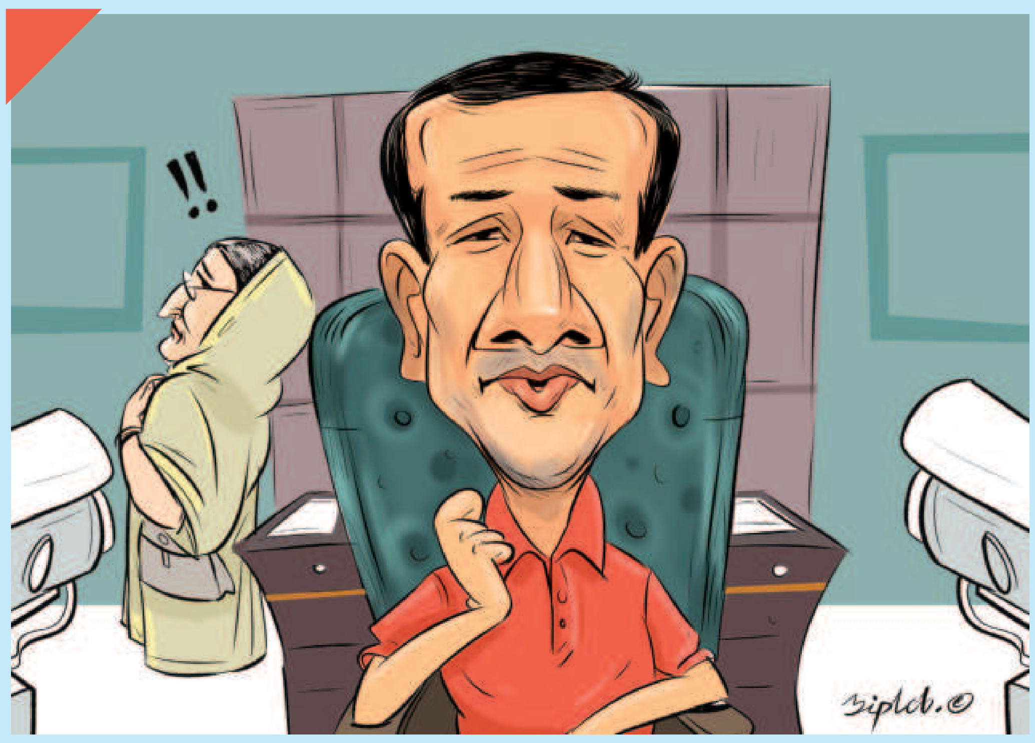
"No revenge, only..." he had to look into the book. "What's that... oh, love and peace."

"The students are our future..." he said to uproarious applause.

"Enemies," he muttered away from the microphone, smiled, and went back in.

Hey, this is Jay from Hinge

AAQIB HASIB



"Did you know babe, I am actually older than my age on Hinge. And because I am very fit, which everyone tells me all the time, everyone always guesses that is my age," said Jay, staring into the mirror, trying to fix his hairline.

I didn't know what to do. I had just told him that I was breaking up with him, but he just simply went back to talking like nothing had happened.

"Hey, Jay, listen. I don't know if you hear me or not, so I am gonna repeat myself," I said, my voice getting louder. I was so tired of this.

"After everything that you and your mother have put me through in the last 15 years, even if it seems abrupt, I am done. I am not SAYING we should break up. I am telling you we ARE broken up. IT'S OVER," I said, mouthing out that last word.

Suddenly, a look of absolute menace creeped up on his face, one I was all too familiar with. He looked so damned stupid with that look on his face. I almost wanted to punch him.

"What the hell do you mean? Who the hell do you think you are? I don't even want you. Me and my mother, we don't want or need you. After everything we have done, you treat us like this? There is something wrong with you people. Who is influencing you? Jamal or that Zead guy at work?" he yelled, a look of fury on his face.

"I mean all of the gaslighting, manipulation, lies, physical abuse, hurting my friends. How can you even believe that I would still want to be with you. I am surprised it took me this long, but I guess that is what Stockholm Syndrome is. We are done. Please leave my house and take your mother with you," I replied, bravely.

This dude is an absolutely crazy person.

"You didn't even pay me for all the work I did on your house for free. Prachy, you are so ungrateful. You don't deserve me or my mother. We are done with you. You're going to become the next Paki," he said, spitting on the floor.

Jay, if that even was his real name, walked out of the room, slamming the door shut behind him.

I breathed a sigh of relief, it was over. They were going to be gone. I was going to be free.

Within a second Jay re-entered the room, a look of fury on his face.

"No, I changed my mind. You belong to me. We have too much history together. 15 years of success. You are nothing without us. I won't stay in this house tonight and my mother won't come back. But we are not done. The Shawami League sends its regards. Remember that," he said, his skin almost snakelike from all the venom he was spitting at me.

"And don't you ever speak about my mommy like that," he said, wagging a finger at my face, before finally leaving. Hopefully for good.

Satire not satiring the same after the fall of Awami League

AFIZAN HADIAR

After the wave of excitement ended and things started to get serious with the new interim government, satire writers seem to have been at a loss on what to make fun of.

This is what satire writers from different top dailies in the country had to say.

"It's not the same thrill anymore. I miss the rush of possibly being killed or disappeared at the hands of the government for making fun of them," said satire writer Chuppu Chup from The Daily First light.

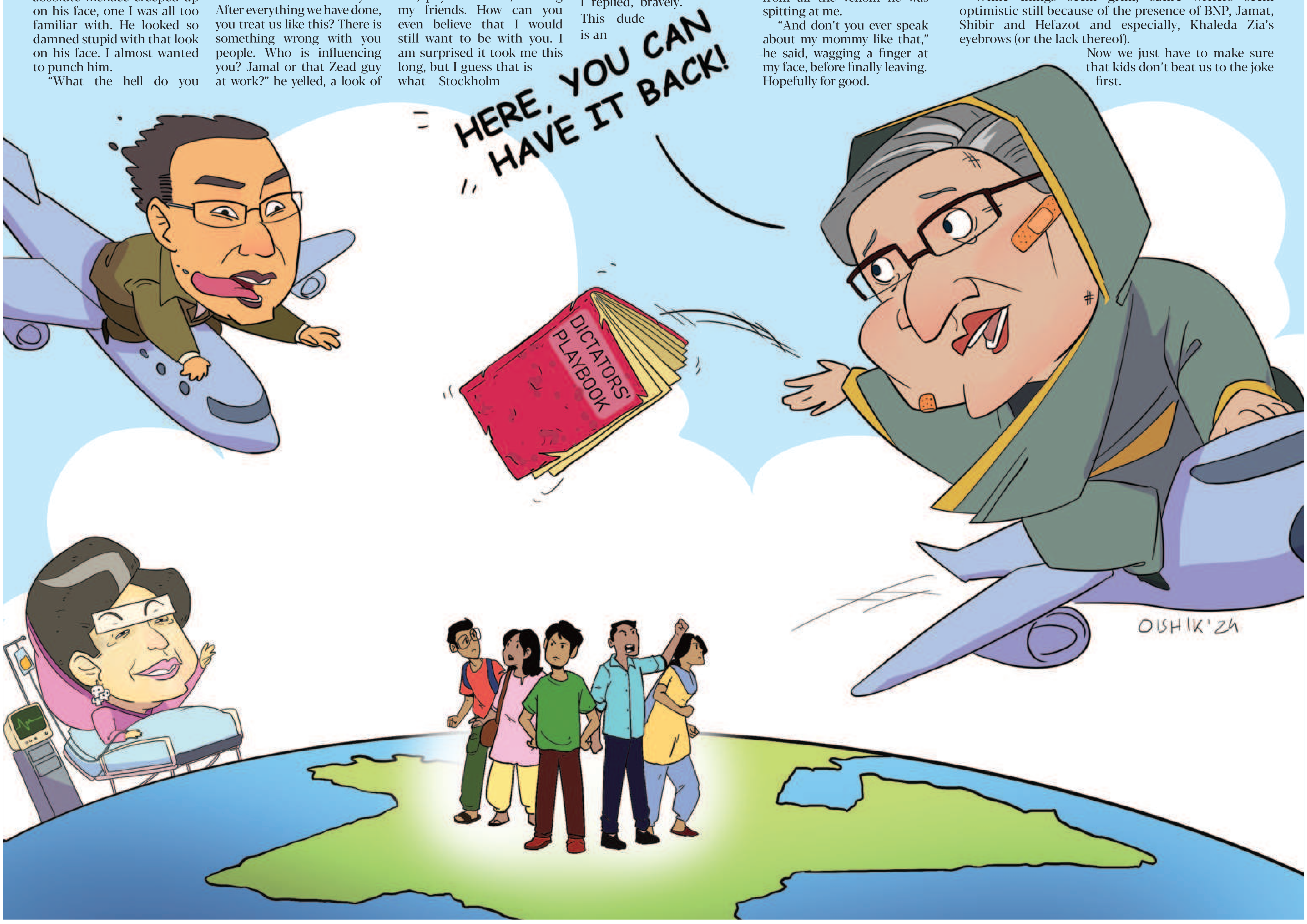
"Things are so safe now that we can literally name names when we criticise the government. There's no repression of freedom of speech yet. I mean how can we even write satire without repression," said another correspondent from The Daily NotunBoyosh.

The two correspondents discussed the golden days when this paper was threatened to be sued by Mayor Taposh for criticising his move to cut down trees in Dhaka city in a satire piece.

Tasher Naziba, the writer of the satire piece, said, "Man, there's no menacing around anymore. There's so much positivity going around that I'm starting to fear satire writers will go out of business."

While things seem grim, satire writers seem optimistic still because of the presence of BNP, Jamat, Shibir and Hefazot and especially, Khaleda Zia's eyebrows (or the lack thereof).

Now we just have to make sure that kids don't beat us to the joke first.



LEDGER OF LOSSES

Prolonged unrest, curfew and internet outage dealt a huge blow to Bangladesh's economy

> **We were unable to collect inward remittance for five days amid the internet shutdown but the remittance flow became normal when broadband internet was made available**
>
> **Selim RF Hussain**
> Managing director of BRAC Bank

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh has entered a new chapter in its journey as the wheels of the economy are rolling again, with the country still healing from fresh wounds.

The recent three-week student movement ultimately forced Sheikh Hasina to resign and flee the country, ending her 15-year rule.

The movement began with the students seeking reforms to the quota system for civil service jobs, citing that it was discriminatory.

The Awami League government responded by showing its iron fist in the form of Bangladesh Chhatra League in a bid to end the agitation.

However, tempers only flared further as the ensuing violence led to the deaths of more than 300 people by the time Hasina eventually fled on August 5. As of August 7, The Daily Star confirmed at least 551 deaths.

And while value of the lives lost is immeasurable, the prolonged unrest dealt a huge blow to Bangladesh's roughly $450 billion economy.

According to official estimates, the country suffered losses of over $1 billion daily after economic activities were halted amid the violence and subsequent government curfew between mid-July and early August.

This is because the lack of public safety and an internet outage had forced factories to shut down for nearly a week.

Besides, import-export activities, the supply of agricultural produce and release of goods from ports were all disrupted.

Needless to say, most retail outlets, restaurants, digital commerce and other sectors also suffered significant losses.

কারফিউ জারির জন্য:
কারখানা বন্ধ।

Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, said if the destruction of property is taken into account, then the economic losses may actually be even higher than the estimate.

Before the second wave of supply chain disruptions started, the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) estimated Bangladesh's total losses at above $10 billion.

Although it is clear that the losses must have piled on following the second wave of closures, the FICCI is yet to estimate the additional amount.

Similarly, the thousands that were injured and the hundreds who became handicapped or lost their eyesight also sustained tremendous losses.

The economic impact of the turmoil on several sectors is provided below.

GARMENTS SECTOR

The primary textile sector faced losses worth $58.8 million for having to shut down their mills for four days due to the violence and curfew during the first round of protests.

The Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) is yet to assess the losses from the second round, when the mills were shuttered amid another spell of violence for four days.

During the first round of protests, the apparel sector lost Tk 6,400 crore as their production units were shut.

The indirect losses are even more, said SM Mannan Kochi, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), during a press conference held at the time.

Other than being able to continue production, local apparel exporters suffered for a lack of communication with their international clothing retailers and brands amid the internet blackout.

Many local suppliers could not book work orders from the retailers and brands during the internet outage as July, August and September are considered as the peak seasons for booking work orders for the next summer and spring seasons.

Both local and international retailers and brands also faced difficulties in shipping goods from Chattogram port because of the violence and curfew.

As a result, many apparel suppliers had to use expensive air shipments, faced work order cancellations or offered big discounts to their international buyers.

ICT SECTOR

The ICT sector was dealt a huge blow, especially when the government shut down the internet in a bid to quell the protests.

The government blocked mobile internet services on July 17 amid widespread violence over the quota reform protests. A day later, broadband internet was shut down, severely affecting public life and a wide range of economic activities, including utility bill payments, online banking, international communications, digital commerce and the clearance of goods from ports.

Digital commerce entrepreneurs, software makers, F-commerce entrepreneurs, business process outsourcing companies, telecom companies and freelancers were also significantly affected by the government-enforced internet blackout.

The government restored broadband internet on a limited scale on July 23.

However, social media services like Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp and YouTube were blocked across the country.

Mobile internet finally resumed on July 28 while social media platforms were unblocked on July 31.

Suddenly, in the morning of August 2, mobile internet users were unable to access their Facebook and Messenger accounts for approximately seven hours.

Again, on August 5, the latest outage occurred, lasting only a few hours, during which former prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country.

These moves severely damaged the reputation of many export-oriented IT firms while many internet-based businesses lost significant revenue.

According to the ICT and telecommunications ministry, the sector faced financial losses of Tk 18,000 crore.

However, many in the sector said that figure is exaggerated.

The biggest blow, according to industry insiders, is the damage to the ICT sector's image on the global stage.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) said its members incurred Tk 500 crore in losses during the five-day internet blackout.

According to the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB), the sector suffered a loss of approximately Tk 1,700 crore during the 13 days in July when the internet was disrupted.

The e-CAB said about 95 percent of e-commerce transactions remained suspended due to various factors, including a countrywide curfew and security concerns.

The e-CAB has initiated a survey to assess the full extent of the damage.

Ride-hailing companies and e-courier services also took a huge blow from the internet shutdown.

BANKING SECTOR

Industry insiders said all the losses in the banking sector could not be estimated in monetary terms. In a recent meeting with the central bank, bankers said that ATM booths were destroyed and two or three officials died.

Pubali Bank Managing Director Mohammad Ali recently said the internet blackout adversely affected the banking sector as well as banks' profitability.

Bankers and officials of mobile financial service (MFS) providers said their remittance collection remained suspended from midnight of July 18, when the internet shutdown was imposed, to July 23, when broadband services were partially reinstated.

"We were unable to collect inward remittance for five days amid the internet shutdown but the remittance flow became normal when broadband internet was made available," said Selim RF Hussain, managing director of BRAC Bank.

Around $80 million to $100 million in remittances are sent to Bangladesh on a regular day, which was disrupted for the internet shutdown, he added.

Amid the internet shutdown, people were unable to conduct online banking. A lot of ATM booths were also shut while others ran out of cash.

An official of a leading MFS provider said they mobilise Tk 5 crore to Tk 7 crore in remittances on a normal day but it had come down to Tk 80 lakh due to slow internet.

STOCK MARKET

Although trading at the stock market was disrupted due to the countrywide movement, the main problem occurred due to a loss in production of listed firms, said Saiful Islam, president of the DSE Brokers' Association (DBA).

"It has a long-term impact."

Due to the loss in production, their business will be hampered, so shareholders will be the worst sufferers.

On the other hand, financial institutions may face a huge blow after the regime change as many influential and big borrowers may flee.

If banks become weak, it would be very alarming for the market, he added.

INSURANCE SECTOR

A top official of a leading insurance company, who is also a leader of the Bangladesh Insurance Association, said premium income in the life insurance sector dropped 30 percent in the last three weeks compared to the previous three weeks.

Insurance claims in the non-life insurance sector increased by at least 15 percent as people's assets are being vandalised, set ablaze and destroyed.

If the second wave of the movement is considered, the loss will be much higher as the vandalism and arson rose in the last three days.

Sheikh Kabir Hossain, president of the Bangladesh Insurance Association, said the insurance sector has suffered greatly due to the unstable situation.

Many customers did not renew their policies during this period, he said, adding that naturally, no one will open a new life insurance policy in this situation.

Hossain said work is underway to estimate how much the insurance sector has suffered financially during this volatile situation.

Md Jalalul Azim, managing director of Pragati Life Insurance, said: "Our colleagues could not get out of their house as the situation was very unpredictable in all regards."

Whenever there is political unrest in the country, even if people have money in hand, they will not spend. It is natural. Overall, business has suffered greatly, he added.

RETAIL SECTOR

Retailers were severely impacted since they could not open shops. Sometimes, they opened their doors for a short time. A huge number of people are connected with the retail service sector so all of them were affected.

According to Bangladesh Dokan Malik Samity, a platform of shop owners, the sector counted losses of Tk 2,000 crore per day.

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Asif Ibrahim, chairman of the Chittagong Stock Exchange, said one of the most important tasks for the nation is to now ensure that economic activities, particularly manufacturing and service sectors, return to business as usual.

"We must assure the countries that we trade with that Bangladesh's private sector is back in business and will fulfil all the commitments to our international customers."

"Now, we want to strongly emphasise to the international business community that the private sector of Bangladesh is resilient. It is the engine of growth of the economy and will continue to be so," he added.

Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office, said the economy was already in crisis and the recent political turmoil had caused the situation to deteriorate further.

Social equity and justice need to be ensured. Internet connection and other communications should not be disrupted further while education should be resumed with full priority.

Such measures would provide confidence to people and normalise economic activity.

Now, everything should be operational. The metro rail and elevated expressway in Dhaka as well as railways and all other connections should be operational as soon as possible, he added.

WALTON
Smart Fridge
১ নম্বর
রেফ্রিজারেটর ব্র্যান্ড

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW
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SECOND EDITION
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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

CJ, 5 other SC judges resign

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan and five other judges of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court stepped down yesterday amid student protests for their resignation.

They sent resignation letters to President Mohammed Shahabuddin through the law ministry and he accepted their resignations.

The development comes only two days after the interim government took charge.

The five other judges are: Justice M Enayetur Rahim, Justice Md Abu Zafor Siddique, Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim, Justice Md Shahinur Islam and Justice Kashefa Hussain.

The Appellate Division was left with Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam only.

Media reports last night said Justice Ashfaqul also resigned, but Law Secretary Golam Sarwar told The Daily Star at 10:30pm that he had not received any resignation letter from Justice Ashfaqul.

The president last night appointed Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed as the 25th chief justice.

The proceedings of the Appellate Division and the High Court Division of the Supreme Court have been suspended since July 22, a day after the apex court delivered a landmark verdict downsizing quotas in government jobs.

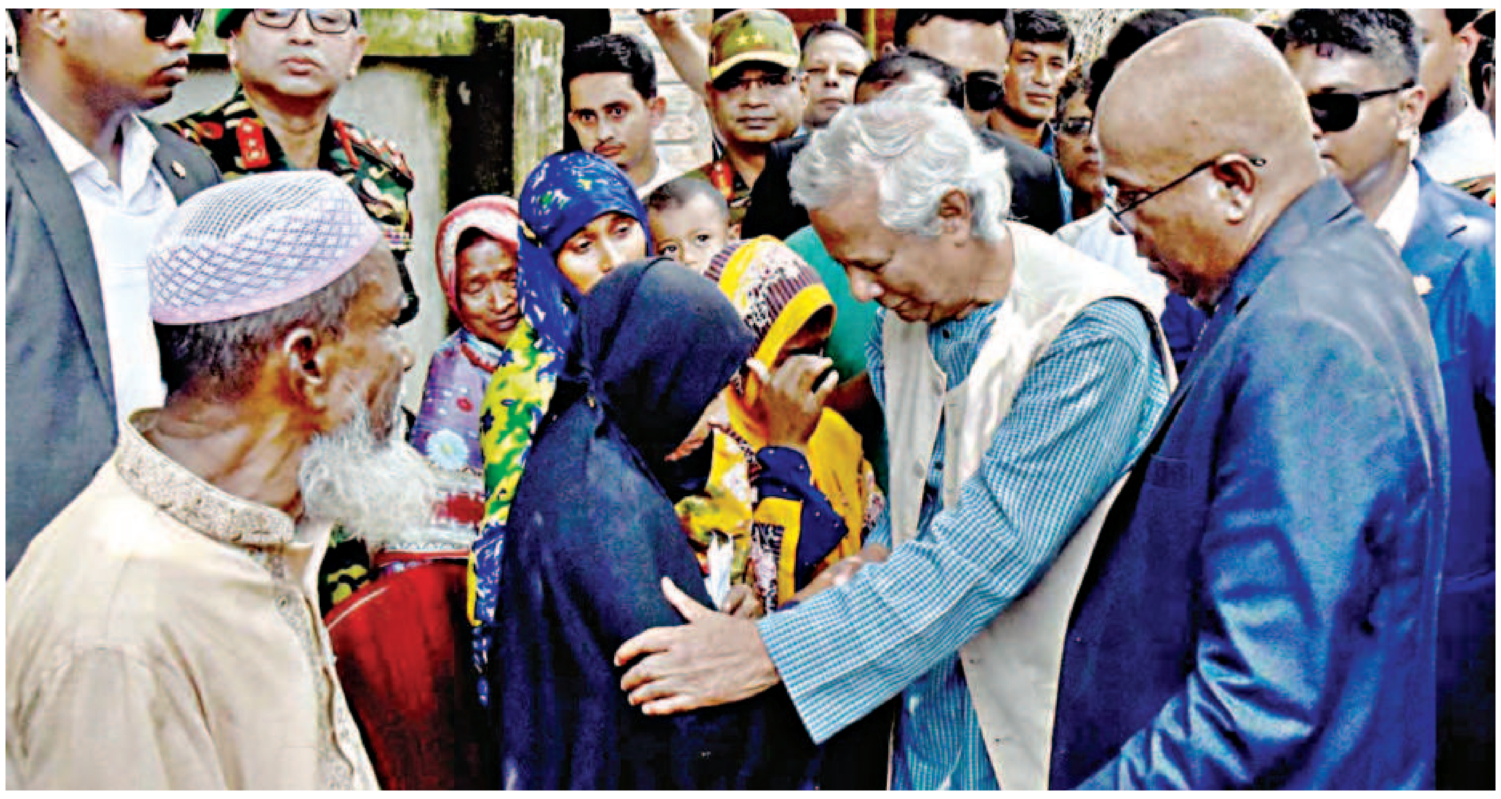
On Thursday, the full bench of the Appellate Division gave its opinion in favour of forming an interim government and a swearing-in ceremony.

The interim government led by Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus took oath the same day, three days after Sheikh Hasina resigned as the prime minister amid a mass uprising.

On Friday, Justice Obaidul Hassan called for a virtual full court meeting of all the Appellate Division and High Court judges to decide whether the functions of the courts could resume virtually after the weekend, Justice Hassan told this newspaper.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Several thousand students gathered on the SC premises around 10:30am and started demanding the resignation of the chief justice and other Appellate Division judges.



Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus consoles the mother of slain student protester Abu Sayed at the family's home in Pirganj of Rangpur yesterday while other family members look on.

PHOTO: **PID**

Normalising economy is a top priority

Says finance adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government will take action as per the law if any official is involved in any irregularity, but its immediate task is to bring normalcy to the economy, said Salehuddin Ahmed, finance and planning adviser.

"Immediately everything, including the Bangladesh Bank, will be on. Banks and ports will operate. Economic

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Sayed every mother's son

Says Yunus after meeting family of slain student protester, urges all to build a new country

STAR REPORT

Chief Adviser to the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday urged all to come forward to build a new Bangladesh keeping in mind the supreme sacrifice of Abu Sayed and others.

"Abu Sayed is not the child of a single family, he is the child of all families in Bangladesh," he said.

The Nobel laureate made the remarks after meeting the family members of Abu Sayed in Rangpur's Pirganj upazila, report UNB and BSS.

Abu Sayed, a student of English at Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, was killed in police firing on July 16 during the quota reform protest in Rangpur. He was a key coordinator of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement which culminated in the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government.

Yunus said, "This Bangladesh is the Bangladesh Abu Sayed wanted. There is no discrimination in this Bangladesh. My request to you all is to protect everyone and make sure there is no anarchy."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed appointed chief justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday appointed Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed as the 25th chief justice of Bangladesh.

Justice Refaat was the senior-most judge of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court, Law Secretary Md Golam Sarwar told The Daily Star.

The president has made the appointment under article 95(1) of the constitution.

The law ministry issued a gazette notification, saying the appointment will come into effect from the day he takes oath of office.

The president will administer the oath to the new chief justice at the Bangabhaban around noon today, Sarwar said.

Justice Refaat was born on December 28, 1958. His father Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed was a prominent jurist and an attorney general of Bangladesh. His mother Sufia Ahmed was the first female national professor, a language hero,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের সাফল্য কামনায়
বিজিএপিএমইএ এর অভিনন্দন
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মো. শাহরিয়ার
সভাপতি
বিজিএপিএমইএ পরিচালনা পরিষদের পক্ষে।
BGAPMEA

Resignations until now

DU, SUST VCs, Bangla Academy, BSEC chiefs quit

DU CORRESPONDENT

The vice-chancellors of Dhaka University, Prof ASM Maksud Kamal, and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed, resigned yesterday.

On the same day, Bangla Academy director Prof Harun-Ur-Rashid Askari and Noakhali Science and Technology University treasurer Prof Newaz Mohammed Bahadur also handed in their resignation.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Congratulations
On behalf of Mosharaf Group, I take this opportunity to congratulate PROF. DR. MUHAMMAD YUNUS Nobel Laureate, Entrepreneur, Banker, Economist and Civil Society Leader as the Head and Chief Advisor of the Interim Government of Bangladesh. I am grateful to the Cabinet Members of the Interim Government and all concerned for facilitating this transition.
You are tracing the path to glory for us like a north star. Wishing you the best and future success in rebuilding the nation by reinstating fair competitive elections, government accountability and democratic norms. While the road is fraught with challenges, Mosharaf Group is committed to supporting you throughout the way.
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We pay homage to the brave martyrs of the student movement, whose sacrifice is the foundation upon which this era of hope is built.
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Interim govt to stay as long as needed

Says law adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law adviser Asif Nazrul yesterday said the interim government will stay as long as it is needed.

People want reforms and the political parties want an election, he said, adding that the interim government will balance between the two and make decisions accordingly.

The tenure of the interim government had not been discussed yet, he told reporters at the Secretariat.

"Please keep two things in mind: political parties will expect an election as soon as possible and the common people desire reforms. People expect some urgent reforms from this government," said the adviser for law, justice and parliamentary affairs.

"We have seen police, judiciary, anti-corruption commission, public universities and other institutions being used as weapons to torture and oppress people.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Shahbagh Police Station has resumed operations on a limited scale, with Ansar and VDP personnel providing security inside the premises. Some police personnel have returned to work in casuals. The station is now accepting general diaries (GDs). Meanwhile, army troops were seen stationed outside the premises yesterday. Story on page 12. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Protesters attack army patrol teams in Gopalganj

4 officers, 5 soldiers hurt: ISPR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three officers, a junior commissioned officer, and five other army personnel were injured yesterday when protesters attacked army patrol teams with sharp weapons at Gopinathpur of Gopalganj Sadar.

According to a press release sent by the Inter-Services Public Relation Directorate (ISPR), two patrol teams of the army went to the spot after protesters blocked the Gopalganj-Dhaka highway.

The teams were attacked with locally made

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Slap sanctions on Quader, ex-home boss

Urge six US lawmakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six congressmen and senators have urged the US authorities to impose sanctions on Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan for their roles in "gross human rights violations" during the recent protests in Bangladesh.

They have sent a letter to the US Secretary of State and Secretary of Treasury Janet Yellen in this regard.

"The use of violent force against peaceful protesters exercising their freedom of expression is an unacceptable violation of human rights. The Bangladeshi leaders who orchestrated this brutal crackdown must be held accountable," reads the letter.

Ensure the journalists' safety: CJA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Commonwealth Journalists Association has urged Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus to ensure the safety of journalists after recent attacks, sometimes deadly, and intimidation amid an uprising.

Since July 16, a total of five journalists were killed and at least 25 others were injured in violence centring the quota reform protests that eventually turned into an anti-government movement, according to media reports.

"The Commonwealth Journalists Association strongly urges you to take swift actions to ensure the physical safety and secure working

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

93 killed as Israel hits Gaza school

World condemns attack; UN rapporteur accuses Israel of 'genocide'

AFP, *Palestinian Territories*

Rescuers in Gaza said an Israeli air strike on a religious school housing displaced Palestinians killed 93 people yesterday, sparking international condemnation despite Israel's insistence that it was targeting militants.

AFP could not independently verify the toll which, if confirmed, would be one of the largest from a single strike during 10 months of war between Israel and Palestinian groups.

The bombardment of Al-Tabieen school and mosque drew criticism from across the Middle East and beyond alongside calls for a ceasefire after international mediators invited the warring sides to resume talks towards a long-sought truce and hostage-release deal.

Civil defence rescuers in the Hamas-ruled territory said three Israeli missiles hit the complex in Gaza City while people were performing dawn prayers.

"They dropped a missile on them while they were just praying," said one woman, mourning over a dead child shrouded in a plastic body bag.

Israel's military said it had "precisely struck" Al-Tabieen, which spokesman Nadav Shoshani added on social media platform X housed a "military facility" with "approximately 20 Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants" including commanders.

3 medical colleges ban student politics

NSTU follows suit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sir Salimullah Medical College and Chittagong Medical College have banned all forms of political activities for students, teachers, and staff on campus and in dormitories since yesterday.

"All forms of politics have been banned for students, teachers, and staff on the campus and dormitories, including all kinds of political and non-political activities in lobbying and clubs," said Md Shahadat Hossain, principal of Sir Salimullah Medical College, in a press release.

The academic council of

SEE PAGE 6 C COL 6

Bangladeshi shot by BSF in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

A Bangladeshi young man was shot and wounded allegedly by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) near Kotapara border in Thakurgaon's Baliadangi upazila yesterday.

The injured was identified as Naimur Rahman, 22, son of Jahangir Alam of Kalibari village under the same upazila.

The victim's uncle said that Naimur and his uncle Alamgir went to their cropfield near the border to cut grass in the morning around 10:00am.

After a while, BSF members of the Bhelagachi camp from the other side of the border started shouting at them and abruptly opened fire in their direction, leaving Naimur injured.

Alamgir, who was unhurt, rescued Naimur and took him to the Baliadangi Upazila Health Complex, where Naimur was given first aid.

Later, Naimur was taken to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital, where he is currently undergoing treatment.

Small plane crash in Chile kills 7

AFP, *Santiago*

Seven people were killed Friday when the small plane they were traveling in crashed in southern Chile, the country's civil aviation authority said.

Contact was lost with the Piper Navajo aircraft at 9:13 am (1313 GMT), shortly after it took off from Coyhaique, some 1,700 kilometers (1,000 miles) south of Santiago.

"The pilot and his six passengers" died, the General Directorate of Civil Aeronautics (DGAC) said in a statement, without specifying the cause of the crash.

The presidential delegate for the region, Rodrigo Araya, told reporters that he had instructed the prosecutor's office and the Forensic Medical Service to launch an investigation into the incident.

Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed appointed chief justice

FROM PAGE 1

Ekushey Padak recipient, and the chairperson of the department of Islamic History and Culture at Dhaka University.

Justice Refaat obtained LLB (hons) with first class, first in order of merit from Dhaka University, BA and MA from Wadham College, University of Oxford, UK, MA in Law and Diplomacy and PhD from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, USA.

He was a Ford Foundation fellow in Public International Law at the Fletcher School.

He worked at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Hong Kong and Washington, DC and as a lawyer in London.

In 1984, he became a lawyer of the district courts. He became a lawyer of the High Court Division in 1986 and a lawyer of the Appellate Division in 2002.

He was appointed as an additional judge of the High Court Division on April 27, 2003, and he was made a permanent judge of the division on April 27, 2005.

Justice Ahmed is a founder member of Global Judicial Institute on the Environment, Brazil.

He participated in international roundtables, workshops, conventions, study tours and courses held in Germany, Malaysia, the Philippines, India, Nepal, Italy, Singapore, Thailand, USA, Brazil and Myanmar.

CJ, 5 other SC judges resign

FROM PAGE 1

The meeting was scheduled for 10:00am yesterday.

There was no other agenda for the meeting, he said.

But, several thousand students gathered on the SC premises around 10:30am and started demanding the resignation of the chief justice and other Appellate Division judges.

A group of pro-BNP-Jamaat lawyers joined the protesters.

The demonstrations began after student leader Asif Mahmud, now the adviser to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, wrote on Facebook around 10:00am that the chief justice must resign and the full court meeting must stop.

"The chief justice of the Supreme Court, who was backed by the fascists and engaged in various misdeeds, has called a full court meeting without any discussion with the government. Any kind of conspiracy by the defeated power will not be tolerated. Lawyers have already rallied against him.

"We had earlier called for the resignation of the chief justice. If you incite the students and mass people by taking any stand against them, you will have to face dire consequences.

"Resign immediately from the post of the chief justice and stop the full court meeting."

Soon afterwards, several thousand students and lawyers marched and held rallies at different places on the SC premises, demanding the resignation of all the judges of the Appellate Division.

The army personnel deployed to avert any untoward incident were seen requesting the students to peacefully demonstrate without damaging properties.

At one stage, Hasnat Abdullah, a coordinator of the student movement against discrimination, declared the judges' homes would be besieged unless the chief justice and judges of the Appellate Division resigned by 1:00pm.

When reporters drew his attention to the matter around 12:00pm, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said he was hoping the chief justice would understand that the demand raised by the masses should be honoured.

He said the outgoing chief justice had warranted controversies for several reasons.

He added that the outgoing chief justice called for a meeting, and Adviser Asif said the meeting was called without consulting anyone. "It seems like a move made by the defeated authoritarian regime," he said.

He said there were questions about the outgoing chief justice. During the anti-government protests, Justice Obaidul asked whether a verdict can be changed by a movement. People did not take it well.

Besides, it is unfortunate that after he took charge, Justice Obaidul received a felicitation from Chhatra League men, which is a violation of the code of conduct, said the law adviser.

He also received a golden sword from the former Detective Branch chief Harun Or Rashid. Besides, when he travelled abroad, he used to stay at the homes of Awami League leaders. "These are the reasons why there were controversies surrounding him," he added.

Justice Obaidul subsequently resigned and the five other judges followed him.

Contacted, Justice Obaidul said, "I decided to resign considering the safety and security of the judges of the Appellate Division, High Court Division, and the lower courts across the country amid the emerging situation."

In a video message on Facebook, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul said, "Our chief justice resigned a few minutes ago. His resignation letter reached the law ministry. We will promptly send it to the president, so that necessary measures can be taken."

After learning around 1:00pm that lower courts in different districts were surrounded by protesting students, he urged students not to harm or disrupt court proceedings.

There is no reason for the students to lay a siege to a lower court because the demand concerns the chief justice and some other judges.

Despite the current situation, the lower court judges are working. They have promised that they will no longer make the old mistakes, he said.

Sayed every family's son

FROM PAGE 1

The chief adviser yesterday also visited Rangpur Medical College and Hospital to see some students who sustained injuries during the quota reform protest. He enquired about their health and gave necessary instructions to the hospital authorities for the proper treatment of the injured.

Posts, Telecommunications and ICT Affairs Adviser Md Nahid Islam and Youth and Sports Affairs Adviser Asif Mahmud accompanied the chief adviser during his visit to Rangpur. Nahid and Asif were two key coordinators of the student protest.

Later in the day, the chief adviser spoke at a session with students at Begum Rokeya University. He called on the young people to take the responsibility for the nation's future.

Yunus urged them to harness their potential and ensure the country's progress.

"This Rangpur, this Bangladesh, is now in your hands. You have the power to take the country wherever you want. This is not a matter of research, it is the power within you," he told the students.

Describing Abu Sayed as an "epic character", he said many poems will be written and many literary works will be done on him.

"The students and the young people of Bangladesh have astonished the entire world."

He termed the students' recent achievement "the country's second victory".

The chief adviser urged the students to make sure that this achievement is not lost. He called upon the older generation to move out of the way for the young generation.

Yunus also spoke about the necessity of having a vision to accomplish any task.

"If there is no dream, there will be chaos. But if you have a dream and you pursue it, you will achieve it although it once seemed to be impossible. The power to make the impossible possible lies within you."

Urging the young people not to back out, he said the older generation has failed to guide the nation.

"We have failed. We could not take you to that destination where you were supposed to be."

Yunus also warned the students not to let their efforts be foiled by those seeking to undermine their progress. "There are many waiting to make your efforts futile. Don't fail this time."

Voicing his commitment to national reform, the microcredit pioneer said he would do whatever is necessary to cleanse the country of its ills. "We will clean everything. We have no relief until everything is cleaned."

He condemned the recent attacks on the religious minority communities. He asked the young people, "You have been able to save the country. Can't you save some families?"

He urged the students to protect all Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist families from harm.

"You must say no one can harm them. They are my brothers. We fought together, and we will stay together."

Comparing Bangladesh to a beautiful family, Yunus said, "No family is more beautiful than this. There are many countries in the world, but there is no such beautiful family."

Normalising economy is a top priority

FROM PAGE 1

activities will be on as per the normal process," he said after a meeting with the secretary-level officials of the finance and planning ministries at the secretariat in Dhaka.

Ahmed, a former Bangladesh Bank governor, joined work yesterday following his appointment as an adviser for finance and planning of the interim government formed after the fall of Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5 due to a mass uprising.

He did not give any directive to the officials.

Ahmed told the officials in charge to work as per the schedule, rules, regulations and norms and refrain from exercising discretionary powers, The Daily Star has learnt from people familiar with the discussions at the meeting.

Asked about the recent protests in the financial sector following Hasina's exit and the resignations of top officials including BB governor Abdur Rouf Talukder, Ahmed said: "If anyone has engaged in any unlawful activity, appropriate actions will be taken in line with the law."

About Talukder's stepping down and the forced resignation of a deputy governor, he said: "All the resignations will be considered as per the process. I will not ask for accepting [the letter]. If needed, I will consult with the chief adviser."

Earlier in the day, he said he would not take any decision alone regarding the resignation of the BB governor, which is a 'sensitive' post.

"Shall I accept as soon as I get the resignation? Can I do that?"

Asked about the demand for the resignation of Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem, chairman of the National Board of Revenue, from a section of revenue officials, Ahmed said: "He has been given a target to collect revenue. He will collect revenue. He will work properly."

Before the meeting with officials yesterday, he told the media personnel that many rules and norms of the banking sector were not followed.

"Those who were supposed to enforce with rules did not do so and those who were supposed to follow the rules did not comply."

Restoring law and order and banking and port activities is the interim government's priority now, Ahmed said, while citing inflation as a major challenge.

"Apart from economic challenges, our policies and strategies for development were wrong. People did not benefit from the development. You have seen the benefit went to the well-off. We have seen economic growth but who enjoyed the benefit of growth?"

Asked about bringing back the laundered money from abroad, he said the interim government will take steps on that front.

"There is a process for this. Information will be needed. For this, we will contact the agencies we need to contact."

Resignations until now

FROM PAGE 1

Besides, several provosts of different dormitories at Dhaka University also stepped down yesterday.

Earlier on Thursday, the full body of DU's Proctorial Team submitted their resignation letters.

"I spoke to an adviser to the interim government Friday night and decided not to hold my position any longer," Prof Maksud Kamal told this newspaper.

"I discussed the matter from a place of common courtesy. My letter of resignation has already been prepared. I spent a lot of time as a student and teacher leader at this university. I believe that, considering the overall situation, my resignation is necessary for the benefit of the students and the university."

In the face of student protests, vice-chancellors of five public universities have so far resigned.

The first to step down were VCs of three public universities, including Jahangirnagar University, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, and Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University.

The protestors of the quota reform movement have been demanding the resignation of many VCs since early on in their movement.

However, the VCs did not start stepping down until after the resignation of Sheikh Hasina.

The Daily Star
PUBLIC DISCOURSE
How to Ensure Public Safety & Security?
Date: August 10, 2024

Speakers at a public discourse on "How to Ensure Public Safety and Security?" at the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: **STAR**

Police must resume duty immediately

Say speakers on ensuring public safety, security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police personnel should immediately resume their regular duty to ensure people's safety, said speakers at a public discourse yesterday.

If there was any sense of insecurity or lack of trust among the police members, then the authorities concerned must sit with them and listen to their problems to find a solution, they said.

The discussion titled "How to Ensure Public Safety and Security?" was organised by The Daily Star at the capital's The Daily Star Centre.

Pointing to police atrocities on student protesters and people during the recent nationwide movements that toppled the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5, they said rogue policemen should be identified and isolated from the force as well as be punished. However, rebuilding people's trust on the police force as a whole is crucial for the country's progress.

Following the August 5 changeover, many policemen deserted their workplaces amid attacks on police stations across the country.

At the event, former inspector general of police Muhammad Nurul Huda emphasised the urgent need for police, particularly traffic officials, to be more "visible" and to promptly resume their duties.

He said students were trying to fill the absence by controlling the traffic situation on the city streets but they need to go back to the classroom immediately as they are the future nation-builders.

"It is important to understand why police behave the way they do," he said, adding, the force is part of the executive branch and merely follows order.

There will be little to no gain in squarely blaming the police force, he further said.

Joining the discussion virtually, Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua said ordinary citizens are the most affected by the recent decline in law and order, while traders have also encountered difficulties in operating their businesses.

He emphasised that maintaining law and order is a role only the police can fulfill, and it cannot be effectively handled by any other agency.

Expressing concern over safety issues, Abdullah Hil Rakib, vice president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, called upon the newly-formed interim government to take immediate steps for redeployment of policemen for smooth shipments of their goods.

In his opening remarks, Golam Mortaza, editor of The Daily Star Bangla, said police are the most important force when it comes to people's safety.

However, they are also one of the most criticised ones for their controversial roles. He said immediate redeployment of police is crucial, as society is full of rumours and confusion.

Rights activist Ilira Dewan said it is important to build the police as a people-friendly force while police itself has to play a role to earn people's trust.

Filmmaker Ashfaq Nipun, JAAGO Foundation founder Korvi Rakshand, Journalist Rashed Nizam, and Dhaka University Chhatra Union President Meghmallar Bosu, among others, spoke at the discussion.

US, Canada, UK support interim govt

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has welcomed the interim government led by Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Sharing a brief message on "X" yesterday, he said the US supports Dr Yunus's call for calm and peace.

Blinken said the US remains committed to working with Bangladesh as it charts a democratic and prosperous future for the people in Bangladesh.

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy also welcomed the appointment of the interim government.

The interim government has the UK's support as it works to restore peace and order, for the sake of the Bangladeshi people, he said in a statement yesterday.

"We urge all actors to prevent further violence and loss of life."

Meanwhile, Canada is eager to engage with the interim government to support an inclusive process that involves everyone, including religious minorities, youth, women, and other marginalised groups.

"We welcome the inauguration of a new interim government, led by

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

More than 100 families formed a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding information about the whereabouts of their missing relatives, who were the victims of forced disappearances during the 15 years of Awami League regime.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

'At least tell us where they are'

Over 100 families stage protest, want info on 'missing' loved ones

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

They shared a common grief: their sons, husbands, or brothers have been missing for years, allegedly abducted by state agencies during the 15-year rule of the Awami League.

Over 100 families of such enforced disappearance victims formed a human chain yesterday in front of the Jatiya Press Club, demanding information about the whereabouts of their missing loved ones.

The protesters, comprising mothers, sisters, fathers, and children, held up pictures of their missing relatives, with names and dates of the day they disappeared inscribed on them.

Some of the dates stretched back as far as 13 years, symbolising the long, painful wait of these families. Children who were young when their fathers were taken have since grown up; some mothers have died while waiting for the return of their sons.

Those who were present yesterday are unsure whether their loved ones are alive or dead. These families are still waiting for any information that might bring them closure.

The human chain began around 11:00am, where the relatives stood in solidarity.

"We just want to know what happened to our loved ones. At least tell us where they are," said one participant, a sentiment echoed by all present.

On August 6, a day after Sheikh Hasina's fall, members of Mayer Daak, a platform of the families of people who fell victim to enforced disappearances, gathered in front of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence office to know whereabouts of their missing relatives.

At least three victims of enforced disappearances, were released on the same day.

The next day, DGFI said there were no detainees in their Dhaka facility.

On the same day, Michael Chakma, 40, a UPDF activist who was forcibly disappeared on April 16, 2019 from Narayanganj, returned to a friend's house in Chattogram.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 11

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-41	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-44	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

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Reform admin, police, judiciary

Demands University Teachers Network

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The University Teachers Network, a platform of teachers who had actively participated in the recent student-led mass uprising, has called for immediate reformation of the civil administration and police, and forming a neutral judiciary to ensure safety and justice to people from all walks of life.

In a dialogue held at Dhaka University yesterday, they also demanded all types of syndicates in the market be abolished to reduce the prices of essentials.

Not only teachers, but also people from other professions, participated in the discussion titled "What We Want from The Interim Government".

Presiding over the event, Prof Anu Muhammad, a former teacher at Jahangirnagar University, said it is the third time that a possibility to rebuild Bangladesh has emerged.

The scope to do so was missed once after the Liberation War in 1971 and again after the fall of HM Ershad in 1990, he said, adding, "During the caretaker government in 1990, Prof Rehman Sobhan proposed a reformation model, but none of the successive political governments followed it."

Stressing that the situation is different this time, he said while the political parties were key players of all previous mass uprisings, this time the students are the main force.

"This generation once said they hate politics but they stood against the bullets fired by police. What could be more political than that?" he asked.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

BCMEA

অভিনন্দন
ও শুভকামনা

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের
মাননীয় প্রধান উপদেষ্টা নোবেল বিজয়ী ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস
এবং অন্যান্য সকল উপদেষ্টাকে
বিসিএমইএ-এর পক্ষ থেকে জানাই

প্রাণঢালা অভিনন্দন ও আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা

সেই সাথে বৈষম্যবিরোধী আন্দোলনে শাহাদত বরণকারী সকল ছাত্র-জনতা
ও নিরাপত্তা বাহিনীসহ আত্মত্যাগকারী সকলের রূহের মাগফিরাত
এবং আহতদের দ্রুত আরোগ্য কামনা করছি।

অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের সাথে বিসিএমইএ একসাথে কাজ করার
দৃঢ় প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করছে।

বিসিএমইএ (বাংলাদেশ সিরামিক ম্যানুফ্যাকচারার্স এন্ড এক্সপোর্টার্স অ্যাসোসিয়েশন)

Cultural centre in Keraniganj vandalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Many establishments were vandalised following the fall of Sheikh Hasina on August 5, one of which was the Hamidur Rahman Cultural Center in Jinjira area of Keraniganj.

Miscreants vandalised the establishment and looted valuables from its premises around 3:00pm on the day.

Wishing anonymity, an official of Hamidur Rahman Cultural Centre yesterday told The Daily Star that the centre is a government establishment that they had leased for three years from Dhaka Zilla Parishad.

They invested around Tk 2.5 crore in overall decoration, furnishing, and interior work, he added.

The centre recently started its classes with 20 students, offering music, dance, and various forms of arts and culture.

It was preparing to enrol 400 more students. In the meantime, this attack occurred, said the official.

He also said the miscreants looted valuables, including furniture and electrical appliances.

Mentionable, the building of the Hamidur Rahman Cultural Centre was designed by internationally acclaimed architect Marina Tabassum.

PHULPUR UPAZILA HEALTH COMPLEX

Healthcare limps on amid doctor shortage

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Phulpur Upazila Health Complex in Mymensingh is grappling with staff shortages and overcrowding, leaving medical services in disarray.

The 50-bed hospital, established in 1983 to serve rural communities, is now struggling to meet the growing demands of the 5 lakh residents in the area.

The hospital is understaffed, with nearly half of the positions for medical officers and consultants remaining vacant.

Out of the 130 sanctioned posts, the hospital currently operates with only seven medical officers and seven consultants, while one medical officer is on deputation in Dhaka.

This acute shortage has left several key departments, including ophthalmology, gastroenterology, and dermatology, without any consultants, forcing patients to seek costly treatment at private facilities.

The hospital faces a daily influx of at least 90 inpatients, far exceeding its capacity, with many patients having to share beds or wait in overcrowded conditions. Despite the overwhelming need, there has been no significant effort to upgrade the hospital's facilities or expand its capacity to 100 beds, as demanded by the local community.

Field-level health services have also been severely impacted due to the shortage of medical assistants, with 29 out of 60 positions lying vacant. This has disrupted essential healthcare services in the region, leaving many without adequate care.

Additionally, the hospital is plagued by a shortage of essential medicines, forcing patients to purchase drugs from outside, often at a high cost.

Although Dr Md Humayun Kabir, the health and family planning officer in Phulpur, claims that around 90 percent of the required medicines are usually in stock, the growing number of patients often leads to shortages.

Dr Md Nazrul Islam, the civil surgeon of Mymensingh, said the authorities have been informed about the urgent need to fill the vacant posts and address the other challenges faced by the health complex. He said steps will be taken soon to improve the situation.

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Smooth gas supply top priority: Adilur

BSS, *Dhaka*

The interim government will give utmost importance to ensuring gas supply to maintain normal production in the industries, said its Adviser to the Ministry of Industries Adilur Rahman Khan yesterday.

"The problems in fertiliser production would be addressed to reduce import dependency, which would significantly save foreign currency," he added.

The adviser said this while talking to the reporters after a meeting with senior officials of the Ministry of Industries at the secretariat in the capital.

Adilur also said they will work to improve the leather industry in Savar.

"At the same time, we ensure environmental compliance in the ship-breaking industry," he told reporters.

The adviser to the industries ministry said various institutions under the ministry are operating at a loss, and proper measures will be taken to identify the issues and make these institutions profitable.

"There is no choice but to be stringent against corruption. We have taken on this responsibility through much sacrifice. There is no question of allowing new scope for corruption," he added.

Adil wanted to join

FROM PAGE 5

"We forced him to stay home on the previous day while protests raged outside. On July 19, we could not stop him. He did not return alive," said Adil's mother Ayesha Akter.

Adil was shot twice in his chest at the protest in front of the factory of SB Style Composite Ltd. People rushed him to a nearby private hospital in Signboard area, where doctors declared him dead.

He was later buried in a local graveyard in Bhuighar area the same night.

"My Adil had a dream to join the army as an officer and serve the nation. He was inspired by his maternal uncle who is an army personnel. It is but an irony of fate that he was shot dead by law enforcers," Ayesha said.

Adil is a student of Tamirul Millat Mohila Kamil Madrasa in Dhaka's Jatrabari area. He returned home from the madrasa's hostel on July 17 after attending pre-tests for upcoming SSC examinations next year.

"As the situation was turning worrisome in Dhaka, I brought him home from the hostel for fear that he would get into trouble if he remained in the capital. Yet I couldn't save my son," said his mother.

Ayesha also said Adil was a bright student, and was especially good in mathematics. He had participated in the Math Olympiad, she added, showing Adil's certificate of participation.

Adil was the youngest of his three siblings. His elder brother Abdullah Al Mamun is studying in Malaysia and another brother Bayejid Ahmed is a student of nursing at Dhaka Medical College.

Reform admin, police

FROM PAGE 3

He said the spirit of Liberation War will remain the main priority in rebuilding the nation.

"It [the spirit of Liberation War] doesn't belong solely to Awami League. During its tenure, the party used it to shield their oppression and plunder, all of which are activities contrary to the aspiration of our independence," he added.

He blamed the system for making Hasina a dictator, and suggested revolutionary reformation to the state mechanism, which will require a change in people's mindset.

"Our MPs, ministers and high-ups never bothered about the environment or air pollution while remaining in their air-conditioned cars, homes and offices. For a starter, the government officials may begin to open their car windows to inhale the air of Dhaka -- the most polluted air across the globe -- to get an idea of what common people have to suffer from," he said.

He also said the interim government should focus on reforming the country's constitution, adding that it may face obstacles from three forces -- the civil and military bureaucracy, the businesses who got unprecedented privileges from the Hasina-led government, and the external powers who have interests in the country.

"The government took numerous illogical and costly projects, which only benefited the local and foreign businesses. Local businesses like Beximco, S Alam, Bashundhara, United, and Summit groups may create problems with their huge capital," he added.

Kazi Maruful Islam, a professor at Development Studies department of Dhaka University, said, "We need to reform the state's system keeping in mind the Liberation War, anti-discriminatory society, secular democracy, exploitation-free economy, participation of the citizens, the government's responsibility to the citizens, and diversity of the state."

The teachers' network will act as an observer to the government, said Prof Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan of DU's International Relations department.

"If they do wrong, we will act as we did earlier. Besides, a students' network will be formed among the students of private universities, who were a vital force in the recent mass uprising," he added.

We got married only

FROM PAGE 5

without him?" said Marzina while talking to this correspondent.

She was taken by her parents to their house in Bipanchashi village of neighbouring Ishwarganj upazila, two days of Jobayer's death, where she has been staying since then.

Jobayer had a mobile accessories shop at Shambhuganj Bazar of Mymensingh city. His father, Md Anwar Uddin, is a retired madrasa teacher from Kaurat village in Gouripur upazila.

"On July 20 morning, I had my last words with my son. I asked him where he was going. Jobayer said he would go to his shop as it had been closed for several days and many customers had called him for delivering their orders. He said he would return soon. He returned... dead," said Anwar Uddin.

He came in the line of fire on his way to the shop in Kaltapara Bazar area on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road in the upazila, and was hit by bullets in his back. He was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to the injuries. He was buried at the family graveyard.

"Jobayer was neither involved in politics, nor did he join any protest. He did not deserve this fate," his father said.

Jobayer's younger brother Mohammad Kawser, an HSC student, said, "Uncertainty now looms over my education as well as of my elder sister. My elder brother was the only financial support of our six-member family."

He called for a proper investigation into Jobayer's death, and demanded justice.

US, Canada

FROM PAGE 3

Dr Muhammad Yunus. This is the first step in restoring peace, to pave the way for free and fair elections and democratic governance," said Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly in a statement yesterday.

She said Canada supports a peaceful way forward in resolving the ongoing crisis in Bangladesh.

She urged all parties to work together to promote the principles of democratic and inclusive governance, respect for human rights, and the rule of law.

Also, in a media briefing in New York, Florencia Soto Niño, associate spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said there seems to be an inclusive process for forming a government.

"We hope that it continues," he added.

How will we survive now?

FROM PAGE 5

village under Patuakhali Sadar upazila, used to work as a cutting master at a tailor shop in Lalkuthi area of Dhaka's Mirpur. He lived in a rented house with his wife, son and two daughters.

On August 5, Bachchu, also general secretary of Bangladesh Poshak Sramik Dal, a BNP-affiliated organisation in Lalkuthi, was demonstrating with party men in front of Adabor Police Station when a bullet hit his chest.

Locals took Bachchu to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital where doctors declared him dead. The family members later took his body to the village home the next day and buried him in the family graveyard.

Bachchu's son is a college-goer, while his elder daughter is a degree student and younger daughter is an 8th-grader, said cousin Delwar Howladar.

"Bachchu was a good-hearted man, and a hard worker. He did not leave behind much for his family except a small portion of ancestral land. We are concerned about how his family will manage now," said his uncle Abdul Jalil Howladar.

"I demand justice for my husband's murder, and urge the government for providing us with financial support," Kohinoor said.

When will father return?

FROM PAGE 5

attacked nearby police stations and outposts, and the same happened at the Kotwali Police Station in the Sadar upazila.

To bring the situation under control, the police opened fire on the mob, when one of the bullets hit Shamsu's face as he was on his way to the nearby market through the area around 6:00pm.

Shamsu's body remained there for about an hour.

Later, his wife Meghla Begum, 31, heard the news from locals and rushed to the spot.

"We found him lying on the road. We took him to Faridpur General Hospital. The doctor advised taking him to the Faridpur Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital. There, a doctor declared him dead," said Meghla.

"We left the house together around 4:00pm. I went to a relative's house, and he went to the market to get some toys for our daughter," she added.

"What will happen to us now? Who will look after my daughter? How will I pay for her studies?" said Meghla.

Their daughter, six-year-old Sammi, is a class one student who still doesn't understand the gravity of the situation.

She kept asking her mother about her father's whereabouts and when he would bring her toy.

"A bullet has finished everything. Now there's no roof over our heads. There is no one else in the world to take care of us," said Meghla.

Meghla's mother Fuli Begum, 56, said, "I don't know what will happen to my daughter and her child. We are poor as well. We can't even afford to provide them with a place to stay."

Dumped in the open

FROM PAGE 5

He also mentioned that a waste-to-energy project to generate electricity from waste has been pending approval for two years.

Deepak Mazumder, MCC's food and sanitary inspector, informed that since 2019, a private enterprise, Nobo Waste Management Service Ltd, has been collecting medical waste from private hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centres in the city for a fee of Tk 500-2,000 per month.

The waste is disposed of through incinerators, burial pits, sharp pits, and recycling units.

Dr HA Golandaj Tara, secretary of Bangladesh Private Hospital, Clinic and Diagnostic Owners Association, confirmed efforts to engage all private hospitals in partnering with Nobo Waste Management Service Ltd for proper medical waste disposal.

Regarding the medical waste produced at public hospitals, Mohabbat Ali said the private enterprise lacks the capacity to handle all of it.

Dr Md Nazrul Islam, civil surgeon of Mymensingh, noted that the renewal of licences for private hospitals and clinics is contingent on certificates from the Department of Environment, which mandates the separation of waste into designated bins.

Md Mesbabul Alam, deputy director of the DoE in Mymensingh, assured that regular monitoring of waste disposal practices is being conducted to ensure compliance with environmental guidelines.

Shakil was vocal against injustice

FROM PAGE 5

Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital in Dhaka's Agargaon.

Later, Shakil's friends and family took his coffin to the Shaheed Minar premises to pay respect to him, before his body was taken to his village home in Bhola for burial. Shakil's father died in 2008.

"My brother used to look after us. I work at a factory but I hardly earn enough to bear the house rent and fulfill the family's needs alone. With him no longer there, now we are looking at a grim and uncertain future. We are devastated," said his younger brother Sumon Hossain, 18.

Rajib Sikhdar, Shakil's childhood friend, said, "We were trying to shield ourselves from bullets with roadside benches and chairs. But it was not enough. So, I told Shakil to run as fast as he can. We began running, but I lost him in the crowd. I thought he managed to escape, but later came to know that he got shot."

He was always vocal against injustice, said family and friends.

Mim Akhter, 19, a neighbour of Shakil, said he always worked for local students and youths, and actively participated in the recent protests.

"Shakil bhaia used to teach children at a local school whenever he had time. He encouraged to be vocal against anything that is wrong, and would sometimes gather us all to sing and paint together. I did not expect him to leave us like this," she said.

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EPI vaccine shortage hits Chattogram

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Amena Begum, a resident of Halishahar area in Chattogram city, has been struggling to get her newborn daughter administered the second dose of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV), Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) and Pentavalent vaccine for the past week.

The vaccines are administered to newborns under the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) to protect them from numerous life-threatening diseases, according to health experts.

"On August 6, the scheduled date for vaccination, I took my baby to Chattogram Ma o Shishu General Hospital, but officials said there was no vaccine in stock. I went to the hospital again the next day but in vain," Amena told The Daily Star.

"I also went to the CCC-run Memon Maternity Hospital on Saturday, but there was no vaccine there either," she added.

Tamanna Khanam, a resident of port city's Jamal Khan area, shared a similar plight.

"I am worried about my child," she said.

Amid the shortage of EPI vaccine, thousands of newborns across Chattogram are at risk of developing poor immunity against different life-threatening diseases if they are not vaccinated in time.

Over the past week, parents across the port city and neighbouring 15 upazilas of Chattogram had to return from vaccination centres without getting their children vaccinated, said sources.

"EPI vaccines should be administered to newborns on scheduled dates to prevent some life-threatening diseases," said Dr Rezaul Karim, former head of child health department at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

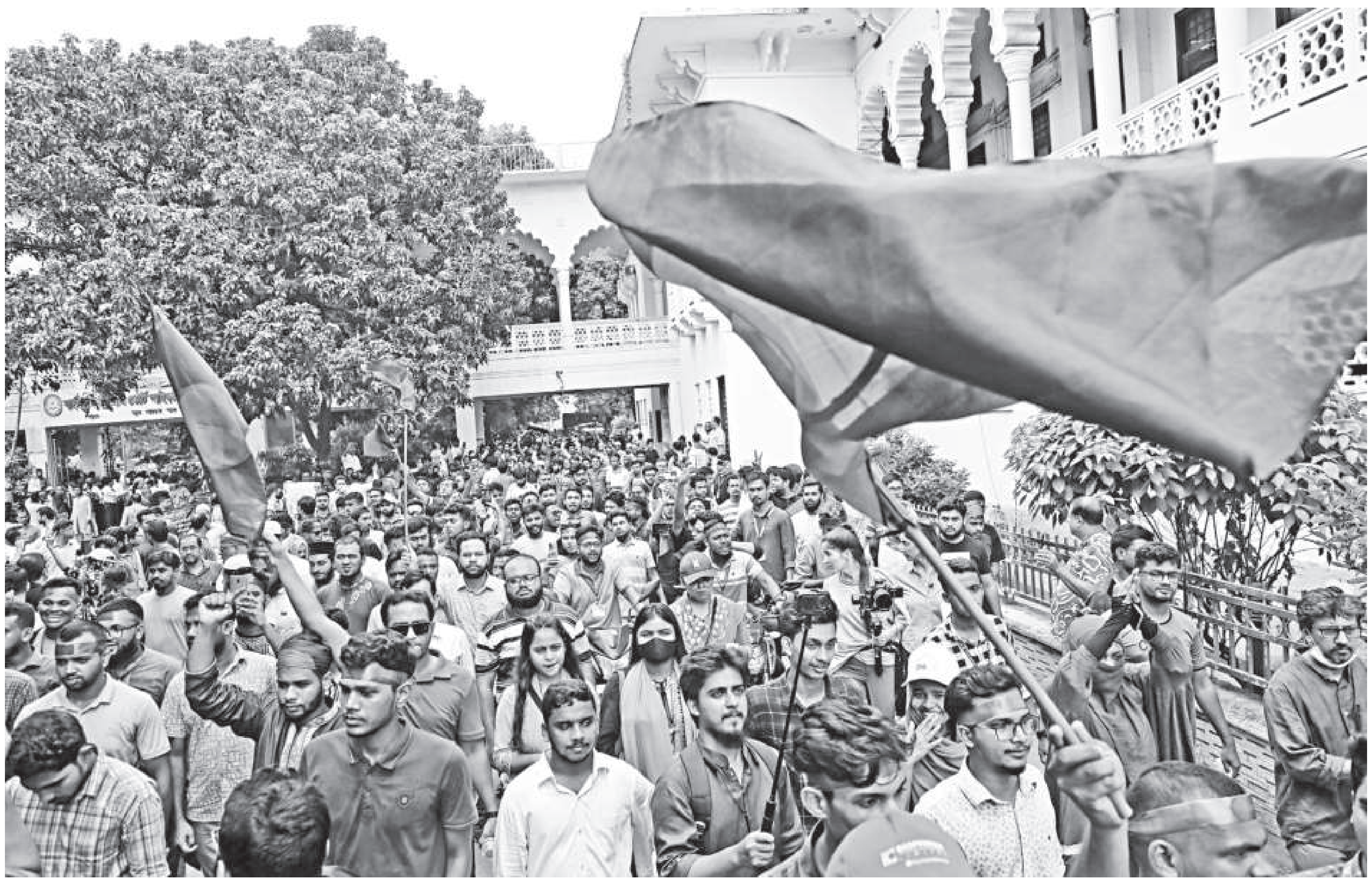
"In Bangladesh, we follow a 28-day interval between each vaccine dose, but in developed countries, they follow a two-month interval between the doses. So, an interval of two months is okay," he added.

Contacted, Dr Imam Hossain Rana, chief health officer of CCC, said they have not been getting an adequate supply of vaccines amid the current situation in the country.

"We get vaccines supplied from Chattogram Civil Surgeon's office. The supply has stopped since mid-July," he added.

Contacted, Dr Ilias Chowdhury, civil surgeon of Chattogram, confirmed a shortage in stock of EPI vaccines in the district.

"There is a shortage of vaccines at present as the supply is controlled centrally. The problem will hopefully be resolved by next week, as a stock of vaccines is scheduled to come from Dhaka on August 14," he said.



Several hundred protesters, including students and lawyers, gathered on the SC premises yesterday morning, demanding resignation of the chief justice and the judges of the Appellate Division. Later in the day, Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan and five more SC judges stepped down from their posts.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

JAIL SHOOTING

Another injured prisoner dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jamalpur*

Another inmate injured in Thursday's shooting at Jamalpur District Jail died at a hospital on Friday night.

The deceased, identified as 30-year-old Md Masud from Banpara in Jamalpur municipality, suddenly fell ill at midnight. He was immediately taken to Jamalpur General Hospital, where he later succumbed to his injuries, confirmed Jail Superintendent Abu Fatah yesterday.

Masud's body has been sent to the morgue for autopsy.

Earlier, six prisoners died, and 19 others -- including guards and inmates -- were injured in the shooting at Jamalpur jail on Thursday.

The incident occurred when prisoners set fire inside the prison and took the jailer hostage. The guards opened fire when the prisoners attempted to break out, with the confrontation lasting from 1:30pm to 3:30pm on Thursday.

MEDICAL WASTE IN MYMENSINGH

Dumped in the open for 30 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Toxic and hazardous medical wastes from approximately 300 hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centres in Mymensingh city have been openly dumped at Moilakanda ground in Char Kalibari area for the past 30 years, raising alarm among residents and officials.

Despite the growing concern, there is still no permanent facility for the disposal of the city's medical waste.

Dr Md Zakiul Islam, deputy director of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH), said the hospital lacks a waste treatment plant, forcing them to store both kitchen and medical waste in a shed before it is collected by Mymensingh City Corporation (MCC) trucks each evening.

Dr Zakiul highlighted that amputated body parts and materials from C-section operations are buried after disinfection with chlorine solution.

He expressed serious concern over the waste management situation at MMCH, noting that although waste is sorted into different bins, the MCC trucks collect and dispose of all waste without proper separation.

A visit to MMCH's garbage station revealed discarded sharp medical items mixed with kitchen waste, underscoring the severity of the issue.

Dr Ranjan Kumar Majumder, a retired medicine specialist, warned that residents near the Moilakanda area are at risk of diseases such as asthma, diarrhoea, allergies, and eye irritation.

Lawyer Shibbir Ahmed Liton, secretary of Mymensingh Poribesh Rokhha o Unnayan Andolon, called for immediate action to prevent medical waste from contaminating the Old Brahmaputra river during the monsoon, posing significant public health hazards.

Mohabbat Ali, conservation inspector of MMC, reported that around five tonnes of medical waste are produced daily in the city, presenting a significant challenge for the MCC.

He admitted that the MCC has been using traditional methods for disposal due to a lack of expertise in medical waste management.

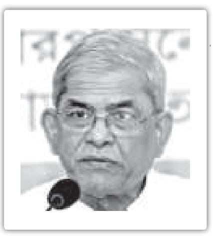
MCC is working to establish a medical waste management plant at Moilakanda by the end of the year, said Md Arifur Rahman, MCC's chief waste management officer.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

RECENT VIOLENCE

BNP to write to UN for probe: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said his party will send a letter to the United Nations calling for a probe into the "genocide" carried out by the Awami League government and forces on protesters "prior to the victory" on August 5.

He said this at a press conference at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office.

Fakhrul said the party also plans to send a letter to the chief adviser of the interim government in this regard.

"At the same time, we will also send a letter to the [interim] government urging them to take steps for the release of about 50 of our workers who have been imprisoned in the UAE for supporting the movement," he said.

About the resignation of judges, Fakhrul said, "This is excellent news for democracy..."

Fakhrul also criticised some media outlets for spreading misleading news about the current situation.

"The news highlighted attacks on minority communities and a deterioration of the law and order situation, which we believe is entirely incorrect. These incidents are not communal or religious; they are political," he said.

Fakhrul also expressed gratitude to the interim government for its efforts to stabilise the country.

"On behalf of the party, we thank Chief Adviser Yunus and other advisers. After the revolution, there may be some problems. Restoring normalcy will not be an easy task," Fakhrul said.

"We sincerely thank the interim government for beginning their work with dedication," he added.

MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

A tenth-grader shot dead in Narayanganj. A father dies of bullet wound in Faridpur. A husband fatally shot in Mymensingh. A university student shot dead in Mirpur. A tailor killed in Adabor. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

Adil wanted to join the army

Says mother of 16-year-old who was shot dead by law enforcers

SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM, *Narayanganj*

Md Adil, 16, a tenth grader, was having lunch with his family at his home in Bhuighar area of Narayanganj on July 19 when a friend knocked on their door and informed that law enforcers were firing at student protesters nearby.

Adil immediately went outside and rushed to Dhaka-Narayanganj link road to join other protesters, despite being urged by his parents to stay home.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

When will father return?

Asks daughter of Shamsu, 62, who died of bullet wounds

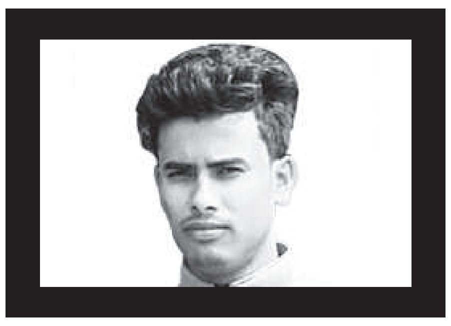
SUZIT DAS, *Faridpur*

Shamsu Mollah, 62, was going to a market near Faridpur's Kotwali Police Station to buy toys for his daughter on August 5, as she had been asking for one for quite some time.

However, instead of bringing a toy from the market, his lifeless body returned home.

Following Sheikh Hasina's resignation, people in different areas of the country

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



We got married only a year back

Says wife of Jobayer, 22, who was fatally shot

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

The world has turned bleak for Marzina Begum, 20, after her husband Jobayer Ahmed, 22, died of bullet wounds sustained during a clash between police and protesters demanding quota reform in Mymensingh's Gouripur upazila on July 20.

"We got married only a year back. Jobayer was the lone earning member of the family. How are we going to manage

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Shakil was vocal against injustice

Says brother of 23-year-old who died of bullet injury

TAHIRA SHAMSI UTSA

Zulfiquar Shakil, 23, who died after being shot during the anti-government protest in Dhaka's Mirpur 10 on August 4, was a student of fine arts in the capital's University of Development Alternative.

He used to bear the family's expenses by doing tuitions. He was shot when Awami League activists and law enforcers opened fire on protesters, and died on August 7 while being on life support at the National

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

How will we survive now?

Asks wife of Bachchu, 47, who was shot dead in Adabor

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Kohinoor Begum has been finding it hard to grapple with the reality that her husband Bachchu Howladar, 47, is no more.

"My husband was the lone earning member of our five-member family. Where shall I go with our three children now? How are we going to survive?" she said.

Bachchu, hailing from West Sharikkhali

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ARTISTES UNITE, call for cultural resurgence at Central Shaheed Minar

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Artistes and cultural figures from across Bangladesh gathered at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday afternoon, rallying under the banner of Srishtir Shadhinotay Shahoshi Bangladesh (Brave Bangladesh for Freedom of Art). The event, which began at 3pm, brought together four prominent platforms: The Visual Artistes' Society, Photographer Society, Protesting Theatre Activists, and Get Up and Stand Up (Bangladesh Musical Artists' Society).

The rally comes in the wake of significant political upheaval, following the resignation and hasty departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5

The rally comes in the wake of significant political upheaval, following the resignation and hasty departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5. On that same day, at least 76 deaths and approximately 500 injuries were reported in areas outside the capital. In the following days, the nation has grappled with a wave of violence as reports of killings, arson, looting, and attacks on minority communities have further heightened tensions across the country.

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

In a joint statement, the assembled artistes addressed the recent turmoil, saying, "We have taken down the dictator through a bloody mass uprising led by the students of our country. We deeply remember the martyred who were brutally killed by Sheikh Hasina's regime. It's very unfortunate that we are yet to get the identification of many and have a confirmed number of the people who have lost their lives."

The coalition put forth several demands, including: immediate compilation of a comprehensive list of those killed during the anti-discrimination movement; guard of honour funerals for the deceased and aid for the injured; construction of a memorial (Shaheed Minar) to honour the martyrs and thorough investigation and trial of those responsible for the killings.

The artistes also condemned the post-uprising violence, calling for fair investigations into the destruction of temples, Liberation War museums, historic establishments, sculptures, and other cultural landmarks.

Notable figures in attendance included Shahidul Alam, Amirul Rajiv, Piplu R Khan, Probar Ripon, Tanim Noor, Azmeri Haque Badhan, Saberi Alam, Zakia Bari Mamo, Rafiath Rashid Mithila, Armeen Musa, Khayam Sanu Sandhi, Kamar Ahmed Simon, Amitabh Reza Chowdhury, Neel Hurerzahan, Tanvin Sweety, Rubayat and Ruslan Rehman, Mumtaheena Toya and Safa Kabir, among others. Their presence underscored the broad support for reform and justice across Bangladesh's creative communities.

Speaking at the event, the artistes urged citizens to actively participate in reshaping the nation. They emphasised their vision for a truly inclusive Bangladesh, where everyone is treated equally regardless of their caste, race, gender, ethnicity, and religion. Drawing parallels to the student-led movement that precipitated recent changes, they called for widespread support "from the plains to the hills" in this next phase of national reform.

They performed patriotic songs dedicated to the martyrs, concluding the event with national anthem.

As Bangladesh stands at this critical juncture, the artistic community's united front is crucial to continue the fight for freedom, justice, and cultural expression. The coming weeks and months will likely prove crucial in determining whether the artistes' calls for transparency, justice, and reform will be heeded by the transitional authorities and whatever new government takes shape.

Cartoon Network's website closes, along with years of nostalgia

Cartoon Network, known for shows like ***Scooby-Doo***, ***The Powerpuff Girls***,and many more, was a key part of many childhoods. Fans could previously revisit these moments online for free, but Warner Bros wwwhas now decided to close the official website.

Visitors to the website will now be redirected to Warner Bros' Max streaming service, where a notification will prompt them to subscribe to access their favourite cartoons.

The closure of cartoonnetwork.com comes a week after Warner Bros Discovery announced the shutdown of Boomerang, with subscribers and

Fake page impersonating Bipasha Hayat spreads propaganda

Posts about the national anthem and various controversial issues were made from a Facebook page impersonating Bipasha Hayat, causing embarrassment and surprise to the actress.

The actress confirmed to The Daily Star that she doesn't use Facebook and that the page posting political content is fake. She shared a screenshot on her verified Instagram, writing, "I do not use Facebook. Instagram is the only social media platform where I share my thoughts and activities."

Asked about the fake Facebook page, Bipasha, currently in Sydney for a special children's welfare event, said, "The Facebook posts using my name are not from me. I am unaware of their purpose. I am not responsible for this negative propaganda."

NEWS

All cases filed to quell protests

FROM PAGE 12

fire on protesters, a large number of whom were later sued.

More than 400 people, including students and police personnel, were killed in the violence centring the student protest that later turned into an anti-government movement.

On August 5, President Mohammed Shahabuddin in a televised address to the nation said that all the prisoners, including those detained in various false cases during the student movement, will be released.

The next day, at least a total of 2,400 people, including several top leaders of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, secured bail in the cases filed with different police stations in the capital over the violence centring the quota reform protests.

According to the court records, over 270 cases were lodged with 39 police stations in the city between July 16 and August 4. The complainants in most cases were police personnel.

The charges in the cases include illegal gathering, rioting, assaulting law enforcers, damaging assets, and arson.

According to the police sources, at least 10,134 people, including students, members of BNP and Jamaat-Shibir, were arrested in 872 cases filed in the capital and 51 districts from July 18-30.

Police not on the ground

FROM PAGE 12

police personnel were found in Shah Ali, where no general diary (GD) was filed in the past two days.

"We're living in fear. Our families don't even want us to leave the house. But I still come to the police station because I'm a government service holder," said a sub-inspector of the station.

The SI suggested that police high-ups consider a mass transfer, as many personnel who are well known to the local communities have become easy targets.

Reassigning them to new areas could offer some relief since locals would not know about their actions during the previous government's tenure, particularly during the recent student movement, he said.

A 60-year-old man was waiting at Kafrul Police Station around 3:30pm. He said he was falsely implicated in a case on July 27 and his mobile phone was seized. He was bailed out of prison on August 7.

"I came here on Friday to get my phone back after I learnt that the station had reopened, but a policeman asked me to come today [yesterday]. I've been waiting for around an hour but there's no policeman."

An army soldier guarding the station said several police personnel came in the morning but left after sometime.

An additional superintendent of police said, "The situation won't change overnight, not until we're assured of our security. We won't be able to go outside in uniform, and so, people will be deprived of our services."

Speaking to The Daily Star, many people said the interim government should first focus on restoring law and order as a peaceful atmosphere is necessary for stability and the development of every sector.

"We must remember that if the police are safe and active, we too will stay safe," said Rafiqul Islam, a resident of the capital's Ramna area.

"Policemen are returning to duty and we all should accept them with love and mutual cooperation. We hope they will quickly normalise the country's law and order situation."

Meanwhile, the officer-in-charge and some other officials returned to the Ashulia Police Station and exchanged views with the locals yesterday. The students welcomed their return, reports our Savar correspondent.

OC AFM Sayed said it will take time to start normal policing as their vehicles were torched.

Our Barishal correspondent reported that police started working on a limited scale in the city and elsewhere in the district.

At Kotwali Police Station, the correspondent found all 10 policemen in plainclothes.

Mostafizur Rahman, chief of the station, said they recorded three cases on Saturday after filing not even one GD since August 5. "We're not going out for investigations or patrolling."

Wahidul Islam, superintendent of police in Barishal, said the 10 police stations in the district were operating on a limited scale since many personnel were yet to report for duty.

Interim govt to stay as long as needed

FROM PAGE 2

"There are some good people in all these institutions. But the system was set up in a way that the institutions became a terror to the people who had different views and exercised their fundamental rights.

"People want to reform them. We will stay as long as we need to balance the desire for reform with the desire for elections.

"I miss teaching at the university. I want to get back to my life [as a teacher] as soon as possible after this job is done."

President Mohammed Shahabuddin on August 6 dissolved the 12th parliament formed through the January 7 national election.

A statement from the Bangabhaban said the decision to dissolve the parliament was made following the president's discussions with chiefs of three staff of armed forces, leaders of different political parties, representatives of civil society and leaders of the student movement against discrimination.

According to the constitution, a general election should be held within 90 days of the dissolution of parliament.

BNP expels 44

FROM PAGE 12

The BNP high command has instructed us to take measures in this regard," he said.

Chhatra Dal had taken a decision regarding its members' entry into the university campuses, but five to seven of its leaders and activists disobeyed the decision, leading to the issuance of show-cause notices against them, he added.

Jubo Dal Office Secretary MN Islam Sohel said, "Action has been taken against some Jubo Dal leaders and activists for anti-organisational activities.

"We have warned them against violating organisational discipline. This action has been taken to make sure that the leaders and activists remain careful about the organisation's directives," he told this newspaper.

BNP sources said that the party's top leadership has taken a strong stance against attacks and vandalism, particularly the incidents targeting religious minority communities.

This move is seen as a crucial step towards upholding the party's reputation and ensuring that the leaders and activists do not engage in any activities that could tarnish the party's image, said a BNP standing committee member, seeking anonymity.

Last week, BNP's acting chairman Tarique Rahman called upon the party leaders and activists to set an example by protecting all citizens regardless of their religious identities.

ACTION AGAINST PARTY MEN

In Dhaka, the convenor of Chhatra Dal's Kadmatali thana unit has been expelled while six other leaders have been served with show-cause notices.

In Chattogram, Chhatra Dal has expelled the senior joint convener of its Chattogram metropolitan unit. Two vice presidents of Chattogram metropolitan Jubo Dal have also been expelled.

In Khulna, a show-cause notice was served on Paikgachha upazila BNP General Secretary SM Enamul Haque over looting and arson.

"He attacked many Hindu houses and looted valuables, but the victims did not dare to speak for fear of reprisals," reads a press release issued by the Khulna district BNP on August 8.

Chhatra Dal district organising secretary in Barishal, the student front's general secretary in Thakurgaon, and its Panchagarh municipality member secretary have also been expelled for violating organisational discipline.

In Jashore, 13 leaders of BNP, Jubo Dal, and Chhatra Dal have been expelled for their involvement in attacks and vandalism.

Warning letters have been issued against at least 35 grassroots BNP leaders in the district as well.

In Jhalakathi, Jubo Dal expelled the convenors of its district and Nalchity upazila units for violating organisational discipline. Also, the district BNP expelled its Sadar upazila deputy publicity secretary, citing the same reason.

Four Jubo Dal leaders have been expelled in Lakshmipur, four in Pirojpur, three in Lalmonirhat, two each in Gazipur, Noakhali, Magura, and Jhenaidah, and one has been expelled in Narshingdi.

The convener of Magura municipality Swechhasebak Dal was also expelled.

Ensure journalists' safety

FROM PAGE 2

environment for journalists and media outlets in Bangladesh who in recent days have experienced serious physical attacks and acts of intimidation," the association said in a letter.

"A free media which is protected by law against acts of violence and intimidation is essential for a healthy democracy," added the letter to the head of the interim government on Friday.

It said offices of several television channels and other media outlets were attacked and ransacked by violent intruders since the military assumed control.

"Many journalists have faced severe threats to their personal safety and been stopped from performing their legitimate duties," the CJA said.

"We appeal to you to take prompt and effective steps to restore the rule of law in these cases, and to ensure that all journalists in Bangladesh enjoy freedom of movement and protection from acts of violence," said the letter.

The CJA is a volunteer association that promotes professional journalism, free media, and freedom of expression across the Commonwealth.

Protesters attack army patrol teams in Gopalganj

FROM PAGE 2

weapons, it said. The protesters also hurled brick chunks at the teams. An army vehicle was set alight and another two were vandalised.

According to the ISPR, the army patrol team fired four shots to disperse the protesters and bring the situation under control.

Additional troops have been deployed in the area, it said, adding that the injured army personnel were out of danger and undergoing treatment.

3 medical colleges

FROM PAGE 2

Chittagong Medical College took an identical decision.

Meanwhile, the academic council of Dhaka Medical College has decided to ban student politics from its campus, and Dr Fazle Rabbi Male Hostel and Dr Alim Chowdhury Girls' Hostel, according to a press release from its principal, Md Shafiqul Alam Chowdhury.

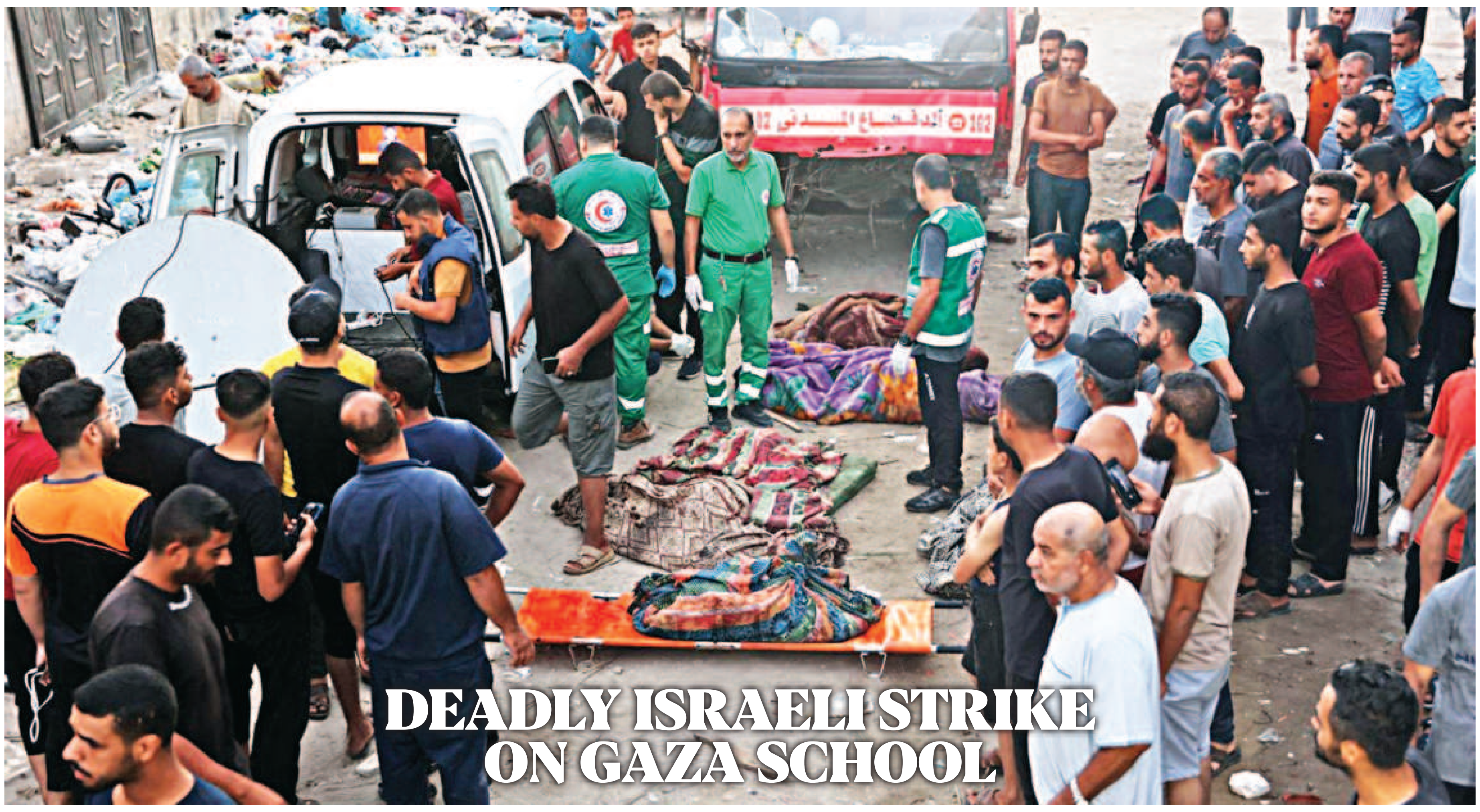
"No political organisation, including Chhatra League, Chhatra Dal, and Chhatra Shibir, will be able to conduct political activities on campus and in two halls. If any student is found re-introducing politics on campus, strict measures will be taken against that student," the release added.

The meeting also decided to ensure proper treatment for all students who sustained injuries during the protests centring the quota reform protests.

The academic councils of Sir Salimullah Medical College and Chittagong Medical College took similar decisions.

On Friday, the authorities at Noakhali Science and Technology University also banned politics for all students and teachers.

The NSTU authorities took the decision at a meeting on Friday evening, sources aware of the development told The Daily Star yesterday.



DEADLY ISRAELI STRIKE ON GAZA SCHOOL

(From left, clockwise) Displaced Palestinians watch as first responders prepare to transport the corpses of people killed in an Israeli strike on a school in Gaza City yesterday that killed more than 90 people; a young girl cries inside the school after the attack; an injured man comforts his daughter after several members of his family were killed in an overnight Israeli strike.

PHOTO: AFP

India, Maldives look to reset ties after spat

AFP, *Malé*

India's foreign minister has called the Maldives a "priority" for New Delhi on his first trip to the archipelago nation since its pro-China president expelled Indian troops.

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said late Friday he was in the Maldives to "take stock of our defence and security engagement", months after President Mohamed Muizzu's administration signed a military assistance pact with Beijing.

Known as a luxury holiday destination with pristine white sand beaches and secluded resorts, the atoll nation has also become a geopolitical hotspot.

India is suspicious of China's growing presence in the Indian Ocean, and Male's military deal with Beijing came as Muizzu ordered a garrison of Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives to assist with maritime patrols to leave.

Jaishankar, who will also meet Muizzu, said he wanted to highlight India's "continued support to Maldives in its quest for progress and prosperity".

Global east-west shipping lanes pass the nation's chain of 1,192 tiny coral islands, stretching around 800 kilometres (500 miles) across the equator.

India's government has traditionally considered the Maldives, home to around half a million people, within its sphere of influence.

"For India, neighbourhood is a priority and, in the neighbourhood, Maldives is a priority", Jaishankar said in a speech Friday.

Male's foreign minister Moosa Zameer called India "one of our closest friends", in a statement.

Zameer said the two countries had agreed to strengthen economic ties, saying Muizzu had asked to "begin negotiations" on a free trade agreement with New Delhi.

Defence links were also discussed, including "continuing joint exercises and expanding training opportunities for officers", he added.

In June, Muizzu visited New Delhi for Narendra Modi's inauguration as prime minister.

Muizzu's election successes hinged on a sustained campaign against India's outsized political and economic clout in the Maldives.

Its influence has been a periodic source of resentment in the Muslim-majority nation.

POLITICAL TRANSITION IN VENEZUELA

Maduro rejects Panama's offer

REUTERS, *Panama City*

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro gave a scathing response to an offer on Friday from his Panamanian counterpart, Jose Raul Mulino, to facilitate his departure to a third country to allow for a political transition.

Mulino told broadcaster CNN he would give Maduro safe passage to act as a "bridge" to a third country, in the aftermath of a July 28 election Maduro says he won but independent pollsters claim as an opposition landslide.

"If that's the contribution, the sacrifice that Panama has to make, by offering our soil so that this man and his family can leave Venezuela, Panama would do it without a doubt," Mulino said in an interview.

But Maduro accused the Panamanian president, who himself was elected to office just three months ago, of getting "carried away by the gringos," using a derogatory term for Americans.

"I will try to learn your name, President of Panama, but whoever messes with Venezuela runs aground," Maduro told reporters outside a courtroom where he filed an appeal to verify the electoral results.

Maduro has claimed a 51% victory in last month's election, while the political opposition maintains its candidate won by millions of votes. Venezuela's electoral authority has yet to release detailed vote tallies.

Escalations in Middle East serve no one

US tells Israel, releases $35b to Israel to spend on weapons

REUTERS, *Washington*

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant in a phone call on Friday that the escalation of tensions in the Middle East was "in no party's interest" while also stressing the need for a Gaza ceasefire, the State Department said.

There has been an increased risk of escalation into a broader Middle East war after recent killings of Palestinian Islamist group Hamas' leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran and of Hezbollah military commander Fuad Shukr in Beirut drew threats of retaliation against Israel.

As a result, many fear a widening of Israel's war in Gaza that has already killed tens of thousands and caused a humanitarian crisis.

"The Secretary reaffirmed the United States' ironclad commitment to Israel's security and discussed how escalation is in no party's interest," the State Department said in a statement.

Blinken stressed the "urgent need to reach a ceasefire in Gaza" that could release hostages held in the enclave and "create the conditions for broader regional stability," the State Department added.

Meanwhile, Washington will provide Israel $3.5 billion to spend on US weapons and military equipment, the State Department said on Friday, with the release of the money coming months after the US Congress appropriated it during Israel's war in Gaza.

A State Department spokesperson said on Friday that the department notified Congress on Thursday that the government intended to release the billions of dollars worth of foreign military financing to Israel.

CNN reported earlier on the release of this amount which comes from a $14 billion supplemental funding bill for Israel passed by the Congress in April.

Meanwhile, an Israeli airstrike on a Gaza school compound housing displaced families killed around 100 people, the Hamas-run Gaza government said on Saturday, while the Israeli military said it had targeted Hamas militants and cast doubt on the Palestinian death toll.

Video from the site showed body parts scattered on the ground and more bodies being carried away and covered in blankets on the floor. Empty food tins lay in a puddle of blood and burnt mattresses and a child's doll lay among the debris.

In another video, men prayed over a dozen body bags laid out on the ground. It was not immediately clear whether all the videos were filmed on the ground floor of the Tabeen school complex, in Gaza City.

Gaza's Hamas-run media office said in a statement that the complex was attacked when people sheltering there were performing dawn prayers.

The Gaza health ministry says that since October 7, Israel's military assault on the Hamas-governed enclave has killed nearly 40,000 Palestinians while also displacing nearly the entire population of 2.3 million, causing a hunger crisis and leading to genocide accusations that Israel denies.

US POLLS CAMPAIGN

Harris in Arizona, Trump in Montana

REUTERS, *Glendale*

US Vice President Kamala Harris campaigned in a packed arena in Arizona on Friday, hoping to put Republican candidate Donald Trump on the back foot in the West, while Trump held his own rally in Montana to support a Republican candidate for Senate.

The Democratic presidential candidate, less than a month into her bid for the White House, has been on a week-long tour after naming her running mate, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, with a focus on building excitement for her campaign in seven states that could tip the Nov 5 election.

That tour on Friday brought her to the Phoenix area, where she was visiting with volunteers at a campaign office and speaking to voters.

Also in the West, Trump held a rally in Bozeman, Montana, a state that Republicans have carried in every presidential race since 1996.

Protests go on across country

FROM PAGE 12

blocked till 7:00pm.

They chanted slogans such as "Save the Hindus", "Why are my temples and homes being looted? We want answers", "Hindu persecution in independent Bangladesh must not go on", "Religion is for individuals, the state is for everyone", "Who are you, who am I? Bangalee, Bangalee", and "Ensure the safety of the Hindus".

Speaking at the programme, Shanti Ranjan Mondal, president of Bhakta Sangha Bangladesh, said, "Many people are waiting near the border for refuge in neighbouring countries. Arrangements need to be made so they can return home with dignity."

The demonstrators warned they would wage tougher programmes if immediate steps are not taken to stop the attacks on the Hindus.

Puja Rani Saha, from Joypurhat's Khetlal area, said, "Someone in Dhaka can't even comprehend the extent of the persecution the Hindus of our locality have been facing. We're citizens of this country, but we're always at the receiving end of the wrath during any unrest."

She said they came all the way to Dhaka to join the protests as their backs were now against the wall.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Mohajote formed a human chain in front of the National Press Club to protest the attacks. They also demanded the reinstatement of reserved seats and a separate election to ensure the minorities' representation.

Bangladesh Sanatan Party, after a meeting at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday, issued a statement urging people to unite and come forward to stop the torture of minorities.

In Chattogram city, several thousand Hindus staged a sit-in at the Cheragi Pahar intersection, demanding the security of minorities.

They started gathering at the intersection from around 3:00pm and kept the intersection blocked for around three and a half hours.

Rinku Sharma, an assistant director of the Hindu Welfare Trust, said, "We [Muslims and Hindus] have been living together in the region for years as Bangalees. But some miscreants are trying to use religious identities to ruin that bond."

In Barishal city, members of the Hindu community held a rally in front of the Ashwini Kumar Hall under the banner of "Nipiron Birodhi Mancha".

Addressing the rally, Bhanu Lal Dey, president of the Mahanagar Puja Udjapan Parishad, said they have been sleepless from fear and are not getting any kind of assistance from the law enforcement agencies.

They later brought out a procession that paraded through different streets in the city.

In Natore, Hindus held a rally at the Kanaikhali Old Bus Stand. They said temples are being vandalised and looted as criminals are taking advantage of the absence of law and order.

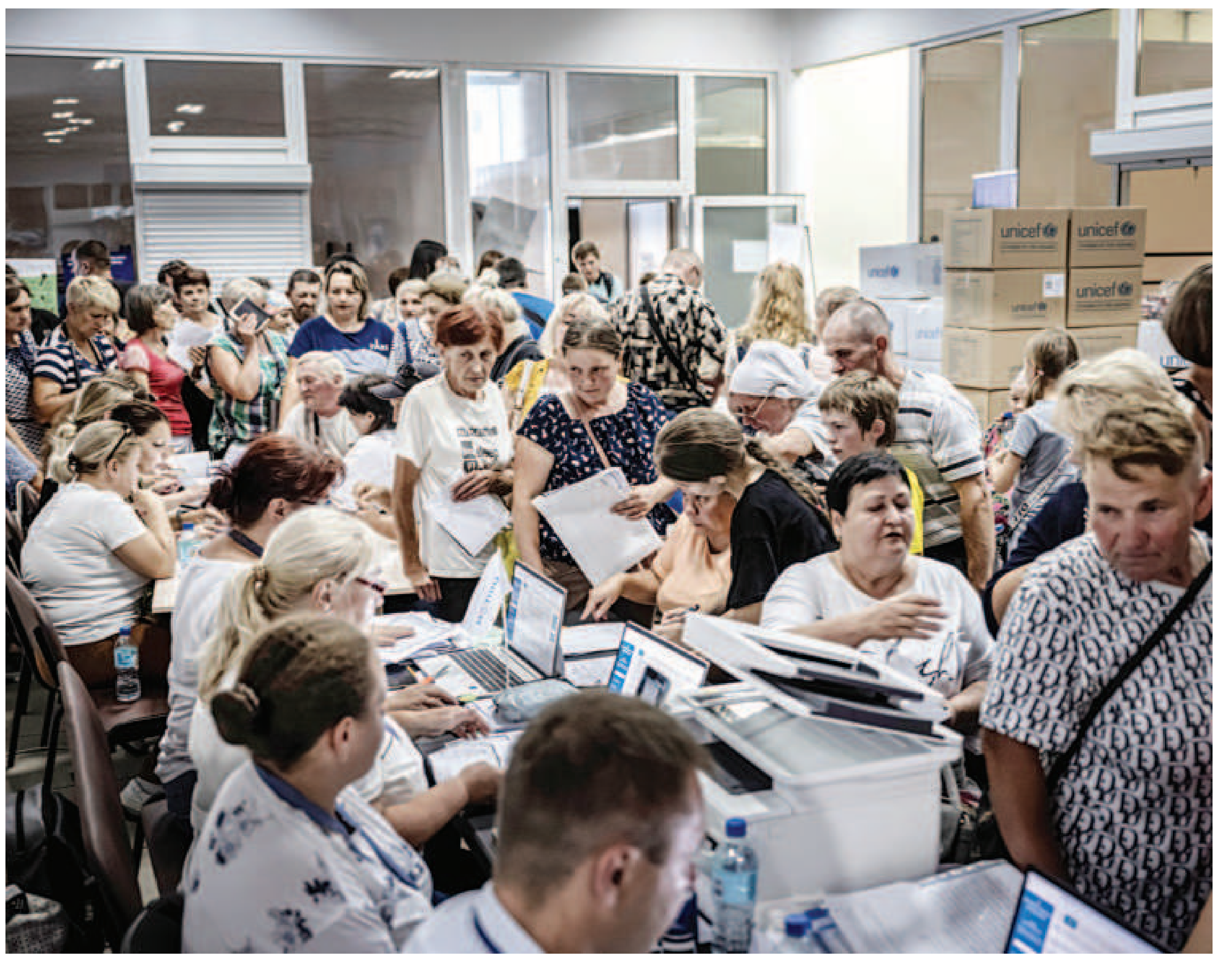
Members of the Hindu community in Mymensingh also formed a human chain in front of the city's Firoz-Jahangir Chattar. They later brought out a procession under the banner of "Shocheton Sanatani Samaj".

In Shariatpur, a group of people formed a human chain, under the banner of "Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Mohajote", near the district's Central Shaheed Minar.

In Narayanganj, hundreds of Hindus brought out a procession, demanding justice for the attacks.

In Kushtia, students brought out a procession and held a rally, urging people to resist any attempts to attack minorities or their religious establishments.

Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad and Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishadon on Friday reported at least 205 attacks on members of minority communities in 52 districts since the fall of the Hasina-led government on August 5.



Local residents from a village near the Russian border who fled due to Russian shelling, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, arrive in an evacuation centre in Sumy, Ukraine. Struggling to contain a major Ukrainian incursion, Russia yesterday said it had evacuated tens of thousands of people from its border region and launched a "counter-terror operation".

PHOTO: REUTERS

EDITORIAL

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

The police must get back to work

An atmosphere of mutual trust must be created

We are deeply concerned that, so far, only 361 out of 639 police stations have partially resumed operations since Friday, with the assistance of the armed forces and Border Guard Bangladesh. At the time when there is a severe lapse in security across all districts, with many incidents of violence, arson attacks, and even robberies being reported, law enforcement cannot be absent from the scene.

While it is understandable that many police personnel are feeling insecure after the destruction of many police stations in the country and attacks on police personnel, they must remember their primary duty, which is to protect the public. The unprecedented number of civilians—many of them students and even children—who were shot and killed by law enforcers during the quota movement, triggered attacks on police and police stations. But now is the time for all official forces to work together to bring security to the nation. Official forces must collaborate to ensure safety, especially in minority communities that have faced violence and vandalism from different coteries trying to take advantage of the power vacuum created by the former government's departure. The same applies to other groups as well, including members of the former administration, Awami League members, and individuals seen as loyal to the former regime.

Without police presence on the streets, miscreants have seized the opportunity to commit crimes with total impunity. In the absence of police, communities are having to mobilise their members to stay on watch all night, with the student volunteers helping. While this is very admirable, it is hardly a sustainable solution. Only a strong law enforcement presence will deter these criminals.

It is worrisome to know that the chain of command within the police force has broken down after the attacks on police personnel. Police from lower ranks have staged demonstrations and made their 11-point demand. The police force, which has long played a partisan role and embittered the public with its actions, must do everything in its power to regain public trust. The interim government must prioritise security and take necessary steps to restore police presence at the stations. Senior officers, particularly the new IGP, must address this crisis through dialogue with their frustrated juniors and find immediate solutions.

This will also require quick logistical support to repair the destroyed stations and get them operational again, as well as address the legitimate grievances of lower-tier police officers. The process of reform within the police force must begin as soon as possible to depoliticise the force, eradicate corruption, and make it a protector of the public rather than a feared or hated entity.

Global response to Bangladesh's transition

We need the support of our friends, now more than ever

We are heartened by the international community's expressed readiness to work with the interim government of Bangladesh, led by its chief, Professor Muhammad Yunus. Following the fall of the Awami League government, due to the popular demand of student protesters and the masses, Bangladesh faces a long journey to chart a democratic future for its people—a challenge recognised by the international community as well. As Bangladesh embarks on this uncertain yet hopeful path, the role of the interim government in steering the nation toward a democratic future cannot be understated.

Bangladesh endured three days without a government, during which law and order deteriorated amid widespread uncertainty. Now that the interim government has been formed, we are confident that stability will return and law and order will improve. As several representatives of our international partners have correctly emphasised, this must be the new government's first priority, along with ensuring accountability for all recent deaths. To achieve this, the interim government may request international assistance, which we hope our partners will be ready to provide upon request.

At this critical stage, with the economy having suffered significantly over the past month—and given the economic challenges that have plagued the country over the last couple of years—Bangladesh will require substantial support from its foreign friends. According to a recent report, the Bangladeshi economy experienced a sharp contraction in July. To get the economy back on track, Bangladesh could benefit from all the help it can get from other countries. To that end, we hope that friendly nations from all regions will step forward.

Given the disruption to business across all sectors in Bangladesh, we urge our international partners to remain patient and work with our industries to ensure that our commercial partnerships can continue to recover and flourish. The European Union, which imports goods worth $24 billion annually from Bangladesh, has expressed its eagerness to engage with the new administration, recognising this moment as crucial for fulfilling the aspirations of the Bangladeshi people, particularly its youth. We believe our other foreign friends share similar views and will engage with the government to achieve positive outcomes for all concerned.

The international response to this transition has been overwhelmingly positive, with key global players pledging their support for Bangladesh's journey toward democracy. The international community's support provides a strong foundation for Bangladesh to rebuild and move forward. However, the ultimate responsibility lies with the Bangladeshi people and their leaders to ensure that this transition marks the beginning of a new, more democratic era in the country's history.

A pathway to transformative governance

Irene Khan
is the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression and former Secretary General of Amnesty International. This op-ed reflects her personal views as a citizen of Bangladesh.

IRENE KHAN

The interim government comes with a mandate to ensure a peaceful transition to democracy, but its full scope is undefined, and a timetable is yet to be determined. Expectations are running high, and so are fears. As the Arab Spring has shown, failure could set back the struggle for democracy for decades to come.

I see a window of opportunity to craft a platform for transformative governance, grounded in democratic values and human rights principles. But that window will not last long. Among the many issues that demand the urgent attention of the interim government, it must select and prioritise a few critical reforms that are truly vital for sustaining democracy in the long run, that can be achieved in a short time and can be embedded in such a way that they will outlive this government.

The selection, prioritisation and delivery of those reforms will determine whether this moment in our country's history is a new dawn or a false one.

I believe early action in six key areas is essential.

First is the early restoration of law and order. There continues to be reports of violence, arson and looting, targeting supporters of the previous regime and members of the Hindu community. The political nature of these attacks is evident. The interim government must make it clear that not only does it have zero tolerance for political vendettas or scapegoating of minorities, but that all political parties must proactively reign in their goons or face political and legal consequences.

The interim government should think outside the box when it comes to policing. The discredited and demoralised police have walked out. Within hours of the police going on "strike", well-organised groups of students and volunteers took to guarding neighbourhoods and managing the city traffic in Dhaka with remarkable skill, politeness and diligence. This could well be the beginning of a new community-based policing system that this country badly needs.

Second is accountability for human rights violations—not to be done forty years down the road but here and now. The interim government should initiate a credible and transparent accountability process, in line with internationally recognised standards and with international assistance, into the massive human rights violations in recent weeks and past years. The government should take up the offer of assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and ask for an international commission of inquiry.

The international nature of the inquiry will be vital for the credibility of the process at home and abroad. By taking the bold step of inviting an investigation, supported by the United Nations, into Bangladesh's human rights obligations which are underpinned by international treaties, this interim government will set an important precedent on accountability and respect for the rule of law which future governments cannot ignore easily.

VISUAL: **ALIZA RAHMAN**

Third is to strengthen the right to freedom of expression and the role of independent news media. The government should immediately repeal the Cyber Security Act, the law on criminal libel and the Information and Communication Technology Act, which were used by the previous government to gag the media, prosecute and punish journalists and human rights defenders, and disrupt the internet.

The previous government weaponised the judicial system to throttle dissent and silence journalists. Multiple charges were brought against scores of editors and journalists and left hanging over their heads for years, inducing a culture of fear and self-censorship. Criminal charges against all journalists and editors must be dismissed immediately. Journalism is not a crime.

Fourth is judicial reform. Parliament has been disbanded, the executive has been replaced, now the judiciary has resigned under pressure from the student-led movement. Root and branch reform of the judiciary is long overdue, and essential to gain the trust and confidence of the public as well as investors. This government should undertake a process of fundamental reforms, especially at the highest echelons of the judiciary, to ensure the independence, impartiality and competence of the judiciary and commitment from its highest echelons to its rank and file to upholding fairness, human rights, and the rule of law.

At a minimum, the interim government must develop an effective judicial mechanism to resolve electoral disputes. As Director-General of the International Development Law Organization, I played a part in the reform of Kenya's Supreme Court, following the adoption of a new constitution in 2010 after the bloodiest post-electoral violence in the history of that country. The reform of the supreme court and the exemplary leadership of successive chief justices have created such public trust that there has been no large-scale political violence in Kenya since then. When the opposition challenged the re-election of then sitting President Uhuru Kenyatta in 2017, the court ordered a re-run which the president accepted. When the court certified that he had won the re-run, the leader of the opposition accepted the court's decision without protest.

Fifth, democratic elections. The interim government will no doubt take many measures to create an enabling environment for free, fair, inclusive and credible elections. I strongly urge a reinstatement of the rule on the caretaker government arrangement for conducting future elections. Remember the Right to Information decree introduced by the caretaker administration in 2008 which the incoming government did not dare to reverse? This government should put the same kind of political capital to embed the caretaker arrangement.

My final point is about bringing a profound change in the political culture. The people of this country, especially the youth, are fed up with self-serving, corrupt and violent politics and politicians. They want a new type of politics that cares about ordinary people, that values equality, opportunity and justice.

The interim government, the student-led movement and all who support it must work to create a broad-based national movement with new ideas, leaders and innovative political structures that are representative of the gender, age, ethnic, religious and socio-economic diversity of our country and committed to create a rights-respecting, just and democratic society. We must have a truly alternative choice at the next elections.

Let people, not political parties decide interim govt's role

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BAZLUL H KHONDKER

Bangladesh witnessed an unprecedented people's revolution led by students which culminated in the fall of the Awami League government and the formation of an interim government. An important outcome of the July movement points to the abject failure of the political parties in the last 15 years to instigate a people-led upsurge to topple the Awami League government as citizens were disgruntled with the political parties and overall political system. On the other hand, an important social issue raised by students gained the resounding support of citizens to depose the mighty Awami League government within a month. There is a powerful sense of freedom in Bangladesh now.

Before the formation of the interim government, some decisions and demands of the major political parties caught my attention. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party's (BNP) decision to hold an assembly on August 7, was very immature. They should have waited till the formation of the interim government and restoration of law and order. We also saw a large rally by Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami which could have been avoided. Meanwhile, we noticed demands for early elections, and enquiry about the interim government's timeframe, legality, and agenda. I was not surprised by these decisions and demands of our major political parties since their ultimate motive is to be in power and unfortunately not to realise the real aspirations of the crores of Bangladeshi. However, some political individuals are in favour of giving the interim government a certain time to carry out fundamental reforms, the absence of which made the country dysfunctional.

There is a fundamental difference between a "caretaker" government and an "interim government." I believe we have a definition of the "caretaker" government but not an "interim" government. The 13th amendment to the Constitution of Bangladesh, which included provisions for a caretaker government to conduct general elections and transfer power impartially, was passed in 1996. This amendment added a new chapter, Chapter IIA: Non-Party Caretaker Government, in part IV of the constitution. Three elections were held under the caretaker system which was abolished by a constitutional amendment on June 30, 2011.

The question is: who will delineate the definition of the "interim" government? The answer is simple—the people of Bangladesh. The next question is how can this be done? The answer also lies with the people of Bangladesh.

The interim government should call for a plebiscite within the next three months along with a clearly thought-out reform agenda and estimated timeframe to achieve them. According to Britannica, a plebiscite is a "vote by the people of an entire country or district to decide on some issue, such as choice of a ruler or government, option for independence or annexation by another power, or a question of national policy." Generally in a plebiscite, voters are asked not to choose between alternate regimes or proposals but to confirm or reject the legitimacy of a certain form of government or course of action. More importantly, through plebiscites a government can reach people directly, bypassing intermediaries such as political parties for people's mandate on important issues such as the legitimacy of a government.

The list of the reforms should be quite large ranging from constitutional reforms to institution building. Some of the top agendas should include reviewing and rewriting the constitution to align with citizens' welfare and protection; revamping the electoral system to curb the influence of families to instil democracy within the parties' selection of nominees and leaders and pave the way for dedicated politicians; restoration of a transparent administration which is accountable to citizens; establishment of an efficient, inclusive and just judiciary system; and setup of a modern economic system focusing on efficiency and equity.

If I understand the mood of the citizens of our country correctly, people are ready to give adequate time to the current interim government as they regard it as their saviour, liberator, and the only institution that would fulfil their dreams.

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How the new leadership can best utilise this fresh start

Dr Faustina Pereira
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FAUSTINA PEREIRA

With the swearing-in of a new interim government of Bangladesh, following a truly phenomenal student-led mass revolution, Bangladesh has effectively entered a new social contract. There will be time enough in the coming days to analyse the full significance of this historic moment that Bangladesh, and indeed the whole world, is witnessing. For now, however, time is of the essence, and every stakeholder invested in a fresh start for nation building must be girded for the tough road that lies ahead. This is a moment that calls for decisive action and precise, intentional leadership to set the course and the tone for Bangladesh's path forward.

There is no denying that the expected deliverables from this new government is mountain high. From addressing immediate concerns such as restoring law and order, and economic and infrastructural recovery, to reclaiming and reforming the judiciary, and critical state institutions and commissions such as the National Human Rights Commission and Anti-Corruption Commission, amongst others, must be addressed with the utmost urgency.

For this government, which will have perhaps only a sliver of a honeymoon period, striking a balance between the urgent and the important in its prioritisation agenda will be one of the first challenges to overcome. For a sustained reform agenda, the government will have to adopt parallel initiatives and go beyond the tangible outcomes around law enforcement, business and the economy, communications, and bricks and mortar development. It will be in the delivery on the more intangible outcomes, that the expectations of citizens who have made immeasurable sacrifices to give Bangladesh this fresh start, will be assessed. The bedrock of these expectations is for Bangladesh to recover its soul. It is to give democracy, the rule of law, and the high ideals of the constitution to establish an equity-based and justice-centric society, the chance to flourish at last.

Translating these idealistic aspirations, especially within this environment of urgency, runs the threat of getting lost or deprioritised in the din of day-to-day minutiae of governance. In order to keep these ideals on the radar of governance, Bangladesh's new leadership need to pay attention and reflect on a few preliminary touch points, as it takes on the mantle of hope for nearly 180 million Bangladeshis.

It is time to go back to the drawing board. For a nation charting its course into the future, it is essential to revisit, as a matter of course, lessons from the past. Keeping an eye on the rearview mirror of political history sheds light not only on mistakes, missteps and missed opportunities but also provide sharp insights into the intent, actions and positioning of the various actors and factors that result in particular outcomes. Going back to the tenets of the original Constitution of Bangladesh, particularly its Preamble, will serve our leaders well in steering Bangladesh in its journey back to its *raison d'etre*. This is essential, irrespective of any future exercises around reframing the constitution.

The Constituent Assembly debates (1971-1973) provide important signposts for Bangladesh's new leadership on how to resolve challenges that have lingered over decades, and that eroded the core values of a cohesive society. From addressing critically important issues of secularism and pluralism, to the limits of power of each organ of the state and the independence of the judiciary, to protection against excessive executive power of the prime minister, and proportional representation in the legislature, the lessons of the past must guide the legacy of the future.

The interim government will need to be aware of echo chambers. In about three months hence, the operational and administrative wheels of governance will have set in. From the very earliest moments, mechanisms will need to be built into daily operations against complacency. Recognised best practices must be adopted against solidifying actions or decisions based on opinions that only reinforce the leadership's own positions. Processes that allow for regular pulse-checks with stakeholders and dissenting opinions, and those that ensure room for course correction, are some of the best antidotes against tunnel vision and mission drift.

It is also the time to prioritise truth, reconciliation, and healing. The pace at which individuals or nations heal from the scars and trauma of wrongdoing, violence and injustice, vary greatly. They depend on many factors and circumstances, both internal and external. The immediate effects of the mass uprising that Bangladesh is beginning to emerge from is but the ultimate protest against the vortex of state sanctioned human rights violations over decades that has included killings, torture, disappearances, suppression of dissent, abuse of power and an overall reign of terror and impunity.

For this government, striking a balance between the urgent and the important in its prioritisation agenda will be one of the first challenges to overcome. PHOTO: PID

In an ideal scenario, every perpetrator of every human rights violation should be brought to justice. The ground reality is that this ideal could be quite hard to achieve, especially if it is aimed to be achieved within a reasonably short period of time. One only needs to go through the bottlenecks and challenges in the existing criminal justice system of Bangladesh, as outlined in the Bangladesh Justice Audit, to understand why most victims and victim families will not receive justice within their lifetime. An overhaul of the criminal justice system may not be realisable within a limited time frame to address the large number of cases that will inevitably be lodged.

Whereas every effort must continue to be taken by the state to document every criminal offence and prosecute every perpetrator accordingly; the interim government should also check the pulse of citizens to assess whether the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission would be acceptable or feasible as a forum and process of justice. There are well known examples globally of similar such redressal mechanisms. Commissions set up, for example, in South Africa, Rwanda, Canada, or Australia, have helped to uncover the truth about human rights violations by gathering evidence and uncovering information—from both victims and perpetrators—on past crimes, to help heal the country and bring about a reconciliation of its people. These have focused on restorative rather than retributive justice as an outcome. If a similar mechanism can be considered for Bangladesh, national unity and intergenerational healing could be part of its objectives. It could go a long way to bring closure for a nation suffering from deep and open wounds and long deprived of timely, transparent and effective justice.

In honouring the aspirations of the student-led revolution that has ushered in a fresh start for Bangladesh, our new leadership must demonstrate a truly inclusive and intersectional approach to decision making, and in policy adoption and implementation. This will mean that those in whose name decisions are taken, particularly underrepresented and marginalised communities, including women, religious, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and people living with disabilities, must have a seat at the table. The voices and the choices of minorities across all social markers of age, sex, belief, class, profession, location or civil status must be an integral part of any decision that directly or indirectly affect these communities. What constitutes "national interest" must be re-defined to include the historically excluded. Inclusion in decision-making and in the spaces for equal or equitable opportunities and outcomes must be unshackled from tokenism.

To take a current example, it is disheartening to note that, despite high levels of participation, sacrifice and visibility of women and girls at the frontline and at the heart of the revolution, women's representation or visibility in the post revolution decisions around the new governance framework has been almost non-existent. This must be rectified immediately.

Indeed, the success of this revolution rests on the blood, sacrifice and participation of every category of citizens. Going forward, every effort needs to be taken to avoid historic mistakes of sidelining or excluding the historically marginalised contributors to state reform.

The adoption of an Anti-Discrimination Act that genuinely addresses the diversity and plurality of identities and experiences of all Bangladeshis, is one step to rectify historical exclusions and wrongs. But it cannot be the only mechanism. Inclusion must become an inherent part of democratic policy and practice.

Not many nations have the opportunity to make a fresh start in the right direction, such as Bangladesh does today. This opportunity has come at very great cost. From now onwards, every action taken by Bangladesh's new leadership, and indeed every citizen, will be indebted to and measured against this supreme sacrifice.

Can our walls make space for our dissent?

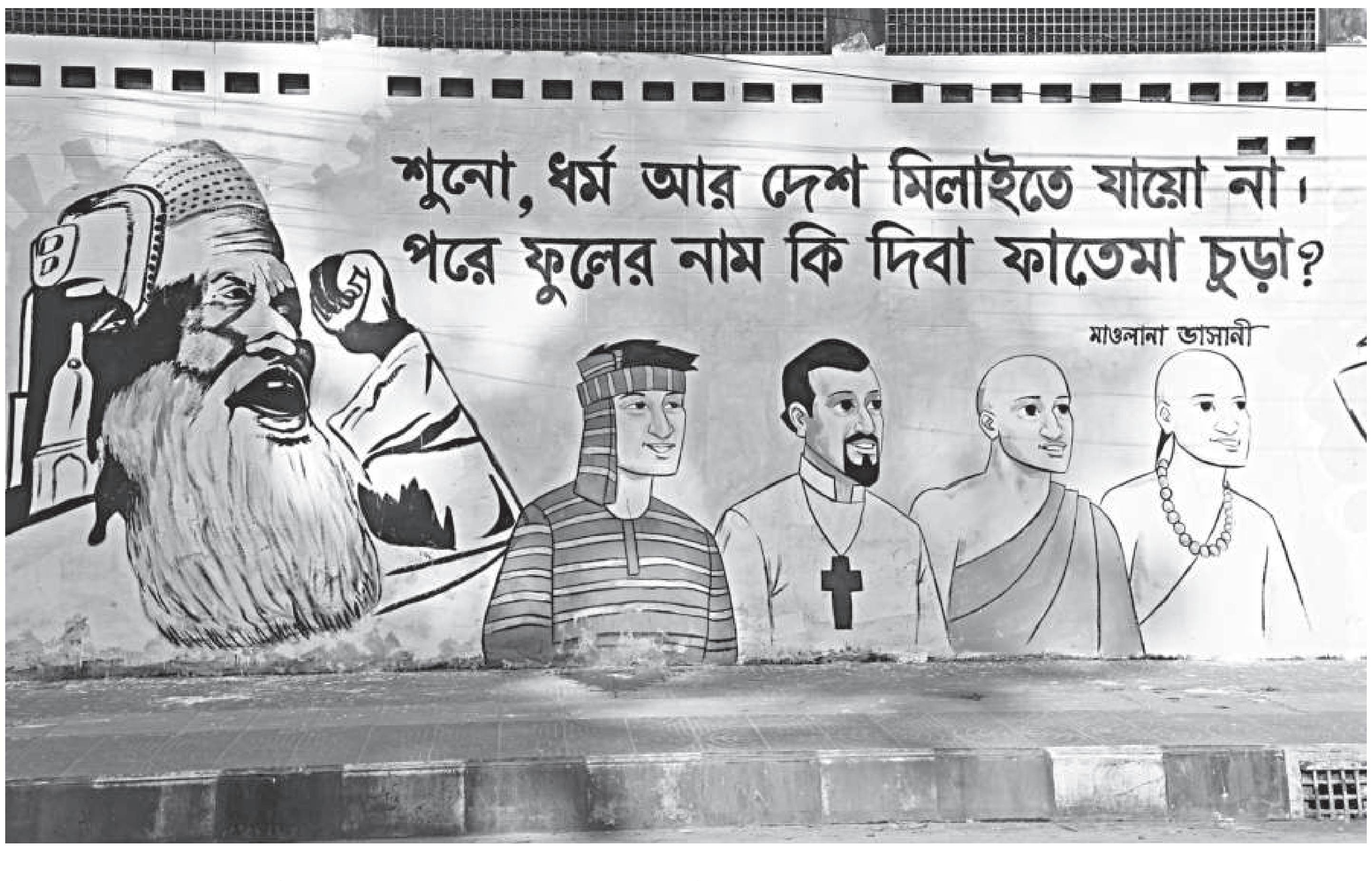
Sarah Anjum Bari
is a writer and editor pursuing an MFA in Nonfiction Writing at the University of Iowa, where also teaches literary publishing.

SARAH ANJUM BARI

The swearing in of the interim government on August 8 opened a new chapter for us, one that is hopefully free of the angst, terror, and frustration that shaped the Bangladeshi experience this past decade. Take a walk through our streets, though, and you'll see remnants of a violent past on nearly every surface. I want to make space for these words in my article: "Why did our brothers and children have to die?" they ask. "Sheikh Hasina is a killer and a dictator," they say. "Don't let the vulture queen stop us," they say. I wonder if we're being too quick to erase these marks.

The walls of our streets have long been one of the truest aspects of our public existence. I instinctively think of Dhaka when I say this, because it is the city I call home, but the same can be said of walls across the country. You'll see election posters plastered over ads for English and Quran tutors, painted over warnings not to paste on those walls, smeared with spray painted slang and declarations of love. If ever a metaphor existed for life in Bangladesh, it would be these walls, which represent the volume and chaos of thousands of people jostling for ever-shrinking space. They speak to how the assertions of empowered groups, and the complaints and desires of repressed classes and genders, layer onto each other, sometimes silencing each other.

The "smarter" Bangladesh became in recent years, the more digitally-reliant our communication channels became. The more populated and developed we grew, the more corrupt and repressed we became. How easy it was for the former government to curb any expressions of dissent against power structures—which were nearly always linked to the government—with the Digital Security Act that came into effect in 2018. How easily we left behind the days in which artists could hold power accountable through satire, writers and publishers could print nuanced accounts of history, and journalists could actually do their job. Even complaining in social gatherings posed risks, lest the wrong person with the right affiliations hear you. These inbuilt systems of censorship have always applied most harshly to ethnic minorities, gender minorities, and working classes who are most strongly harassed by corruption, violence, and discrimination.


শুনো, ধর্ম আর দেশ মিলাইতে যায়ো না।
পরে ফুলের নাম কি দিবা ফাতেমা চূড়া?
মাওলানা ভাসানী

Students want to move on from the violence but remember the sacrifices and courage through wall art. PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

The dystopia of it all still blows my mind when I find myself describing it, even though we've lived it for so long. Through it all, nameless, faceless graffiti was perhaps the safest (and most satisfying) way to express rage at life in Bangladesh. The writing on our walls expresses some of the truest things we've felt.

Even then, the graffiti that came out of July's student protests ruptured through any semblance of fear or self-censorship that we might have practiced before. The cityscape changes as I make my way from my home in North Dhaka to the heart of Dhaka University (DU)—disparities of class, culture and institutional interests become apparent—but never before have I seen such consistency of sentiment on city walls as I make this journey now. They all say the same thing: that the autocratic regime of Sheikh Hasina must go down, that we have nine demands and then just one, that the people will not back down, she will have to step down, that July is our month of mourning, and we will remember all the martyrs who were ruthlessly killed for demanding basic human rights. If some of these spray-painted messages contain lewd language and violent hate, that, too, is a never-before-seen reflection of exactly what Bangladeshis have been feeling: grief and absolute rage.

Amidst the internet blackout that silenced real time dispatches, the sanitised curation of news on several TV channels, and the slowness of the print cycle that our newspapers have had to contend with, it is the protest graffiti that has been most raw and unfiltered. Not only do they present the anti-discrimination protests as they unfolded in real time, they also display an irony that may only be called nature's balancing act. Today, the development projects that Sheikh Hasina's government used as mascots of their contribution to Bangladesh have words sprayed onto them that call her a murderer.

Recent news showed beautiful, vibrant artwork that many students are painting onto walls in Dhanmondi and the DU campus. These newer paintings present a distinctly different tone from the protest graffiti. The former comprised spray painted scrawls—the spikes and messiness of the script, the anger and lewdness of their phrasing speak to the chaos, fear, and wrath felt by protesters while they were being persecuted by the police and the government. The graffiti being created now paints entire scenes on walls—blocks of defiant red, beaming yellow and blue, slogans that call for a new, secular Bangladesh, others that memorialise the toppling of a "fascist" regime. They depict hope and initiative for the future.

I spoke to some (notably, not all) of the students volunteering for this, and it is their sentiment that the slogans of the protest should stay, but the profanities don't belong in areas where little kids and older parents can read them. Some of them want to move on from the violence but remember the courage and sacrifice that made it possible. Others want to take responsibility for undoing the hatred they imprinted onto public spaces, along the same veins as cleaning the streets on which the chaos of their protests took place. A few were careful to paint over pre-existing, politically disruptive or divisive messages, while painting *around* slogans that call for freedom and equality. All these impulses, their visions, deserve space.

Can we allow both these rhetorics to exist? The interim government has just sworn in, and we are yet to see what the ashes of this past month will rest into. Peace is still a distant promise: ethnic and religious minorities are being attacked, houses are being looted across neighbourhoods, law and order aren't fully operating yet.

In a video recording broadcasted on Thursday, Sajeeb Wajed Joy declared that Sheikh Hasina will come back to Bangladesh when we hold the next elections, and we don't yet know what that election will bring. Bangladesh is on shaky ground—with hope we call it transition, with trepidation we call it purgatory. The over 400 deaths, 10,000+ arrests, the communications blackouts and police shootings aren't yet a distant memory, they are very fresh wounds.

I believe that the courage and defiance that shaped the protests—which are spelled out in the protest graffiti—should stay in our environments still. How people felt while writing those words should be present still, for as long as we need to channel those feelings into motivation for a free, safe country for *all* its people. We need them at least until the problems they speak to have been addressed, and even after that, they should be preserved as reminders of a momentous, necessary revolution. In a museum (which, as we've seen, aren't invincible), relics of revolution become distant. On our streets, they stay on as signs of what a population is capable of.

If we *are* trying to build a Bangladesh where free speech prevails, a country that we can shape as we wish, its most nuanced version would be a collage and a palimpsest of angry, precocious, ambitious revolution coexisting with calls for peace and growth. That is Bangladesh's reality.

High rates of intimate partner violence among adolescent girls: A global concern

A staggering number of adolescent girls around the world are experiencing intimate partner violence, with nearly a quarter of those in relationships—close to 19 million—subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by the time they reach 20 years old. This alarming statistic comes from a new analysis by the World Health Organisation (WHO), published in *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*. The study also found that 16% of these girls experienced such violence in just the past year.

"Intimate partner violence is starting alarmingly early for millions of young women around the world," said Dr Pascale Allotey, Director of WHO's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research Department. This early onset of violence has severe health consequences, including injuries, depression, anxiety disorders, unplanned pregnancies, and sexually transmitted infections.

The study highlights that violence against adolescent girls is most prevalent in lower-income regions, such as Oceania (47%) and central sub-Saharan Africa (40%). Central Europe (10%) and central Asia (11%), in contrast, have lower rates. Factors like lower secondary school enrolment for girls, weaker legal property rights, and child marriage significantly increase the risk of violence.

To combat this issue, WHO emphasises the need for targeted support services and preventive measures tailored for adolescents. Strengthening girls' access to education, securing gender-equal property rights, and ending child marriage are critical steps towards reducing partner violence. WHO plans to release new guidelines on preventing child marriage by the end of 2024.

Essential tips for healthier, stronger hair

STAR HEALTH DESK

Achieving and maintaining healthy, strong hair often feels like a constant battle against damage and breakage. While there is no magic formula for perfect locks, adopting a thoughtful hair care routine can make a significant difference. From avoiding common pitfalls to embracing beneficial practices, here are 14 essential tips to help you nurture your hair and keep it looking its best.

1. Cool it down: Frequent use of heat styling tools like blow dryers and flat irons can weaken your hair. To prevent damage, always use a heat protectant spray, choose the coolest setting, and limit heat styling to a few times a week. Work quickly to minimise exposure.

2. Let wet hair be: Hair is most vulnerable when wet. Avoid brushing it while dripping wet to prevent breakage and damage. For straight hair, let it air-dry before gently combing with a wide-tooth comb. Curly or textured hair should be detangled with a wide-tooth comb while damp.

3. Take care with colour: Bleaching and other chemical treatments can weaken your hair. Opt for colours close to your natural shade to minimise damage, and always do a spot test with new dyes to avoid adverse reactions.

4. Meds can help or hurt: Minoxidil can help regrow hair, but you will need to use it consistently. Prescription medications like spironolactone and finasteride may also assist with hair loss. However, some medications might contribute to hair loss as a side effect. Consult your doctor for alternatives if needed.

5. Get a trim: Regular trims prevent split ends from travelling up the hair shaft and causing further damage. Aim for a trim of about 1/4 inch every 3 months to keep your ends healthy without sacrificing growth.

6. Stress less: High stress levels can trigger hair loss and conditions like alopecia areata. Finding effective ways to manage stress, such as through relaxation techniques or counselling, can positively impact hair health.

7. Handle with care: Delicate hair, particularly in individuals with textured hair, needs extra care. Wash less frequently to avoid stripping natural oils, use gentle hair treatments, and avoid excessive chemical processing.

8. Take care with extensions and braids: Extensions and braids can offer a temporary length boost but should not be worn for more than 2-3 months at a time. Avoid pulling them tightly to prevent scalp damage and hair breakage.

9. Get into condition(er): Conditioning helps strengthen and protect hair from damage. Apply conditioner every time you shampoo, focussing on the ends for finer hair or throughout for thicker textures.

10. Do not lose weight too fast: Rapid weight loss can lead to hair loss due to insufficient protein intake. Follow a balanced diet to ensure your body has the nutrients needed for healthy hair growth.

11. Do not be deficient: Nutrient deficiencies can impact hair health. Ensure you are getting enough iron, vitamins B and D, zinc, omega-3 fatty acids, and biotin. Consult your doctor about supplements if necessary.

12. Sleep on satin: Switching to satin pillowcases or wearing a satin bonnet can reduce friction and prevent hair breakage, helping keep your hair smoother and healthier.

13. Give yourself a massage: Regular scalp massages can stimulate blood circulation and potentially enhance hair growth. Use your fingers or a scalp massaging tool to gently massage your scalp for a few minutes each day.

14. Consider microneedling: Microneedling involves using a roller with tiny needles to create micro-injuries in the scalp, which can help improve hair growth when combined with treatments like minoxidil. Always consult with a dermatologist before starting microneedling to ensure it is safe and suitable for you.

Identifying and managing cholesterol problems: What you need to know

High cholesterol does not always make its presence known through obvious symptoms, but it can significantly increase your risk of serious health issues such as heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure. Here is what to look out for and how you can take charge of your cholesterol levels.

Signs of cholesterol issues: While cholesterol problems themselves do not cause noticeable symptoms, they can lead to conditions that do. Watch for:

- *Soft, yellowish growths:* Known as xanthomas, these lesions on the skin may signal high cholesterol levels.
- *Health conditions:* Obesity and diabetes often accompany high cholesterol, indicating a need for a check-up.
- *Impotence:* In men, high cholesterol can affect artery health, potentially leading to erectile dysfunction.

Steps to manage your cholesterol:

1. Understand your numbers: Cholesterol is not just one figure. Your lipid profile includes "bad" LDL cholesterol, "good" HDL cholesterol, and triglycerides. Regular blood tests can help you track these numbers and understand your risk.

2. Get tested: Even if you feel healthy, high cholesterol can lurk unnoticed. Starting at age 20, aim to undergo testing every 4-6 years. More frequent tests are necessary if you are overweight, diabetic, or have heart disease.

3. Exercise regularly: Physical activity is a powerful way to manage cholesterol. Aim for 30 minutes of brisk exercise, like walking or swimming, several times a week. Even short bursts of activity can be beneficial.

4. Avoid smoking: Smoking lowers HDL cholesterol and raises LDL cholesterol, worsening your cholesterol profile. Quitting can improve your cholesterol and overall heart health.

5. Maintain a healthy weight: Excess weight, especially around the abdomen, can negatively affect cholesterol levels. Even a modest weight loss can make a significant difference.

6. Limit saturated fats: Cut back on red meats, full-fat dairy, and tropical oils. Instead, opt for lean meats and low-fat dairy. Avoid trans fats found in many processed foods.

7. Address underlying conditions: Managing related health issues like diabetes and obesity can help improve cholesterol levels. Work with your doctor to treat these conditions effectively.

When to seek medical advice: Consult a doctor if you notice yellowish skin growths or if you experience symptoms like chest pain, dizziness, or slurred speech, which could be linked to high cholesterol.

Taking these steps can help you manage your cholesterol and reduce your risk of serious health problems. Stay proactive and work with your healthcare provider to keep your cholesterol in check.

Stroke survival: What the latest study reveals

Stroke is a serious health condition, and recent research from the Neurology journal sheds new light on how survival rates for two common types—ischaemic stroke and intracerebral haemorrhage—have changed over the past 30 years.

The study analysed thousands of cases from 1993/1994 to 2015 and found some hopeful news: the 5-year survival rate for ischaemic stroke, which happens when a blood clot blocks blood flow to the brain, improved from 53% to 48.3%. This suggests that advancements in treatment are making a difference. However, the outlook for intracerebral haemorrhage, a type of stroke caused by bleeding in the brain, remains less optimistic, with survival rates increasing from 64.4% to 69.2%.

This study underscores the importance of recognising stroke symptoms early and seeking prompt medical attention. If you have risk factors such as high blood pressure or diabetes, managing these conditions can significantly impact your stroke risk.

Prioritising elderly individuals for COVID-19 boosters

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, the question of how best to allocate limited booster vaccine supplies remains critical. New research from the University of Oxford, published in *PLOS Computational Biology*, suggests that prioritising elderly individuals for booster shots is the most effective way to reduce deaths, regardless of a country's socioeconomic background or age distribution.

Despite widespread vaccination efforts, the emergence of new variants and waning immunity have led to ongoing waves of COVID-19. This has left policymakers grappling with the decision of whether to target booster vaccines at older populations or to consider other strategies that might also reduce premature deaths.

The study, led by Dr Robin Thompson, used mathematical modelling to assess the impact of different vaccination strategies across various countries with diverse economic and demographic profiles. The findings were clear: prioritising the elderly consistently resulted in the lowest number of deaths and years of life lost, a measure that considers premature mortality among younger people.

The study concludes that older individuals, who are at significantly higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19, should be prioritised for booster vaccines when supplies are limited. This strategy was shown to be effective not only in high-income countries, where the population tends to be older, but also in lower- and middle-income countries, where younger populations are more prevalent.

Global call for enhanced pandemic research

In a pivotal move for global health security, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have emphasised the need for an expanded and accelerated approach to pandemic preparedness. Announced at the Global Pandemic Preparedness Summit 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, this new strategy underscores the importance of broadening research efforts to include entire families of pathogens rather than focussing solely on individual threats.

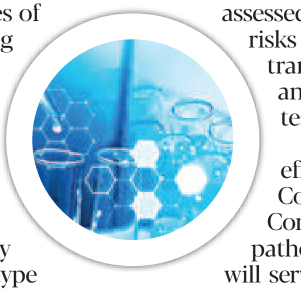
The WHO R&D Blueprint for Epidemics' latest report advocates for a shift in how we approach pandemic research. Instead of concentrating on pathogens with immediate perceived risks, the strategy calls for the use of prototype pathogens to develop a comprehensive understanding of entire pathogen families. This broader focus aims to create versatile tools and countermeasures that can be rapidly adapted to new and emerging threats. It also emphasises the need for enhanced surveillance to better understand pathogen transmission, infection mechanisms, and immune responses.

Dr Richard Hatchett, CEO of CEPI, highlighted the importance of this expanded research approach. He compared it to illuminating a dark area by studying prototype pathogens, which could reveal unknown pathogens that might currently be overlooked. This strategy is particularly crucial for resource-scarce regions with high biodiversity, where novel pathogens may exist but remain under-researched.

The report is the result of collaboration among over 200 scientists from more than 50 countries. It evaluated 28 virus families and one core group of bacteria, encompassing 1,652 pathogens. Researchers assessed epidemic and pandemic risks based on factors such as transmission patterns, virulence, and the availability of diagnostic tests, vaccines, and treatments.

To support this global effort, WHO is establishing Collaborative Open Research Consortia (CORCs) for each pathogen family. These CORCs will serve as research hubs, bringing together scientists, developers, funders, and regulators from around the world. The aim is to foster greater research collaboration and ensure equitable participation, particularly from regions where pathogens are likely to emerge.

This comprehensive approach seeks to strengthen global preparedness for future pandemics and enhance our ability to respond swiftly to unforeseen threats, ultimately aiming to protect global health more effectively.



Source: *World Health Organisation*

The hidden costs of excessive worrying!

Do you find yourself endlessly worrying about potential problems, convinced that your anxiety might somehow prevent them from happening? While this instinct to overthink can feel protective, excessive worrying can take a significant toll on both your mental and physical health. Understanding the effects of chronic worry and learning strategies to manage it can lead to a healthier, more balanced life.

What happens with excessive worrying? Worrying, at its core, is an unease or concern about potential issues. When this worry becomes excessive, it puts both your mind and body on high alert. Chronic worriers often experience intense anxiety and panic attacks, feeling a persistent sense of impending doom. Their heightened sensitivity can make them perceive everyday situations and interactions as threats, leading to even more anxiety.

This constant state of stress can disrupt your daily life, affecting your appetite, sleep, relationships, and job performance. Many individuals turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as overeating, smoking, or substance use, to manage their anxiety. This reliance on harmful habits only exacerbates the problem, creating a vicious cycle of worry and stress.

Understanding anxiety: While a certain amount of anxiety is a normal response to stress and can even be beneficial—like motivating you to prepare for a job interview or a test—excessive anxiety crosses into harmful territory. Anxiety disorders, such as generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder, affect nearly 40 million adults in the U.S. These disorders can make everyday stressors seem overwhelming, causing significant distress and disability.

The physical impact of excessive worry: Chronic worry activates the body's stress response, triggering the "fight or flight" reaction. This response releases stress hormones like cortisol, which can lead to various physical symptoms, including, difficulty swallowing, dizziness, dry mouth, rapid heartbeat, muscle tension and aches, headaches, fatigue, shortness of breath, etc.

When the body remains in this heightened state for prolonged periods, it can lead to more severe health issues such as immune system suppression, digestive problems, and even heart disease. If left untreated, excessive worrying can contribute to depression and suicidal thoughts.

Managing excessive worrying: Fortunately, there are several strategies to help manage excessive worrying and reduce its impact on your health:

1. Talk to your doctor: Begin with a medical check-up to rule out other health issues. Your doctor might suggest medications to help manage anxiety.

2. Exercise regularly: Physical activity can enhance your mood and help your body handle stress more effectively. Aim for regular aerobic and strength-training exercises.

3. Maintain a balanced diet: Avoid emotional eating and focus on a nutritious diet to support overall health.

4. Limit caffeine: Excessive caffeine can heighten anxiety, so consume it in moderation.

5. Practice relaxation techniques: Techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, and yoga can help calm your mind and reduce stress.

6. Seek professional help: Therapy can provide strategies to cope with anxiety and address underlying issues.

By integrating these practices into your routine, you can break free from the cycle of excessive worrying and cultivate a more peaceful, healthier lifestyle.

Star
DHAKA SUNDAY AUGUST 11, 2024, SRABAN 27, 1431 BS
SPORT

What to WATCH

SPORTS 18-1
Paris Olympics Events
Live from 11:30 am
Paris Olympics

Closing Ceremony
1:00 am (Monday)

T SPORTS
GT20 Final
10:00 pm

Tigers leave for Pakistan tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has decided to prepone the men's national team's scheduled flight to Pakistan as the team will now leave for the country tomorrow instead of August 17.

The decision was made after the BCB failed to properly hold the final phase of the Tigers' training session ahead as the foreign coaching staff expressed their reluctance to join practice in Mirpur amidst the current situation of the country.

"That [getting full team together] is the main reason we are travelling to Pakistan much earlier than scheduled time," a member of the selection panel told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Going there few days ahead will also give us a chance to adjust to the conditions. We have also received a positive response from the Pakistan board," he added.

Meanwhile, a BCB source confirmed that the board has booked 18 tickets for players and coaching staff, who will leave for the two-match Test series on Monday at 4:00pm.

A few members of the probable Test squad, including Mushfiqur Rahim and Mominul Haque, have already reached Islamabad with Bangladesh 'A' team for two four-day game s against Pakistan 'A' team.

The BCB is expected to announce the national team squad for the Test series today.

Netherlands women's hockey players pose with their gold medals after beating China 3-1 in penalty shootout following a 1-1 draw in regulation time in the final of the Paris Olympics at the Yves-du-Manoir Stadium in Colombes on Friday. It was double delight for the Dutch, who saw their men's team clinch gold after beating Germany in another penalty shootout on Thursday. PHOTO: **AFP**

Tipu doubts progress despite leadership change calls

SPORTS REPORTER

Although there is a growing sentiment for change within the country's sports community following the resignation of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina amidst widespread student protests, former Bangladesh football captain and coach Golam Sarwar Tipu believes that merely changing leadership won't lead to any real progress in the nation's sports.

Since the Awami League government came to power in 2009, most sports federations have been led by organisers affiliated with the party, sidelining those with differing views. After the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government, many organisers -- particularly those who had been marginalized and denied opportunities for the past 15 years -- have called for new leadership in various sports federations.

Despite this, Tipu remains pessimistic about the future of sports in Bangladesh.

"No change in leadership will bring any real change to Bangladesh's sports because we are a nation of betrayers and immoral people. Two days later, they will call for another change," Tipu told The Daily Star on Tuesday. "Unless we change our mentality and become more humane, this shift in leadership will not bring any real change to the sports community.

"One person will leave, and another will take their place at the helm of different federations... Those who are now vocal are well-known because we've seen them in the past. It would be different if these changes happened naturally, but change by seizing an opportunity is another matter. I don't know if this will bring any real improvement," Tipu reiterated.

The former national defender emphasised the need for changes in sports infrastructure, budgeting, and the election processes of various federations if Bangladesh truly wants to see its sports progress.

"If there are free and fair elections in sports, some changes may come, as organisers will be motivated to work or develop their respective disciplines in order to be re-elected," remarked Tipu, adding that the sports budget is insufficient to drive evolution.

"I've heard for a long time that Bangladesh participates in the Olympics to gain experience, and this goes on; whereas India has been winning medals in various disciplines at the Olympics for the last four editions."

Tipu also addressed the inadequate facilities in football, reflecting a lack of proper planning and concern from the relevant authorities.

"Renovation work at Bangabandhu National Stadium has been ongoing for the last three years, with no urgency or accountability to complete it. The football federation has to search for venues to hold competitions.

"The women footballers have been practicing on artificial turf, which causes muscle damage. But how can the authorities understand the need for natural grounds for these young girls? So, I don't see any change coming," he concluded.

France 'happy' and 'united' in Olympics joy

AFP, *Paris*

Paris Olympics organisers celebrated the country being "united" and "happy" during the widely hailed two-week sports extravaganza amid doubts about how long the feel-good mood will last.

"France has shown itself to the world in a very, very good mindset: confident, united, warm, welcoming," head of the Paris 2024 organising committee Tony Estanguet told reporters on Saturday, the penultimate day of the Games.

Estanguet repeatedly voiced his "pride" at organising what he had promised would be an iconic Olympics, which have seen record ticket sales and packed fanzones around the country.

He added: "We've seen a happy France, happy French people, and you shouldn't underestimate that in terms of the legacy of these Games," he added.

Estanguet said the weather had been his biggest cause for concern, while the run-up to the start also saw a global IT outage and an attack on the French railways.

"The weather in the final phase was our main difficulty," said Estanguet.

Heavy rains washed out the opening ceremony on the River Seine -- the first times a Games had begun outside the main stadium -- while other events had to be postponed because of storms in the first week.

Apart from these, French church leaders and conservatives were left outraged by a scene in the ceremony involving drag queens and lesbian DJ Barbara Butch that appeared to parody Jesus's Last Supper.

Artistic director Thomas Jolly denied any such intention. He and others involved ended up facing online harassment that led to police complaints.

Khelif answers 'fierce campaign' with gold

REUTERS, *Paris*

Algeria's Imane Khelif, the female boxer thrust into the centre of a gender dispute at the Paris Games, made a statement on her womanhood after beating China's Yang Liu to take the welterweight Olympic gold medal, sending her newfound devotees into delirium on Friday.

Khelif, silver medallist at the 2022 World Championships, and Taiwan boxer Lin Yu-ting have been in the spotlight as part of a gender dispute in Paris that has dominated headlines and been the subject of much discussion on social media platforms.

Khelif is the first Algerian woman to earn an Olympic boxing title and the first boxer from her country to claim gold since Hocine Soltani at Atlanta 1996.

"This is my dream. Eight years, my dream. I'm Olympic champion, gold medallist. I'm very happy. Eight years, I work," Khelif, 25, said.

"Eight years, no sleep. Eight years, tired. Now I'm Olympic champion. I'm very happy. I want to thank all the people who have come to support me. People, Algeria, and all the people, Paris.

"This gold medal is the best answer to the fierce campaign against me."

Her defeated opponent Yang said: "I'm happy for her. I respect everybody and I will even learn from her (boxing wise)."

Janjaem Suwannapheng of Thailand and Taiwan's Chen Nien-chin were awarded bronze.

Khelif and double world champion Lin were disqualified by the International Boxing Association (IBA) from the 2023 World Championships, with the body saying at a press conference during the Paris Games that a gender test had ruled them ineligible.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is using boxing eligibility rules in Paris that were applied at the 2016 and 2021 Olympics and which do not include gender testing.

The volume went up several notches to ear-splitting level when Khelif entered the arena on Friday in her red trunks and shirt for the last bout on a suffocating Parisian evening, the only breeze coming from the hundreds of flags being waved.

"Imane, Imane, Imane!" the crowd chanted and screamed.

Following yet another straightforward victory, the crowd cheered as Khelif's corner carried her on their shoulders to the end of the stadium.

Khelif's win even sparked wild celebrations back in her poor, rural hometown Biban Mesbah in Algeria, with her father, Omar Khelif, claiming his daughter's triumph as 'Algeria's victory' and crowds invading the city centre of the capital Algiers to celebrate the victory with fireworks and a chorus of car horns.

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

ATHLETICS
Women's Marathon
12:00 PM
WEIGHTLIFTING
Women's +81 kg
WRESTLING
Men's Freestyle 65 kg
4:20 PM
Men's Freestyle 97 kg
4:50 PM
Women's Freestyle 76 kg
5:20 PM
MODERN PENTATHLON
Women's Individual, Laser Run
4:40 PM
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL
USA vs Italy
5:00 PM
CYCLING TRACK
Women's Sprint
5:44 PM
Men's Keirin
5:32 PM
MEN'S HANDBALL
Germany vs Denmark
5:30 PM
MEN'S WATER POLO
Serbia vs Croatia
6:00 PM
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
France vs USA
7:30 PM

Spain cherish 'unbeatable summer'

AFP, *Paris*

Spain star Fermin Lopez described his summer as "unbeatable" after he starred on their run to Olympic football gold having also played a part in their triumph at Euro 2024.

"We have had a great tournament. We deserved this and I am really proud of the team," said the 21-year-old Barcelona midfielder after scoring twice in a classic Olympic final on Friday, in which Spain beat France 5-3 following extra time at the Parc des Princes.

"The truth is that this summer has been unbeatable. I am so proud and really happy with everything I have experienced."

Lopez was included in Spain's squad for the European Championship in Germany after an outstanding breakthrough season with his club.

He made one appearance for Luis de la Fuente's team at the Euros, in which Spain beat England 2-1 in the final in Berlin.

Lopez then joined up with Santi Denia's Olympic squad, in which he was the outstanding performer with six goals, including five from the quarterfinals onwards.

Only Morocco's Soufiane Rahimi, with eight, finished the tournament with more goals.

Lopez scored twice and Alex Baena, another member of Spain's Euro squad, added a free-kick as their team came from behind to lead 3-1 at half-time in Friday's final.

France fought back to level at 3-3 and force extra time, in which Sergio Camello scored twice to seal victory for Spain, and their first Olympic men's football gold since 1992.

"We found ourselves in a difficult position on two separate occasions but the team fought so hard. I think we have a great team, a great family and you could see that on the field," added Lopez.

"The European Championship and Olympics are the first two titles I have won and I am so happy."

Barcelona kick off their season next weekend but, having been away on international duty for more than two months, Lopez admits he needs a short break.

"I always want to play, but a little week's holiday won't do anyone any harm. But just a week, and then I'll be back."

Lisa Carrington reacts after winning the women's kayak single 500m final in the canoe sprint competition at Vaires-sur-Marne Nautical Stadium during the Paris Olympics yesterday. With her third gold medal in Paris, she has become New Zealand's most decorated Olympian, now holding a total of eight gold medals. PHOTO: **AFP**

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All cases filed to quell protests will be withdrawn

Law ministry decides, sets up hotline for victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has said it would withdraw all cases filed with the intention of suppressing the recent mass uprising of students and the people, which resulted in the ouster of Sheikh Hasina's government last week.

The decision was made during a meeting between law adviser Prof Asif Nazrul and law ministry officials at the ministry's conference room yesterday, according to a press statement.

The ministry has decided to take steps within three working days to withdraw all the cases filed between July 1 and August 5 against innocent protesters.

Arrangements will be made within the next three working days to release juveniles from correctional facilities who were arrested in cases filed to harass them.

Additionally, through the Law and Justice Division's hotline number, 16430, the ministry will offer support to those who have been the victims of false cases.

During the meeting, the ministry also decided to swiftly hold trials against those involved in the killings during the protests.

The ministry said it would also take steps to withdraw the cases filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Cyber Security Act.

Members of law enforcement and the paramilitary force had opened

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Members of the Hindu community, under several banners, gathered at the capital's Shahbagh intersection yesterday to protest the recent attacks on minority communities since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

ATTACKS ON HINDUS

Protests go on across country

STAR REPORT

Members of the Hindu community and others yesterday took to the streets in the capital and at least seven other districts to protest the attacks on their houses, shops and temples since the fall of the Awami League government.

In Dhaka, they blocked the Shahbagh intersection for the second consecutive day to press for an eight-point demand, including the formation of a minority protection commission.

Other demands include the formation of a separate ministry for minorities; the enactment and strict enforcement of laws to prevent all forms of attacks; and allocation of 10 percent of parliamentary seats for them.

The agitators began gathering at the intersection around 3:00pm and kept it

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Khaleda will run in polls if able

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has said party chief Khaleda Zia will run in the polls if she is fit.

"If she's physically fit, she will definitely contest the election," he told NDTV in an interview yesterday.

"She's very sick. She's in the hospital. She's suffering from multidisciplinary diseases. Her treatment was not going well in this country and we requested the judiciary as well as the government several times to send her abroad, but that didn't happen... Doctors say she's not fit to travel right now and we will have to wait for some time before taking her outside the country," he said.

The BNP leader said while his party is ready for polls at any point, the interim government would need more time to conduct them.

"The entire election machinery has become totally polluted and they are not in a position to hold a free-and-fair election. So, they will have to bring some reforms to the election system as well."

The BNP leader also said he believes that the Bangladesh army will not interfere in the political process going forward and also claimed that no extremist elements were involved in the protests.

Police not on the ground

Guarded by army, ansar personnel, cops in casuals perform office work in most stations

STAR REPORT

Five days after an uprising toppled the Sheikh Hasina administration, police have not yet resumed their work to ensure public security.

Officials who reported for duty in their stations, with the assistance of the army, have limited their work.

Some police stations are only recording general diaries and handling internal tasks, while others remain deserted with the policemen leaving after just marking their attendance.

> **"We're reporting to our stations but not going to the field out of fear of violent reprisals from the public as many of our colleagues had opened fire indiscriminately to kill protesters during the uprising."**
>
> **An inspector**

"We're reporting to our stations but not going to the field out of fear of violent reprisals from the public as many of our colleagues had opened fire indiscriminately to kill protesters during the uprising," said an inspector who preferred anonymity.

Amid this situation, the Police Headquarters yesterday issued directives to form civic committees and resume police work at the stations to maintain law and order.

Yesterday, 538 out of 639 police stations in the country partially resumed operations with the assistance of the armed forces and Border Guard Bangladesh, according to the PHQ.

However, they refrained from patrolling the streets or managing traffic.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, over a dozen police personnel cited this absence of the law enforcers as a key factor behind plunderers targeting the public, especially members of minority communities.

This correspondent visited Kafrul, Shah Ali, Pallabi and Bhasantek police stations in Dhaka yesterday. Several police personnel were found in Shah Ali, where no general diary (GD) was filed in the past two days.

"We're living in fear. Our families don't even want us to leave the house. But I still come to the police station because I'm a government service holder," said a sub-inspector of the station.

The SI suggested that police high-ups

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Withdrawal of cash from banks capped at Tk 2 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Bank yesterday ordered commercial banks not to allow cash withdrawal of more than Tk 2 lakh per customer this week because of a lack of security, a senior official of the central bank said.

It also instructed the banks to monitor cheque transactions and block any suspicious transfer of funds.

"Due to security problems of transporting cash to the bank branches, please do not allow withdrawals of cash more than 2 lakh in the upcoming week," the Bangladesh Bank said in a letter to the banks.

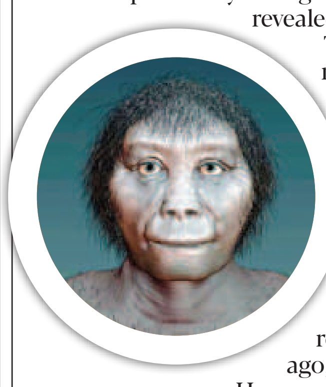
The directive comes as the law and order situation remains unpredictable since police have not resumed work following deadly attacks and clashes during the uprising that led to the fall of Sheikh Hasina on August 5.

The BB asked the banks, if possible, to stop disbursing cash among branches amid the weak security.

Smallest human species were even smaller than thought: study

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Homo floresiensis, a species of humans dubbed "Hobbits" for their short stature, were even smaller than previously thought, a new fossil study has revealed.



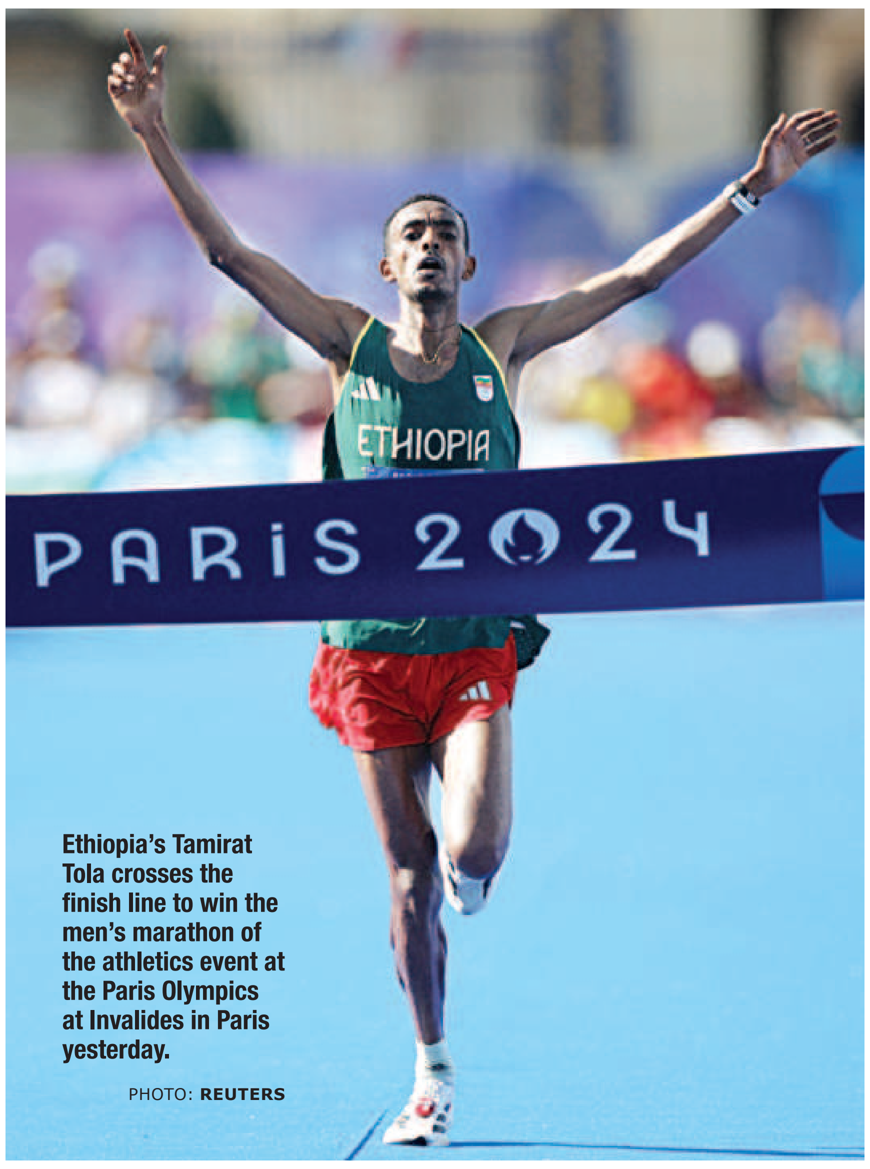
The species, related to modern humans, was first discovered in 2003 at the Liang Bua cave on Indonesia's island of Flores, after which they are named.

Archaeologists found that the small-brained people lived on the island as recently as 50,000 years ago, when our own species, Homo sapiens, was already long established in Australia to the south.

Initial fossils suggested that individuals of the species grew up to about three feet six inches tall with small brains and large teeth for their tiny size. The origin of the species remained a mystery, however, due to the rarity of their fossils.

It was initially believed that Homo floresiensis was a dwarfed descendant of the early Asian populations of human ancestor species Homo erectus.

Some researchers speculated that the "Hobbits of Flores" were a late-surviving remnant of a more ancient small-statured human ancestor species from Africa predating even Homo erectus.



Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola crosses the finish line to win the men's marathon of the athletics event at the Paris Olympics at Invalides in Paris yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

BNP expels 44, cites role in violence, other reasons

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

BNP and its associated organisations have taken strict action against some of their party men for their involvement in the recent violence and violation of organisational discipline.

Over the last five days, at least 44 leaders and activists from 17 districts have been expelled. Of them, 27 are from Jubo Dal, 10 from Chhatra Dal, six from BNP, and one from Swechhasebak Dal.

Additionally, show-cause notices have been served on at least 42 leaders and activists of the BNP and its associated bodies in three districts.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Chhatra Dal General Secretary Nasir Uddin Nasir stressed the need for maintaining discipline within the student organisation.

"After the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government, some Chhatra Dal leaders and activists got involved in a few isolated incidents.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

বাংলাদেশ-এর অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের
প্রধান উপদেষ্টা
বিশ্ব বরেণ্য অর্থনীতিবিদ ও শান্তিতে নোবেল বিজয়ী
ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস
সহ অন্তর্বর্তীকালীন সরকারের উপদেষ্টা মন্ডলীকে
পারটেক্স পরিবারের পক্ষ থেকে জানাই আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা।

পারটেক্স পরিবার বিশ্বাস করে আপনার প্রজ্ঞা, দূরদর্শিতা এবং যোগ্য নেতৃত্বে এক আধুনিক ও সমৃদ্ধ বাংলাদেশের ভিত্তি প্রতিষ্ঠিত হবে, রচিত হবে এক নতুন ইতিহাস।

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Cash withdrawal limit affects businesses

B1

In Focus: Utpal Dutt and Postcolonial Political Theatre

P14

The fall of a dictator should not give rise to another

P12

Students, locals join hands to repair damaged road in Kurigram

P5

All contractual appointments to be scrapped

Interim govt to draw up list of those hurt during protests, bear treatment cost

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The interim government yesterday decided that all contractual appointments of the administration will be terminated in phases.

The decision was taken at a meeting of advisory councils of the interim government held at State Guest House Jamuna.

A list of all contractual appointments is being prepared, said two advisers of the interim government asking not to be named.

While some of the disputed and controversial contracts will be immediately terminated, the rest will be done in phases, they said.

In recent years, Awami League-aligned officials were appointed on a contractual basis. These create dissatisfaction among the administration.

After the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government on August 5 in the wake of a mass upsurge led by students, the contract of IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun was terminated on August 7.

On the same day, the former Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Md Tofazzel Hossain Miah's contract was cancelled.

At present, Md Mahbub Hossain, cabinet secretary; Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem, chairman of the National Board of Revenue; Lokman Hossain Miah, executive chairman of the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, are serving on contractual appointments, among others.

At the meeting, the advisory council noted the attacks on religious minorities in some places with grave concern.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

The capital's Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue was gridlocked yesterday as offices and businesses across the country have begun regular operations after weeks of nationwide protests and consequent violence.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Metro rail service to resume on August 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Metro rail operation is set to resume on August 17, nearly a month after the suspension amid violence centring the quota reform protest.

However, the operation of two stations, Kazipara and Mirpur-10, which were vandalised on July 19, will remain suspended until those are repaired.

The advisory council of the interim government yesterday made the decision.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) restarts services with the operations of freight trains from today and the full train services will resume from Thursday.

Besides, the operation of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway resumed formally yesterday with the authorities collecting tolls from vehicles.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Gunfire, clash at Islami Bank

Protests in banks controlled by S Alam Group, Salman F Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Clash and gunfire erupted in front of the Islami Bank head office in Motijheel yesterday while six individuals were injured by gunfire, a rare incident in banking history.

The incident occurred when officials appointed by the S Alam Group, which forcefully took over the Shariah-based bank in 2017, tried to enter the bank's headquarters.

Since 2017, the Chittagong-based conglomerate appointed about 14,000 officers and employees, mostly without following the proper recruitment process, according to people with knowledge of the matter. Most come from Patiya, an upazila of Chattogram from where Alam hails.

PREMIER
cement
চেলাইয়ের রাজা

Officials appointed before 2017 started demonstrating in front of the bank's head office on August 6, a day after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government. S Alam Group chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam is a close associate of Hasina.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Cops call off strike, set to join work today

Home adviser says their uniform to be changed soon; 599 police stations resume operations partially

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police members have called off their strike and are to report to their stations today.

They made the decision after a meeting with Home Affairs Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain and top police and Rab officials yesterday.

After the meeting, the home adviser told The Daily Star that many of the demands made by the policemen were logical, and he promised to consider them. Some demands can be met now while some will take time.

"Police uniform and logo will be changed at the quickest possible time. Their hearts are heavy with grief. They [police] do not want to go out in this uniform," he said.

"If the police are not there, the citizens are not protected. So, don't harm the police. If you have problems, tell the senior officers," Sakhawat said, adding that students told him that they have no enmity with the police.

The adviser said those at the political level and issued commands were more to blame for the way police were used during the protests. "I have asked them [pointing to the IGP sitting beside him] to take necessary measures.

"I personally think there should be a police commission. Police will function under the commission, not under any political party. Political parties misuse the police," Sakhawat said.

He said those who ordered excessive force were at the political level and no wrongdoers would be spared. There will be an investigation and the wrongdoers

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

> **"I personally think there should be a police commission. Police will function under the commission, not under any political party. Political parties misuse the police."**
>
> Home Adviser
> **M Sakhawat**

Political parties must abide by relevant act

Says home affairs adviser, threatens to close down media outlet if it turns to sycophancy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Affairs Adviser Brigadier General (retired) M Sakhawat Hussain yesterday said political parties must operate in accordance with "the political party act".

"If you [political parties] want to do politics in the country, you have to abide by the political party act whether you like it or not. As long as I'm around, I'll make it happen," he told reporters before taking charge at the home ministry in the afternoon.

"You will become a dictator -- that is not going to happen."

About the "political party act", he said, "I have prepared a draft [of the act]. There will be discussions [on it]. [But] if you are a political party, you have to register. You will form a political party and indulge in extortion -- that will not happen."

With an oblique reference to the Awami League, the home adviser said, "Look at the state of a political party today. Such a big and traditional party, whose name is associated with the independence of Bangladesh, its

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Every attack on minorities will be probed

Says Foreign Adviser Touhid

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The interim government will give all-out efforts to investigate all the attacks against the minorities following the fall of Awami League government, and bring to book all the criminals irrespective of their political affiliation.

"We will in no way accept people being attacked over religious or political identity. The [interim] government will ensure full transparency and diligence in this regard," said Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain said in his first media briefing after taking the oath on August 8.

At a meeting with all

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Chief justice, 2 more advisers sworn in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new chief justice and two advisers to the interim government were sworn in at the Bangabhaban yesterday.

Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed was sworn in as the 25th chief justice at a ceremony at the Darbar Hall of the president's official residence around 12:45pm.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin administered the oath to the chief justice at the event conducted by Cabinet Secretary Mahbub Hossain.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, other advisers to the interim government, and distinguished personalities attended the event.

Justice Refaat, who was the most senior judge of the High Court Division, was first appointed as a judge of the Appellate Division and then appointed as chief justice, Law Secretary Golam Sarwar told The Daily Star.

The previous chief justice, Obaidul Hassan, resigned on Saturday amid demonstrations on Supreme Court premises.

Later, five more judges of the Appellate Division resigned.

Bidhan Ranjan Roy Poddar and Supradeep Chakma also took oath yesterday as advisers.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin administered the oaths at the same venue.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

PHOTO: PID

Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed being sworn in as the 25th Chief Justice of Bangladesh by President Mohammad Shahabuddin yesterday.

ATTACKS ON MINORITIES

BBC, dismislab debunk fake news

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While it is undeniable that the aftermath of the ouster of the Awami League government was marked by violence against the Hindus, fake news is also being spread with abandon in social media in India.

This was found by BBC Verify, the fact-checking unit of the British broadcaster.

BBC Verify found that a photo of the arson attack on the house of cricketer Mashrafe Bin Mortaza is being shared as that of cricketer Liton Das's house. Mortaza was an Awami League lawmaker.

This piece of fake news was being spread from India by ultra-right wing influencers, found BBC Verify.

A report published by BBC said that a social media intelligence or "social listening" platform, also mined X, formerly Twitter, for trending hashtags pertaining to violence on minorities in Bangladesh and found that the most viral posts were generated from India.

A video of Chattogram's Nobogroho Temple in Laldighi Par allegedly being set on fire was making the rounds on social media.

BBC Verify inspected the footage and found that the temple was not the target, but rather an Awami League office situated right behind the temple was attacked.

A Bangladeshi fact-checking organisation called dismislab also found the truth to this.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Two suspected robbers beaten to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Two people, including a teenage boy, were beaten to death by a mob while they reportedly attempted to rob a battery-run autorickshaw in Dinajpur Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The incident took place at Nawshan Dighi (Ramsagar) village under the upazila's Auliapur union shortly after Saturday midnight.

The deceased were identified as Shuvo Meraz, 20, son of Sabbir Hossain of the town's Neemnagar Balubari area and Md Tareq, 17, son of late Md Jewel block-4 of the Newtown area.

Farid Hossain, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station, quoting locals, said, "Shuvo and Tareq stopped an autorickshaw at Ramsagar around midnight on Saturday and tried to rob the vehicle at knifepoint. At one point, they stabbed the driver and tried to get away with the vehicle."

Later, locals caught and beat them, leaving both injured critically, the OC said.

They were brought to Dinajpur M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared them dead on arrival around 3:20am, said Md Mortuza Rahman, a physician at the hospital.

Several thousand Hindus gather at Khulna city's Shibbari intersection yesterday afternoon to protest the attacks on their homes, businesses, and temples since the fall of the Awami League government. Bangladesh Sachetan Sanatani Student Society organised the event.

PHOTO: **HABIBUR RAHMAN**

Video clip of Yunus' motorcade stuck in traffic goes viral

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The motorcade of Prof Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser to the interim government, was spotted in the capital stuck in traffic.

Usually, the motorcade of the head of the government gets the full VIP treatment -- a clear path to his destination without any traffic on the street, not even pedestrians on pavements or people on footbridges.

A video taken by a commuter of the stuck motorcade has gone viral on social media.

It was not immediately clear when the video was taken.

The footage shows the motorcade stuck in front of the Jibon Bima Tower in Motijheel.

The car's licence plate read, "Prime Minister".

His car was flanked by Special Security Force personnel who got out of their vehicles and encircled the car.

As people attempted to get a closer look, an SSF officer with a megaphone told people not to approach the vehicle that had tinted windows.

Previously, the prime minister and the president would opt for seamless journeys by completely blocking and emptying the road they would be travelling on without prior notice.

For the duration of the VIP movement, pedestrians would not be allowed on the pavements or on the footbridges. Even street hawkers had to close their shops and leave.

All contractual

FROM PAGE 1

"Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus will immediately sit with the representative bodies and other concerned groups to find ways to resolve such heinous attacks," said another adviser.

The advisory council of the interim government also decided that a list of all injured protestors would be prepared at the earliest and their treatment would be funded by the government.

The health ministry will instruct all hospitals accordingly. The government will also support the families of the deceased protestors.

More than 400 people, including students and police personnel, were killed in the violence centring the protests on quota reforms for government jobs. Several thousands were also injured.

The ministry of foreign affairs will immediately start consultation for the release of the 57 Bangladeshis arrested and sentenced by the UAE authority for protesting in support of the Bangladeshi students and people.

"If needed, the chief adviser himself will talk to the concerned government," said an adviser.

The interim government has also accepted the resignation of Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder and Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Shibli Rubayat-Ul Islam.

The governor of Bangladesh Bank will be appointed soon, while a three-member search committee has been formed to recommend appointments for the vacant posts of deputy governors.

The advisory council decided that the supply of all essentials shall be ensured.

Operations of metro rail, suspended since July 18, will resume from Saturday. The train, however, will not stop at the damaged stations of Kazipara and Mirpur until repair works are complete.

BBC, dismislab

FROM PAGE 1

Dismislab said that an X account called Daily Latest Updates first shared that video along with the hashtags "#AllEyesOnBangladeshiHindus" and #SaveBangladeshiHindus". The account is run from India, said dismislab.

They found that the video was even run on an Indian channel called RepublicTV.

Similarly, Factwatch, the fact-checking wing of University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, found that an old video of a shop on fire was being shared as evidence of arson attack on Hindu establishments.

"The post says that the video shows that Hindu shops are being set on fire in Lakshmipur's Maju Chowdhury's Haat. Whereas this is an old video from July 11, 2024, of when the market caught on fire," said Factwatch.

Dismislab debunked the same video and found that it was primarily posted by an Indian X account, along with the hashtag #AllEyesOnBangladeshiHindus.

The video was also carried by Sudarshan News, an Indian news channel.

Dismislab also found that a fake photo is being shared as evidence of a Hindu woman getting raped in Bangladesh. The photo stems from an incident of sexual assault and trafficking in Bangalore in India from 2021.

However, the photo is primarily being carried by an X account from India.

Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad and Puja Udjapan Parishad recorded 205 incidents of violence against minorities in 52 districts.

Cops call off strike, set to join work today

FROM PAGE 1

will face punishment.

Over 400 people, including 42 policemen, were killed and many injured during the student mass movement that eventually forced Sheikh Hasina to resign and flee.

Sakhawat said they had decided to take action against those involved in the Rangpur shooting and killing of Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed.

A probe has begun and the officer-in-charge who filed the FIR and "framed a 12-year-old boy" has been suspended.

Asked about many policemen accusing their commander of ordering the shooting of protesters, the adviser said, "I cannot respond immediately. But those in command also have their higher command. What did the man sitting here [at the ministry] do? I will blame the man sitting here, before blaming others."

Replying to a query, the adviser said they would discuss the probe in this regard at the cabinet. "I am not a dictator. I will make a decision now."

Coordinators for the protesting policemen Inspector Zahidul Islam and Constable Shoaib Ahmed announced the withdrawal of the police strike after meeting Sakhawat.

They were assured that most of their demands would be met.

Formation of a police commission and a change in uniform were two of the 11 demands made by the policemen.

Earlier in the day, Sakhawat said all police personnel have to report to their stations by this Thursday or else they would be considered "unwilling to be in the force any more".

Talking to reporters at his secretariat office, Sakhawat said, "Police's morale is very low now."

As of yesterday, 599 out of 639 police stations in the country resumed partial operations with assistance from the armed forces and Ansar members.

Most of the stations were not fully staffed. General diaries were being filed, and some office tasks were being carried out.

Police were yet to start patrolling as of last night.

Sakhawat yesterday also visited the Central Police Hospital in Dhaka and enquired about the health of the injured police personnel.

Talking to reporters there, Sakhawat said, "Police have been given lethal weapons. I was surprised to see 7.62 [7.62mm rifles] in the police's hand ... Police should not be given these weapons.

"I am saying clearly, whether politicians like it or not, it will be difficult to do politics now. You can't use police like killers and henchmen any more.

"Our society cannot function without police. I am receiving reports of robberies every day," he said, adding that what the army is now doing is not their job. But they are still doing it. They were even attacked in Gopalganj.

Gunfire, clash at Islami Bank

FROM PAGE 1

The protesters are demanding the cancellation of appointments made after 2017 without following the proper recruitment process and the reinstatement of persons illegally terminated after 2017, said Anisur Rahman, an Islami Bank official.

The protesters decided not to allow any executive who joined after 2017 to enter the bank.

Most of the officials who joined the bank after 2017 did not come to office after the resignation of Hasina, including the bank chairman, managing director, additional managing director and deputy managing directors, according to people familiar with the matter.

A group of Islami Bank employees, some holding cricket stumps, demonstrating in front of the bank's headquarters in Motijheel demanding the cancellation of appointments made after 2017 without following the proper recruitment process.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

But yesterday, a group of officials appointed after 2017 gathered around the head office at around 10.30am and tried to enter the office. Protesters blocked their way, which later transformed into clashes.

Six of the protesters were wounded by gunshots, they said.

Last week, Muhammad Qaisar Ali, additional managing director of Islami Bank, was forced to resign.

Once one of the most robust banks in Bangladesh, Islami Bank's financial health started deteriorating after S Alam Group took control.

There is an allegation that the conglomerate took out huge amounts of money from the bank in the name of loans.

The Islami Bank recently faced a huge liquidity crisis and its current account with the central bank faced a deficit for a long time.

On the other hand, the central bank is providing liquidity facility to the lender in a special arrangement.

Mohammed Monirul Moula, managing director of the bank, could not be reached for comment.

Meanwhile, a group of employees of Social Islami Bank, where S Alam Group owns significant stakes, are demanding the dissolution of the existing board.

The officials, all of whom were appointed before S Alam Group took over Social Islami in 2017, placed their demands from a human chain in front of the National Press Club in Dhaka.

At the programme, they alleged that S Alam Group seized control of the bank in 2017 by taking hostage the then board of directors at gunpoint.

Since then, the group along with its associates and with the direct support of the Awami League government has embezzled thousands of crores from the bank's stakeholders and laundered the money abroad, the demonstrators said.

The employees urged the current interim government to dissolve the existing board and establish a new one composed of the bank's original owners and founding entrepreneurs, to "free the institution from the grip of money launderers".

Also yesterday, sacked IFIC officials gathered in front of the head office around 10:00am demanding their jobs back.

They also demanded exemplary punishment for the bank's chairman Salman F Rahman, a Sheikh Hasina loyalist, and former managing director Shah Alam Sarwar.

Meanwhile, the central bank yesterday instructed banks to refrain from undisciplined work at banks.

Such actions could cause depositors to lose their confidence, and these activities are punishable offences under the Bank Companies Act, the notice said.

Metro rail service to resume

FROM PAGE 1

Operations of the metro rail and passengers' trains have been suspended since July 18.

METRO

MAN Siddique, the managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd, yesterday said they have begun preparing to resume operations.

They were expecting to start trial runs within a day or two, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Asked about the two vandalised stations, he said the committee formed to assess the damage and all other technical issues was yet to submit a report.

"We are hoping the committee will submit the report soon, and we will move forward on the basis of the report."

Attackers vandalised the two stations on July 19 and authorities at that time said it would take at least one year to make the stations operational.

Over three lakh commuters used to travel on the metro rail daily.

RAIL SERVICES

BR will resume railway operations from today, after more than three weeks.

The operations will restart with freight trains while mail, express, local, and commuter trains will start services from Tuesday and intercity trains from Thursday.

Tickets for intercity trains will be available online from 5:00pm today.

However, operation of Parabat Express and Jamalpur Express trains will remain suspended, Nahid Hasan Khan, director (public relations) of BR, said in a press release yesterday.

Operations of passenger trains were suspended on July 18 amid the violence. Some freight trains continued to run for one or two days after July 18.

In another development, the authorities of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway formally resumed its operation from 3:00pm yesterday, said an official.

However, entry ramps at Banani and Mohakhali and an exit ramp near the FDC gate (Karwan Bazar) will be closed.

"We have resumed formal operation of expressway by starting toll collection from vehicles at the airport ramp," Captain (retd) Hasib Hasan Khan, manager (operations and maintenance) of First Dhaka Elevated Expressway Company Ltd, which operates the expressway, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Attackers torched the Banani toll booth on July 18 and the Mohakhali toll booth the following day amid unrest centring the quota reform protest. Toll collection had been suspended since then.

After the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5, people started using the expressway without paying tolls as the toll collection mechanism was absent.

Hasib said they closed the two entry ramps at Banani and Mohakhali as the toll booths were torched. They also closed the exit ramp near the FDC gate as one of the expressway pillars there was set on fire. "We are checking the pillar ... ."

The first elevated expressway was opened to traffic partially from the airport area to Farmgate in September last year, and the FDC exit was opened early this year, giving much relief to the city commuters.

On average, over 50,000 vehicles used the expressway daily.

BUS SERVICES

Long-route bus services resumed last week.

However, the number of passengers is very low, Mosharraf Hossain, general manager of Hanif Paribahan, told this correspondent yesterday.

He said they were operating 50 to 60 percent of buses in their fleet.

Every attack on minorities

FROM PAGE 1

foreign ministry officials yesterday, he shared the priorities of the interim authorities.

He said the interim government condones all such attacks, whether for religious or political identity.

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is likely to meet the leaders of the minority communities today, Touhid said.

He also requested the media to factcheck before publishing news reports.

About the India-Bangladesh relations, he said there is no doubt the two governments had a very good relationship in the past, adding that the interim government will try to ensure the relationship is not only between the governments, but also between the two peoples.

"The people are very important in this relationship. They should feel that the relationship with India is very good ... We want to take it forward and seek India's support in this regard."

About the deals Sheikh Hasina signed during her recent visit to India before her ousting, Touhid said, he is yet to look at them.

The foreign adviser also said the international community has expressed its readiness to work with the interim government, which is also committed to work with all for the best interest of Bangladesh.

About the UN's willingness to deploy a fact-finding mission to probe recent killings and violence, he said they can certainly be involved in this regard.

Today, Touhid will hold a meeting with foreign diplomats based in Dhaka and give a briefing about the country's latest situation while also seek their support. The issue of restarting visa issuance will also come up.

He also said the government will maintain the policy of anti-discrimination in all spheres of life, and especially emphasise on the welfare of the more than 10 million Bangladeshis abroad. "We want to ensure they get better services."

Chief Adviser Yunus himself will speak to the high authorities of the UAE to release over 50 Bangladeshis, who were jailed for holding rallies in solidarity with the students in Bangladesh.

Regarding former Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy's claim that Hasina has not resigned, he said he has confirmation that her resignation letter was sent to the president.

Chief justice

FROM PAGE 1

The interim government was sworn in on Thursday, three days after the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina amid a mass upsurge.

Supradeep, Bidhan and Farooq-e-Azam could not be sworn in that day as they were outside the capital.

According to sources, Farooq has yet to be sworn in as he is still in the United States, and the date of his arrival is not confirmed.

পূবালী ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং
শরী'আহ্ ভিত্তিক ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা
AAA Rated Bank
পূবালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
PUBALI BANK PLC.
Open your Account from anywhere
PI Banking - a Pubali Bank apps
Islamic Banking services are provided through online from all our branches and sub-branches

Ansars want their jobs regularised

Along with VDP, they protest in front of SC for over 5 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Ansar and the Village Defence Party blocked the road in front of the Supreme Court's main gate for over five hours in the capital yesterday, demanding immediate regularisation of their jobs.

Several hundred Ansar members, both in uniform and non-uniform, took position in front of the Supreme Court's main gate around 11:30am.

They began chanting slogans such as, "Ar Noy Jukti, Eibar Chai Mukti [No more logic, this time we want emancipation]," and "Ek Dofa, Ek Dabi, Chakri Jatiyakaron [One point, one demand, we want jobs regularisation]."

Speaking to The Daily Star at the spot, some Ansar members expressed their

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Demanding immediate regularisation of their jobs, members of Ansar and the Village Defence Party block the road in front of the Supreme Court's main gate for over five hours yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

INTERNET SHUTDOWN

Find out in 24hrs who's responsible

Says ICT adviser

STAR REPORT

A seven-member committee has been formed to investigate the internet shutdown during the recent protests that led to the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government.

This comes after Nahid Islam, adviser for Posts, Telecommunications, and Information Technology, sought an explanation as to why the internet was shut down during the protest and who was responsible, with a report within 24 hours.

AKM Amirul Islam, an additional secretary at the Posts and Telecommunications Division, was appointed as the head of the committee.

"We are now working on it," he told The Daily Star.

Earlier, while speaking to journalists at the secretariat, Nahid said action will be taken against the officials involved in the internet shutdown.

Nahid said access to the internet is a right, and disrupting or shutting down internet services is a violation of human rights.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Restore order, probe all the killings

Urges Shujan, places 18 proposals for state reform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) has called for bringing the law-and-order situation under control quickly and initiating an investigation by the United Nations to bring the culprits of the July-August killings to justice.

Simultaneously, Shujan, a civil society platform advocating for good governance, has also called for long-term initiatives from the interim government to reform the state system.

They made these calls at a press conference titled, "What the Interim Government Should Do to Reform the State", organised by Shujan at the Dhaka Reporters Unity

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Wave of resignations hits universities

UGC chairman, at least 13 VCs and top officials quit over a week

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

> **An UGC member said in most cases, these VCs are stepping down citing personal reasons, but they are actually doing it in the face of pressure from students and teachers. Most of these resignations took place following the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in the wake of a mass upsurge led by the students.**

A wave of resignations has swept through the nation's higher education sector, as an unprecedented number of vice chancellors from the public universities are stepping down from their positions.

At least 13 VCs have so far resigned from their official positions.

"We are fearing that the number will increase in the coming days," said a University Grants Commission top official.

There are 42 public universities in the country that are teaching students. Besides there are five public universities that are yet to enrol students, five medical universities and two affiliating universities and one open university.

A UGC member said in most cases, these VCs are stepping down citing personal reasons, but they are actually doing it in the face of pressure from students and teachers.

Most of these resignations took place following the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina in the wake of a mass upsurge led by the students.

All the VCs' were appointed by the previous Awami League government.

UGC CHAIR STEPS DOWN

University Grants Commission Chairman Prof Kazi Shahidullah resigned from his post yesterday citing illness. In his resignation letter to the education ministry's Secondary and Higher Secondary Division, Shahidullah said he has been in Australia for medical treatment since August 20 last year.

The letter said based on advice from Australian doctors and due to his health condition, he is unable to continue his duties.

He joined as the UGC chairman for a second term on May 28 last year. Earlier in May 2019, Shahidullah was appointed the UGC chair.

Shahidullah is a brother of Awami League leader Kazi Zafarullah.

UGC member Prof Muhammed Alamgir said he will remain in charge as UGC chairman until the next chairman takes charge.

Yesterday, the UGC appointed Mohammad Fakhrul Islam, director of the research support and publication division, as its new secretary, replacing Ferdous Zaman.

Comilla University VC Prof AFM Abdul Moyeen, Jagannath University VC Prof Sadeka Halim, National University VC Prof Mashiur Rahman and Bangamata Sheikh

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

HC division also needs reform

Says Attorney General Asaduzzaman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court Division of the Supreme Court needs to be reformed like the Appellate Division, said Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman yesterday.

Speaking to reporters at his Supreme Court office yesterday, he expressed optimism that the newly appointed Chief Justice, Syed Refaat Ahmed, would soon enhance the judiciary's role in upholding the rights of the people of Bangladesh.

"The government has taken initiatives to reform the Supreme Court. With a new chief justice in place, I am confident that this institution will quickly evolve to better serve the people," said Asaduzzaman, who was appointed on August 8, even before the interim government took oath.

His remarks come in the wake of significant changes in the judiciary, including the resignation of former chief justice Obaidul Hassan and five other Appellate Division judges on Saturday, amid widespread student protests.

On the same day, Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

JATIYA PRESS CLUB

Memberships of Farida, Shyamal 'revoked'

The two term move unconstitutional

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of Jatiya Press Club's managing committee yesterday revoked memberships of its president Farida Yasmin, general secretary Shyamal Dutta and managing committee member Shahnaj Siddiqui Soma.

At the same time, senior vice president Hasan Hafiz and joint secretary Md Ayub Bhuiyan were selected as the new president and general secretary respectively.

The decision was taken unanimously during a meeting of the club's managing committee, following demand from the anti-discrimination student movement coordinators, said a notice signed by Hasan and Ayub.

It said the decision was taken as per clause 13 (b) and clause 34. The new president and general secretary were chosen as per clause 14 b (1), (3) and (4) of the club's constitution. Shahnaj said they received the notice.

The Daily Star could not contact Hasan Hafiz and Ayub Bhuiyan for their comments.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

ZIAUL AHSAN KNOWS All DISAPPEARANCES HANDOVER HIM TO US !
RETURN OTHERS ALIVE
ZIAUL AHSAN KNOWS ABOUT All ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES
Return My Disappeared Son Alive!
Maayer Daak
RETURN

They share a common grief: their sons, husbands, or brothers have been missing for years, allegedly abducted by state agencies during the 15-year rule of the Awami League. Families of such enforced disappearance victims formed a human chain in front of the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday. They placed three demands before the interim government and sought a reply within 24 hours. The demands are unconditional and immediate release of their loved ones, trial of those state force members involved in enforced disappearances, and a commission for the victims and their family members under UN supervision. The event was organised by Maayer Daak.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

RMG workers seek reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Garment Workers' Solidarity presented an 11-point demand to the newly formed interim government, calling for improvements for garment workers and other key labourers vital to the country's development.

At a meeting titled "Garment Workers' Expectations from the Interim Government" held at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital, the organisation demanded justice for the murder of garment worker Shubho Sheel and six others, urging state honours for all workers killed during clashes centring the quota reform movement, appropriate compensation for their families, and proper treatment and rehabilitation for the injured.

The group also called for the immediate withdrawal of all repressive cases filed during the 2023 wage increase movement and the release of 57 expatriate workers imprisoned in the UAE in connection with the protests.

Taslima Akhter, the organisation's president, emphasised the need for a reform to the minimum wage board and a reconsideration of the demand for a minimum wage of Tk 25,000.

She highlighted the need for unions, proper daycare centres for workers' children, extension of paid maternity leave to six months, and the creation of anti-sexual harassment complaint cells

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Dainik Dinkal gets permission to resume publication

Tarique Rahman its publisher

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dainik Dinkal, a broadsheet Bangla language newspaper, received permission to resume its publication yesterday.

Dhaka District Magistrate Anisur Rahman gave the temporary permission to the pro-BNP newspaper in an official order.

The newspaper's publisher is Tarique Rahman, the acting chairman of the BNP.

The Dainik Dinkal, halted its publication in February 2023, a day after Bangladesh Press Council rejected an appeal against its cancellation order.

Rashedul Haq, a news editor of the newspaper, told The Daily Star yesterday, "The previous government halted the publication of the newspaper because its publisher was out of the country and had been convicted."

"After that, the press council upheld the suspension order. However, after reapplying, we have now received permission to resume our publication," he added.

Memberships

FROM PAGE 3

Farida and Shyamal in a statement last night said some executive members were trying to take control of the club. "They are trying to grab the club like river chars. They have vandalised the rooms of the president and secretary... Vice president and joint secretary have announced themselves as acting president and secretary unconstitutionally. They have expelled three members and are trying to expel more than 50 others," it read.

It said the club members elect its executive body with a neutral, systematic and participatory election.

"We believe that the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, who dreamt a democratic Bangladesh, will not support it," the statement added.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 12

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-41	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-44	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

SADPASHA-MUROICHHARA ROAD

Potholes all along

MINTU DESHWARA, *Moulvibazar*

A seven-kilometre stretch of road from Sadpasha in Prithimpasha union to Muroichhara in Karmadha union in Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila has long been in a dilapidated state.

The bitumen surface and bricks have been eroded from the road at numerous places due to a lack of renovation for prolonged period. There are hundreds of potholes on the road, some being 30-50 feet wide.

Residents, including students, from around 20 villages under the two unions, including 12 Khasi punjees, use the road daily for commute. The road connects several educational institutions including Longla Modern Degree College, and Ali Amjad High School and College, among others, in the area.

"The road was last renovated in 2017-18 fiscal year. Since then, it went through a lot of wear and tear, including damage from rain and flood, and is now in a terrible shape. It has become very risky and accident-prone for vehicular movement. The locals repeatedly called upon the authorities concerned to repair the road, but to no avail," said Muhibul Islam Azad, chairman of Karmadha union parishad.

Jasim Uddin, a driver of CNG-run auto-rickshaw, said, "The road surface is severely damaged. The entire seven-kilometre stretch has hundreds of potholes of different shapes. Some are so wide and deep that whenever it rains, water accumulates in those potholes to resemble a ditch. Driving vehicles on the road has become very risky and turbulent, and accidents can happen any time."

Locals Yunus Mia and Noor Mia echoed him.

Jimiur Rahman Chowdhury, chairman of Prithimpasha union parishad, said he had raised the issue of repairing the road several times in the monthly meeting of the Kulaura Upazila Parishad.

"The upazila engineer gave assurance that initiative will be taken soon to repair the road," he added.

Contacted, Tarek Bin Islam, upazila engineer of LGED in Kulaura, said, "A proposal has been sent to the higher authorities for repair work of 20-km road network in the upazila, including the Sadpasha-Muroichhara road. If approved, the repair work of the road will begin after the tender process."

Restore order, probe all the killings

FROM PAGE 3

yesterday afternoon.

Speaking at the event, Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar demanded punishment for those who have committed injustices, criminal offences, and corruption in the financial sector in the past.

"We believe there are long-term steps that need to be taken for reform. We need to build a new political arrangement in consultation with political parties and civil society," he said, calling for the formation of a citizen's charter by political parties.

Zakir Hossain, assistant secretary of Shujan, said the recent mass movement for reform was not a revolution.

"In the past, certain individuals created a reign of power in various areas, and MPs created their domains. This situation must end. We want to build institutions. We believe that if there is a change in the structure, and if the political culture changes, everyone will benefit and the country will move forward," he said.

Shujan executive member Prof Shahnaz Huda said past corruption has left a lingering impact on people's minds, making it difficult to break the cycle.

"Sculptures have been vandalised in isolated places, which is highly condemnable," said Shahnaz, who is also a teacher at Dhaka University.

Another executive member, Prof Robaet Ferdous, said the revolution the country witnessed in 2024 has also become a social movement.

"The interim government did not ensure representation of all sections of society. Structural change must be transformed into cultural change. A surveillance framework must be established to prevent the emergence of another autocratic structure."

Prof Robaet, also a DU teacher, added that the tenure of the interim government needs to be specified.

Shujan's central coordinator, Dilip Kumar Sarkar, presented a keynote paper at the event, highlighting five urgent tasks that the interim government needs to address immediately.

These tasks include: bringing the law-and-order situation under control quickly, creating a list of the victims of violence in July-August, providing assistance and compensation to their families, protecting religious institutions from attackers, and initiating a UN-led investigation to identify and punish those responsible.

Additionally, Shujan presented 18 proposals, including constitutional changes, institutional reforms, electoral system changes, and amendments to election laws for state reform.

Other proposals include establishing a non-partisan caretaker government, reconstituting the Election Commission, enhancing the effectiveness of parliament, and ensuring the independence of the judiciary.

HC division also needs

FROM PAGE 3

the senior-most judge of the High Court Division, was appointed as the 25th chief justice of Bangladesh.

Addressing concerns about alleged syndicates within the HC, Asaduzzaman said, "I am unaware of any syndicates in the High Court. If any such activities are reported, swift action will be taken."

Regarding the recent resignations of several law officers, including additional attorney generals, deputy attorney generals, and assistant attorney generals, Asaduzzaman assured that the issue would be resolved promptly.

Commenting on the irregularities within the judiciary, he reaffirmed his commitment to combating corruption. "The people are standing against irregularities and lawlessness. I am hopeful that the interim government will advance the cause of establishing the rights of the people," he said.

Find out in 24hrs

FROM PAGE 3

The government shut down mobile internet services on July 17 amid widespread violence over the quota reform protests.

A day later, on July 18, broadband internet was blocked, severely affecting public life and a wide range of economic activities, including utility bill payments, online banking, digital communications, digital commerce, and the clearance of goods from ports.

Mobile internet was restored on July 28, while social media platforms were unblocked on July 31.

However, mobile internet users were unable to access their Facebook and Messenger accounts for approximately seven hours on August 2. Mobile internet and Facebook were blocked again on August 4.

On August 5, both mobile and broadband internet were blocked again for a few hours.

The internet was fully restored after 2:00pm, when Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister and fled the country.

Zunaid Ahmed Palak, then state minister for ICT and Telecom, maintained that the internet was shut down due to a fire in the data centres in Mohakhali.

However, The Daily Star found no evidence of fire upon visiting these data centres. Officials of these data centres also confirmed that there were no instances of arson.

Wave of resignations

FROM PAGE 3

Fojilatunnesa Mujib Science and Technology University VC Prof Kamrul Alam Khan also resigned from their positions yesterday citing personal reasons.

On Saturday, Prof ASM Maksud Kamal and Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed, VCs of Dhaka University and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, resigned.

Previously, VCs of Jahangirnagar University, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University in Dinajpur, Rajshahi University, and Islamic University, Kushtia, resigned from their positions,

TOP OFFCIALS ALSO RESIGNING

Additionally, several provosts from at least six dormitories at DU resigned on Saturday. On Thursday, the entire proctorial team of DU submitted their resignation letters.

At RU, 29 officials, including the proctor, 11 assistant proctors, the student adviser, and the Public Relations Office administrator also submitted their resignation letters.

At Islamic University, pro-VC Prof Mahbubur Rahman and Treasurer Prof Alamgir Hossain resigned from their positions.

Treasurer of Noakhali Science and Technology University Prof Newaz Mohammed Bahadur also handed in his resignation.

Meanwhile, all members of the proctorial body, along with the provosts and assistant provosts of dormitories at SUST resigned as well. Besides, JnU acting registrar, its proctor, 13 assistant proctors, lone house provost and two house tutors have also resigned.

BANS ON POLITICS

Authorities of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology on Wednesday and Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University yesterday imposed a ban on student politics at their campuses.

On Saturday, authorities of Dhaka Medical College, Sir Salimullah Medical College and Chittagong Medical College also banned student politics.

Sir Salimullah Medical College and Chittagong Medical College have also banned political activities of teachers, and staff on their campuses and in dormitories.

Vaccination

FROM PAGE 5

"An initiative has been taken to continue our operations by bringing some equipment from the Police Hospital through the district's civil surgeon. Hopefully within 4-5 days it will be possible to resume some activities on a limited basis," she added.

Sources at mosquito control department said some miscreants looted 12 fogger machines used for spreading insecticides. Of those, four were later recovered and with those the mosquito control activities will resume soon.

Prof Zahid Hossain, convener of Sacheton Nagorik Committee, urged BCC authorities to resume the activities of the two departments promptly.

HC functions

FROM PAGE 5

The judicial functions of both the Appellate and HC Divisions have been running irregularly and with breaks after the nationwide curfew was imposed on July 20.

The functions were completely closed since August 5.

Contacted, SC Public Relations Officer Md Shafiqul Islam told The Daily Star that it was not announced when the Appellate Division's judicial functions will resume.

Ansars want their jobs regularised

FROM PAGE 3

long-standing grievances.

"We have been deprived year after year," said Babul Sarkar, an Ansar member.

"Our jobs have never been regularised. We have no benefits other than our regular salary, and our pay is based on our work. If we miss a day's work, we don't get paid," he added.

"If we want to take a holiday, we have to bribe the officers. If we want to withdraw our rations, we have to pay a bribe. When we rejoin the office after a six-month forced leave, we have to pay a bribe upon returning to the officers," he claimed.

Additionally, he alleged that each Ansar member has to pay Tk 100 to the thana officers. "In every step, we are forced to pay bribes," he alleged.

Abul Kalam, an Ansar commander, said, "We are sent for six months' forced leave from our jobs every three years. Then, we have to remain idle for about six months to a year. There is no way to earn during this time."

He added there is no job stability in Ansar and VDP, which is why they have taken to the streets to press for their one-point demand of job regularisation.

Maj Gen AKM Aminul Haque, director general of Ansar and VDP, went to the scene to hear their demands. Aminul urged them to remain disciplined and not to create chaos on the road.

"I am here to listen to your demands. I assure you that I will present your demands to the ministry. I request you to form a committee which will meet with the officials concerned with written demands."

He warned them not to create unrest by taking advantage of the new government and urged them to assist the government.

The Ansar chief also requested them to clear the road, but the protesters refused to clear it immediately.

They finally cleared the road over half an hour later, at 5:00pm, and a 10-member team went to the DG's office to submit their demands.

Ansar members also staged a demonstration in front of the Chattogram Press Club yesterday over the same demand.

Meanwhile, the Ansar chief after a meeting with 10 coordinators of the protests took three days to fulfill their demand, said Md Nasir Miah, chief coordinator of the protests.

RMG workers

FROM PAGE 3

in factories. The organisation called for the formation of a national commission to ensure safe working conditions, national policy dialogue on housing, healthcare, education, and fair retirement benefits, and the enactment of laws for compensation adhering to international standards.

Speakers underscored that previous regimes suppressed workers' protests, especially during the 2023 wage movement, and stressed the importance of safeguarding workers' rights to free speech and organisation.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Food Safety Authority
BSL Office Complex, Bhaban-02 (Level-04, 05 & 06)
119, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000
www.bfsa.gov.bd

Invitation for Enlistment

Memo No: 13.02.0000.511.07.001.22.574 **Date: 11th August, 2024**

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH		
1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Food
2.	Agency	Bangladesh Food Safety Authority
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Mohammad Atiqur Rahman Mazumder
4.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5.	Invitation for	Vehicle Maintenance and Servicing
6.	Invitation Ref No	13.02.0000.511.07.001.22.574
7.	Date	11th August, 2024
KEY INFORMATION		
8.	Procurement Method	**Limited Tendering Method**
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
		Date: 27/08/2024 **Time: 12:00 PM**
9.	Application Closing Date and Time	
10.	Name & Address of the Office(s)	Bangladesh Food Safety Authority BSL Office Complex, Building No-02 (Level- 04, 05 & 06) 119, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000
	- Application Form Availability	BSL Office Complex, Building No-02 (Level- 05), Room No-532 119, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000
	- Receiving Application Form	Tender Box can be found at above mentioned address
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
11.	Eligibility of Applicant	a. Must have valid Trade License b. Must have TIN c. Must have Bank Solvency Certificate d. Must have at least 05 (Five) years of Experiences e. Specify others, if any Detailed qualifications and eligibility criteria mentioned in Standard Application form for Enlistment (SAFE)
12.	Price of Application Form **(Tk)**	**500.00** taka (Five Hundred Taka only)
13	Enlistment / Renewal Fee **(Tk)**	First Time Enlistment Fee: **5,000.00** taka Renewal Fee: **2000.00** taka
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
14.	Name of Official Inviting Application	Mohammad Atiqur Rahman Mazumder
15.	Designation of Official Inviting Application	Director (Establishment, Finance & Human Resource Management)
16.	Address of Official Inviting Application	BSL Office Complex, Building No-02 (Level- 05), Room No-519 119, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000
17.	Contact details of Official Inviting Application	Phone: +8802-222227534 Email: director.admin@bfsa.gov.bd
18.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all Applications	

11.8.24
Mohammad Atiqur Rahman Mazumder
Director (Establishment, Finance & Human Resource Management)
Bangladesh Food Safety Authority
Phone: +8802-222227534

GD- 143

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Tender Notice (Open Tendering Method - OTM)

ActionAid Bangladesh invites sealed quotations from bona fide manufacturers/suppliers for supplying the below-mentioned items:

SL#	Name of Items	Quantity
1	Dignity Kits (A set of 21 items as mentioned in the tender schedule)	2,200 Set (as mentioned in the tender schedule)

Interested manufacturers/suppliers can collect tender schedule and submit quotations from 12th August 2024 to 2:00 pm on 21st August 2024. The schedule can be collected from the link:

https://actionaidbd.org/tender-notice or physically from the ActionAid Bangladesh Country Office (House SE (C) 5/B, Road 136, Gulshan – 1, Dhaka-1212, Phone: 55044851-7). ActionAid Bangladesh reserves the right to accept/reject any/all quotation without showing any clarification.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Gopalganj
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.3500.000.07.001.24.2480 Date: 11.08.2024

e-Tender Notice
(Notice Number: 02/2024-25)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of

SL No.	ID, Reference No.	Procurement method	Name of works	Tender/proposal decument last selling date and time
01	1006946	OSTETM	Construction of 30.0m Long RCC Variable Depth Girder Bridge on Mandra Kheyaghat-BAPARD via Jathia Road at Ch. 3596m (Road ID 3354515596) under Kotwalipara Upazila, District: Gopalganj, Package No. GDIRIIP/Kotali/VR-SR/24-25/290	04.00pm on 11/09/2024
02	1006592	OTM	Improvement of Dignagar Bazar-Dewan Shah Mosque Road by BC from Ch. 00m-1036m under Muksudpur Upazila, District Gopalganj [Road ID No: 335584156] (Salvage Materials Cost Tk. 27,18,472.00), Package No. GDIRIIP-2/Muk/VR-BC/23-24/07	04.00pm on 04/09/2024
03	1006593	OTM	Improvement of Millick Sreerampur-Wapda Road to Chowgasha Harun Rashid by BC from Ch. 00m-350m under Muksudpur Upazila, District Gopalganj [Road ID No: 335585224] (Salvage Materials Cost Tk. 4,00,595.00), Package No. GDIRIIP-2/Muk/VR-BC/23-24/08	04.00pm on 04/09/2024
04	1006594	OTM	Improvement of Pashergati UP office to Panchuria High School via Abu Saleh (Ex Chairman) Road by BC from Ch. 00m-1730m & Construction of 02 Nos. 2.00x2.00m single vent RCC Box culvert at Ch. 400m & 1630m on the same road under Muksudpur Upazila, District Gopalganj [Road ID No: 335584105] (Salvage Materials Cost Tk. 40,98,008.00), Package No. GDIRIIP-2/Muk/VR-BC/23-24/09	04.00pm on 04/09/2024
05	1006595	OTM	Improvement of Goptogati-Jhakor Road by BC from Ch. 00m-1010m under Muksudpur Upazila, District Gopalganj [Road ID No: 335584128] (Salvage Materials Cost Tk. 27,65,770.00), Package No. GDIRIIP-2/Muk/VR-BC/23-24/10	04.00pm on 04/09/2024

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Ehsanul Hoque
Executive Engineer
Tel. 02-478821702
E-mail: xen.gopalganj@lged.gov.bd

GD-145

PHULBARI UPAZILA

Students, locals join hands to repair damaged road

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Lalmonirhat*

A group of students have joined local people to repair a damaged road in Phulbari upazila of Kurigram to enable vehicular movement for the time being until extensive renovation can be made to it.

Visiting the road along Helipad area in Phulbari Sadar union, this correspondent saw sand-filled geo-bags were being dumped on the damaged portions of the road to prevent further damage. The work has been continuing since Saturday noon.

The road sustained significant damage due to heavy rains two weeks ago, said locals.

Several thousand people from some 10-12 villages in the vicinity use the road to communicate to the upazila headquarters. Since the road got damaged, no initiative was taken to repair it from the authorities concerned despite repeated requests from the locals.

"Around 18-20 students are working on repairing the damaged parts of the road alongside local people. The effort will continue till all the damaged roads in the area are repaired to make those passable for pedestrians and vehicles," said Shafiqul Islam, a student engaged in the effort.

Mobarak Ali, 65, a local farmer, said, "The students have been working tirelessly to repair the collapsed road even though there is no government allocation for the repairs. We are also working with them."

"If the students remain dedicated to the welfare of the people, the country will progress rapidly," he added.

A group of students, along with locals, repairing a damaged road in Phulbari upazila of Kurigram yesterday. The road had sustained significant damage due to heavy rains two weeks back. The photo was taken near the Helipad area in Phulbari Sadar union. PHOTO: STAR

100 AL men sued over killing of students

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

More than 100 activists of Awami League and its affiliated organisations have been sued on charges of killing two students during their anti-government movement in Pabna on August 4.

Md Dulal Uddin, father of one of the deceased, filed the case yesterday, said Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Rawshan Alom.

However, the OC declined to disclose the names of the accused for the sake of investigation.

"We are investigating the incident and trying to nab the culprits," he said.

The students brought out a procession in Pabna on August 4. Suddenly, the AL men opened fire on them at Traffic Intersection, leaving two students -- Md Jahidul Islam, 19, and Md Mahabub Hasan Niloy, 14 -- dead and many others injured, said sources.

HC functions resumes on a limited scale today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Judicial functions of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court will resume on a limited scale today.

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed yesterday constituted eight benches of the High Court with its 13 judges for hearing and disposing of cases.

Among the eight benches, five are division (two judges) benches and three are single (one judge) bench.

There are a total of 82 judges for the HC Division and only two judges, including the chief justice, for the Appellate Division of the SC currently. Of the total 82, three HC judges have been kept away from judicial functions since August 2019 as an inquiry is pending against them.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

ACC sues 4 over Tk 5.37cr graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has filed a case against four individuals on charges of attempting to misappropriate Tk 5.37 crore by creating forged documents and bills from the public exchequer.

The case was lodged yesterday by Assistant Director Enamul Hoque of Chattogram ACC Integrated Office-1, accusing Munsi Farrukh Hossain Mintu, Munsi Sazzad Hossain, Mukit Mandol, and Mohammed Furkan.

Among the accused, Furkan is the accountant at General Hospital in Andarkillah, while the others are employees of MS Ahmed Enterprise.

The case statement said in 2013, the hospital authorities under the Chattogram Civil Surgeon Office invited tenders for purchasing MRS, ICU beds, ICU ventilators, and other equipment worth Tk 5,32,25,000.

MS Ahmed Enterprise won the tender and supplied the equipment, but the items were found to be substandard, prompting the authorities to request their return.

Despite this, from 2019 to 2022, the accused allegedly attempted to withdraw the tender bills by forging documents and the then civil surgeon's signature.

Only 31mm rain inundates port city

The GEC intersection in the port city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

All it needed was some 31.4mm of rain to submerge many areas of the port city yesterday, once again exposing the dilapidated state of the city's drainage system.

The downpour, recorded between 6:00am and 9:00am, led to vehicle shortages in low-lying areas, forcing many residents to wade through flooded streets to reach their destinations.

Key areas like GEC, Katalganj, and Chawkbazar went under ankle to knee deep water following the rain.

Nizam Uddin, a resident of Katalganj, was forced to walk a kilometre to reach Agrabad due to a lack of available vehicles. "I had to avoid my usual route through Chawkbazar to escape the worst of the waterlogging," he said.

The waterlogging also caused traffic jams at several busy intersections. However, the situation improved by noon.

Residents expressed their frustration over the persistent waterlogging issue, which has plagued the city every monsoon for years.

"We face this problem every year, despite the government spending crores on multiple projects," said Zahid Bin Hossain, a resident of Katalganj. Abdus Sabur from Halishahar echoed the sentiment, questioning how much longer they would have to endure the situation.

Despite ongoing efforts by various government agencies, including the Chattogram Development Authority (CDA), Water Development Board (WDB), and Chattogram City Corporation (CCC), residents have yet to see substantial relief. The four major projects, worth a combined Tk 14,388.74 crore, have been in progress for several years but have not delivered the expected results.

The CDA's "mega project" to address waterlogging, initiated in 2018 at an initial cost of Tk 5,617 crore, has seen its budget balloon to Tk 8,626.62 crore, with the deadline extended to June 2026.

Despite claims from Lt Col Ferdous Ahmed, the project director, that the project has improved water flow in the city's canals, residents remain unconvinced.

Work on the other three projects -- two by CDA and WDB initiated in 2017 and 2019, and one by CCC since 2014 -- continues, but the completion remains uncertain.

ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLENCE

BNP leader expelled in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Humayun Kabir alias Naiya Kabir, the president of the BNP's Baufal town unit in Patuakhali, has been dismissed from his post due to his involvement in violent activities.

The dismissal, effective from August 10, follows accusations of vandalism, looting, and issuing threats in various parts of the upazila.

This decision was confirmed in a letter signed by district BNP convener Abdur Rashid Chunnu Mia and member secretary Snehanshu Sarkar Kutti.

According to BNP sources, after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, specific allegations against Humayun Kabir came to light.

He was also issued a show-cause notice on August 8.

The district BNP found his responses unsatisfactory, which led to his dismissal.

Efforts to reach Humayun Kabir for comment were unsuccessful as he did not respond to phone calls.

However, his son, Imamuzzaman Anik, who is the BNP student affairs secretary in the municipality, said, "My father is a victim of political conspiracy."

"There is no evidence to support the charges against him," he told The Daily Star.

ARSON ON BCC BUILDING

Vaccination, anti-mosquito drives halted for six days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barishal*

The vaccination of newborns under Expanded Program on Immunisation (EPI), as well as anti-mosquito drives of Barishal City Corporation have remained halted for the past six days after the BCC building came under arson attack on August 5.

According to sources, the annex building of BCC was completely burnt down by miscreants on August 5. All the machinery, equipment and important files, computers and medicines of the EPI and mosquito control departments located in the building were also damaged.

Since then, all the activities of these two departments have been completely halted.

BCC officials, however, said these facilities will be available soon.

Annex Bhaban on Sadar Road in Barishal was set on fire on August 5. PHOTO: TITU DAS

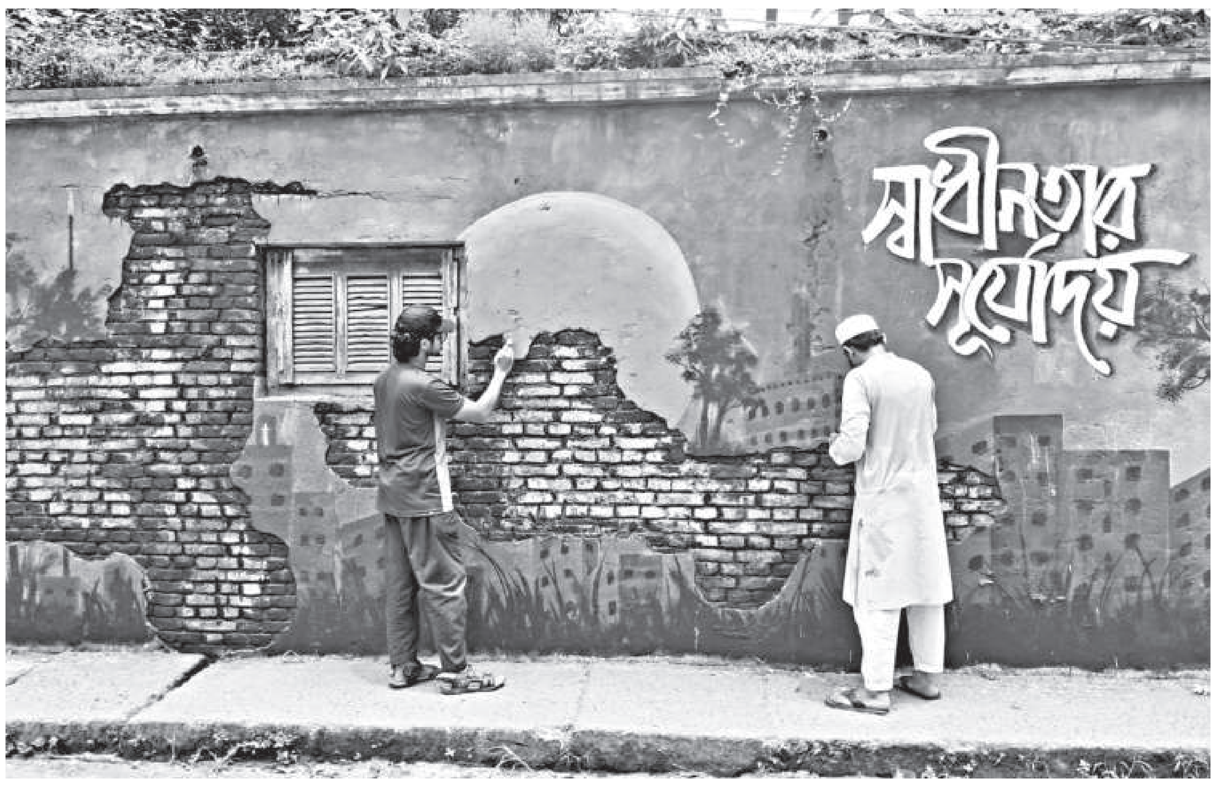
Sources at EPI department said at least 10,000 children were scheduled to be vaccinated, according to roster. The ice boxes, freezer, and about one lakh vials of medicines for 154 centres across the city were all burnt to ashes in the arson attack.

As a result, vaccination and vitamin programmes for around 5 lakh children are currently suspended.

Rebeka Sultana, a resident of the city's Katpatti area, said, "As the vaccination centre at Ashwini Kumar Town Hall is not operational, I am unable to get my child vaccinated. An official told us to get the vaccination done from hospital."

Dr Pallabi Sultana, acting chief health officer of BCC, said residents of BCC area can get vaccination for their children from Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital and Barishal General Hospital.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8



DAWN OF FREEDOM. Two students painting graffiti on the wall of the office of Brahmanbaria deputy commissioner yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড
(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানি)
Sylhet Gas Fields Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)

গ্যাস জাতির সম্পদ। এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতির দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

Ref: 28.20.9153.142.14.010.24 Dated: 11-08-2024

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (http.//www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following goods:

Sl. No.	Package No.	Description of Goods	Tender ID	Last Selling of Tender (Date & Time)	Tender Closing & Opening (Date & Time)
1.	28.20.9153.142.14.010.24/LP-1	Procurement of PLC Module for DCS of 4000 BPD Condensate Fractionation Plant under Sylhet Gas Fields Limited.	1007514	08-Sep-2024 15:00 Hours	09-Sep-2024 12:00 Hours

This is online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http.//www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Tarak Ahmed)
Deputy General Manager (Procurement)
E-mail: dgmpr@sgfl.org.bd

GD-144

BNP leader Salahuddin

FROM PAGE 16

government, Salahuddin paid respects to BNP founder Ziaur Rahman at his grave in the city's Chandrima Udyan.

Speaking to reporters there, Salahuddin called for meaningful reforms to the country's democratic structures to build a "truly democratic state".

"We must make this victory meaningful," he said, referring to the outcome of the recent uprising.

The BNP leader urged everyone to be patient and restore discipline so that the people can enjoy the benefits of freedom and democracy.

"If we can establish the rule of law, create a state governed by the rule of law, and allow all constitutional and democratic institutions to function independently and impartially, its benefit will reach every home of the 18 crore people."

He vowed to protect the country from external enemies and internal conspirators.

"This country did not achieve independence under the leadership of a single person. The country was liberated through the participation of all the people."

"Independence cannot belong to any single party, nor can it belong to any individual. This liberation and victory belong to all of us, and we must protect this country," he added.

After being missing for 62 days, former state minister Salahuddin was found in Shillong, the capital of the northeastern Indian state of Meghalaya on May 11, 2015.

He was arrested for entering India without valid documents and charged under the Foreigners Act. Later, Shillong police pressed charges against him in the case.

The BNP alleged that Salahuddin was abducted from his home in Uttara, Dhaka, on March 10, 2015, by people posing as police detectives.

On October 26, 2018, a Shillong court acquitted him of the charges related to illegal entry.

A higher court upheld the verdict on February 28, 2023, and directed the Indian government to arrange for his return to Bangladesh.

Form special tribunals

FROM PAGE 16

of 10 percent of parliamentary seats for members of minority communities and the enactment of a minority protection law.

In Sylhet, several thousand people from all walks of life protested against vandalism, arson, attacks, and looting of Hindu houses and temples in different parts of the country.

As part of the nationwide programme, a rally was held in front of the Sylhet Central Shaheed Minar premises.

"The main goal of the recent uprising was to establish a society without discrimination. But in the present context, it is evident that minorities are being oppressed all over the country. We strongly protest it," said Himadri Shekhar Roy, a professor at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology.

In Narayanganj, several hundred people from the Hindu community brought out a protest procession for the second consecutive day.

The protesters started the procession around 4:00pm from the Shahid Minar area followed by a sit-in at the Chashara intersection.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigoshthi, a prominent cultural organisation, also held a rally in the Shahid Minar area.

In Barishal, a protest rally was held in front of the Ashwinikumar Hall area which was joined by around a thousand members of the Hindu community around 3:00pm.

Later, they brought out a procession from the area which marched through different major streets of the city.

In Lalmonirhat, defying the heavy rain, several thousand people from the Hindu community formed a human chain at the Mission Mor in the town at 10:30am.

In Patuakhali, two separate programmes were held under the banners of "Sanatan Nagorik and Students" and "Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Unity Council".

Sanatan Nagorik and Students formed a human chain in front of Patuakhali Central Shaheed Minar around noon. They later submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner demanding an end to communal violence.

Meanwhile, the district unit of Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Unity Council brought out a procession from Patuakhali cremation grounds around 3:00pm.

In Pabna, over a thousand people from the Hindu community brought out a protest procession from the Joy Kalibari Temple area and paraded through the major streets in town.

In Joypurhat, around 4,000 people staged demonstrations and formed a human chain protesting the attacks on Hindu properties across the country.

They gathered at the Zero-point area of the town around 11:00am, where they formed a human chain.

In Cumilla, around a thousand people held a rally in the Town hall field area of the city as part of the nationwide protest programme to end violence against minority communities.

USA pip China in medals table

FROM PAGE 16

At the velodrome, Dutch star Harrie Lavreysen surged to the men's keirin for his third gold of the Games, ending British dominance of the event they had won at every Olympics since 2008.

New Zealand's Ellesse Andrews blasted to the women's sprint title to add to her keirin gold, while American cyclist Jennifer Valente won the women's omnium.

In men's water polo, Serbia won their third straight Olympic gold with a 13-11 victory over Croatia at La Defense Arena and pulled their coach into the pool in the celebrations.

As the sport ends, attention turns to the closing ceremony and the next Olympics in Los Angeles in four years.

"On August 11, the Olympic Games will be over, and the Olympic flame will be extinguished," said Thomas Jolly, who masterminded the unique opening ceremony along the River Seine.

"That moment will remind us just how precious are these Olympic Games," added Jolly, whose opening ceremony sparked outrage in some quarters with a scene that appeared to parody the Last Supper.

Political parties must abide by relevant act

FROM PAGE 1

members have to be on the run now."

Warning all the political parties, Sakhawat said, "Now, if you think you'll take control of the markets and resort to extortion, you can go ahead and do it for a while. But I have requested the army chief to break your legs ... I don't care, go to hell.

"I am neither the public nor a politician, I come from a military background. I'll do what I say for as long as I stay."

Sakhawat, a former commissioner of the Election Commission, urged all to refrain from extortion.

"Whoever resorts to extortion -- no matter what party you are associated with -- I would ask the people to give them a beating. Those who extort, catch them on the spot. We'll do what needs to be done. We'll restore law and order. The country cannot run like this. We cannot lease out the country."

Saying that 30 lakh people made the supreme sacrifice for the country's independence, he added, "Aren't you ashamed of getting involved in extortion and doing politics, sitting on their blood? Don't do it. I warn you [political parties]. Take care of your men. Or else, you have seen how it doesn't take long to fall."

He said over a thousand people, including police officers, had to shed their blood. "You have to pay the price."

About the previous government's ban on a particular party, Sakhawat said, "It's a political matter. It will be discussed."

Regarding the mobs storming the Gono Bhaban and Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, he said, "Any destruction is bad. These are state assets, I condemn those [the destructions]. A mass uprising as such in any country in the world does not happen with limits or discipline. Similar incidents occurred during the Arab Spring ... ."

About the attacks on minorities, he said it is the responsibility of every citizen to deter such attacks.

He called upon all to come forward to save the minority communities.

"It is the sacred duty of the majority ... We're going through turbulent times. I request the majority of the society to protect the minorities and the oppressed."

Earlier, speaking to reporters after visiting the injured police members at the Central Police Hospital in Dhaka, the home adviser threatened to shut down media outlets if they turn to sycophancy.

"I saw what happened in the country through BBC. But our media said nothing had happened. If the media had played an objective role, police would not face this situation. Shame on you. Shame on the media owners.

"A country drowns when the media does not speak the truth and publish false information."

About the culture of politics in the country, he said "The politics of Bangladesh is the politics of sycophants. We didn't make politicians, we made sycophants. There is so much flattery that even when people are dying, they will say nothing happened. Such sycophants can't do politics."

On the extent of corruption, he said, "A peon owned Tk 400 crore! I can't even think beyond Tk 1 crore! ... Such a plunderer! They [the plunderers] have amassed no less than Tk 4,000-5,000 crore and have 10-12 homes abroad."

He also said he will be submitting his own wealth statement soon.

"A state can't be run according to one's whims, no matter who or what they are. Bangabandhu has of course contributed, but thousands of people fought and 30 lakh people were killed to liberate this country. The state is not anyone's personal property... ."

Criticising dynasty politics, he said, "Power has been consolidated [through dynasty politics]. They want to stay in power even after killing thousands of people. It's very sad."

Prof Yunus acquitted in graft case

FROM PAGE 16

oath after the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in the face of a mass upsurge led by students on August 5.

Judge Md Rabiul Alam of the Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka yesterday acquitted Prof Yunus, Nurjahan, and 12 others accused after the ACC applied with the court, seeking withdrawal of prosecution of the case under Section 494 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, Amir Hossain, an ACC official working in the court, told The Daily Star.

Earlier in the day, the anti-graft watchdog approved the withdrawal of the persecution of the case after scrutinising an application submitted by the case investigating officer and other case records, Amir added.

A day before his oath on August 8, Prof Yunus, also chairman of Grameen Telecom, and its directors -- Ashraful Hassan, M Shahjahan and Nurjahan Begum -- also got acquittal in a labour law violation case in which they were sentenced to six months imprisonment and fined Tk 30,000 each on January 1.

On June 12, Prof Yunus, Nurjahan, and 12 others were indicted in the ACC case filed over the misappropriation of about Tk 25.22 crore of Grameen Telecom Workers' profit participation fund. The court was also scheduled to record the statements of the witnesses.

On February 1, Investigating Officer Gulshan Anwar Prodhan, a deputy director of the ACC, placed the charge sheet before the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka.

On April 2, the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka accepted the charges pressed against the 14 accused.

On that day, the court also transferred the case to the Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka for the next course of action.

The 12 other accused are Grameen Telecom Managing Director Nazmul Islam, Directors Ashraful Hassan, Naznin Sultana, Parvin Mahmud, M Shahjahan and SM Huzzatul Islam Latifee, Sramik-Karmachari Union President Kamruzzaman, General Secretary Firoz Mahmud Hasan and representative Mainul Islam, Jatiya Workers Federation Office Secretary Kamrul Hasan, and lawyers Zafrul Hasan Sharif and Yusuf Ali.

On May 30 last year, Gulshan Anwar filed the case with the ACC's integrated district office in Dhaka.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Immigration and Passports
Data and Personalization Centre
E-7, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
www.dip.gov.bd

Invitation for International Tenders

Sl. No.	Description	Details	
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs	
2	Agency	Department of Immigration and Passports	
3	Purchaser name	Director (Data and Personalization Centre)	
4	Purchaser code	Not applicable	
5	Purchaser district	Dhaka	
6	Invitation for	Tender for selection of service provider for delivery of printed passports from personalization Center, Dhaka & Passport Personalization Center, Uttara to Bangladesh missions in abroad.	
7	Invitation Ref No.	58.01.0000.305.07.008.24/171	
8	Date	01/08/2024	
KEY INFORMATION			
9	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
10	Budget and source of funds	Government of Bangladesh (GoB)	
11	Development partners	None	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
12	Project / programme code	Not applicable	
13	Project / programme name	Not applicable	
14	Tender Package No.	Not applicable	
15	Tender package name	Not applicable	
		Date	
16	Tender publication date	06 August 2024	
17	Tender last selling date	14 September 2024	
		Date	Time
18	Tender closing date and time	17 September 2024	1.00pm BST
19	Tender opening date and time	17 September 2024	2.00pm BST
20	Name & address of the office(s)	Address	
	- Selling tender document (principal)	Asst. Accountant, 2nd floor, Data and Personalization Centre Department of Immigration and Passports Bhaban, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.	
	- Selling tender document (others)	None	
	- Receiving tender document	Assistant Director (DPC), Ground Floor, Data and Personalization Centre Department of Immigration and Passports Bhaban, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.	
	- Opening tender document	Conference Room, Room No. 6002, Department of Immigration and Passports Bhaban, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Conference Room, Room No. 6002, Department of Immigration and Passports Bhaban, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.	
21	Pre-tender meeting (optional)	Date	Time
		02 September 2024	11.00am BST
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
22	Eligibility of tenderer	a) Experience of having packaging capacity and city required secured transport capacity. b) Experience of having Customs clearance. c) Having at least 10 years' experience of carrying and delivery of secured document in different countries. d) Having tracking systems of goods. e) Adequate skilled manpower and office premises to perform the service Goods to be delivered to the destination within 72 hours. In case of remote area/undesirable reasons the time will be 96 hours. f) Having branch offices/supports in foreign countries to deliver the passport to Bangladesh Missions in abroad perfectly and timely. g) Experience certificate of similar assignments completed in the immediate past with user's certificate. To submit documents of ongoing contract having valid internationally recognized relevant license. h) To submit annual turnover of last three years. i) No arbitration is allowed	
23	Brief description of services	Passports are printed centrally at personalization center of Department of Immigration & Passports (DIP) at Agargaon and Uttara, Dhaka. After printing, the passports are delivered to the respective issuing offices. In case of issuing offices in abroad passports have to be delivered to the respective Bangladesh Missions in abroad. Currently there are 81 Bangladesh Missions in all over the world (Annexure-1). It may increase in the future where the service provider will provide the same facility at same reasonable rate. Service provider will have to collect deliverable printed passports from personalization centre at Uttara and Agargaon, Dhaka and pick it as per lot for respective Bangladesh Missions each business day and deliver the items with proper security to the Bangladesh Missions within stipulated time. After delivery they will collect acknowledgement receipt from the respective Bangladesh Missions and submit the receipt along with the bill claimed for payment	

Services to be delivered:

The objectives of the Tender is to select a reliable and International experienced postal/courier service provider that would collect printed passports from personalization Centre at Uttara and Agargaon. Dhaka and distribute those to 81 Bangladesh Missions (BM) in abroad. Name of the Bangladesh Missions are: 1) Ankara, Turkey. 2) Beijing, China, 3) Birmingham, UK, 4) Colombo, Sri Lanka 5) Kathmandu, Nepal, 6) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 7) London, UK. 8) Manchester, UK 9) Muscat, Oman, 10) New Delhi, India. 11) Rabat, Morocco 12) Berlin. Germany.13) Brussels, Belgium14) Doha, Qatar. 15) Calcutta, India, 16) Male, Maldives, 17) Moscow, Russia, 18) Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 19) The Hague, Netherlands 20) Tripoli, Libya, 21) Washington, USA, 22) Tokyo, Japan, 23) Paris, France, 24) Los Angeles, USA 25) Bangkok, Thailand. 26) Brunei 27) Cairo, Egypt 28) Canberra, Australia, 29) Hanoi, Vietnam 30) Jakarta, Indonesia, 31) Thimphu, Bhutan, 32) Seoul, South Korea, 33) Singapore, 34) Stockholm, Sweden. 35) Pretoria, South Africa, 36) Agartala, India 37) Amman, Jordan 38) Islamabad, Pakistan 39) Jeddah. KSA, 40) Karachi, Pakistan, 41) Manama, Bahrain 42) Rome, Italy 43) Riyadh, KSA 44) Tehran, Iran 45) Abu Dhabi, UAE 46) Hong Kong 47) Kuwait 48) Madrid, Spain 49) Manila, Philippine 50) Nairobi, Kenya, 51) New York, USA 52) Ottawa, Canada, 53) Yangon, Myanmar, 54) Istanbul, Turkey, 55) Milan, Italy. 56) Baghdad, Iraq. 57) Athens, Greece 58) Kabul, Afghanistan 59) Freetown, Sierra Leone 60) Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 61) Bucharest, Romania 62) Vienna, Austria 63) Warsaw, Poland 64) Copenhagen, Denmark, 65) Mumbai, India 66) Abuja, Nigeria 67) Kunming, China 68) Port Luis, Mauritius 69) Lisbon, Portugal 70) Beirut, Lebanon 71) Mexico City, Mexico, 72) Algiers, Algeria, 73) Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 74) Chennai, India, 75) Guwahati, India. 76) Sydney, Australia, 77) Florida, USA 78) Khartoum, Sudan, 79) Geneva, Switzerland, 80) Dubai, UAE, 81) Toronto, Canada.

The services include:

1. To collect passports from Personalization Center (Uttara and Agargaon) of Department of Immigration and Passports (DIP) and deliver them to respective Bangladesh Missions in abroad in each working day from 2 PM to 5 PM.
2. To deliver different sizes of packages to Personalization Center (Uttara and Agargaon) for packing ready printed passports as per DIP requirement.
3. Service provider will attach proper label on the front side of the packages.
4. Service provider will provide proper secured vehicle for carrying passports.
5. Service provider will provide proper security for the purpose of carrying and delivery of passports to the Bangladesh Missions.
6. Service provider will bear all expenses for carrying and clearing from respective customs department of respective countries.
7. Service provider will establish two ways online tracking system one is web-based, open for all and other is through customized software for any individual passport on delivery.
8. Service provider will engage sufficient and efficient manpower for service delivery.
9. In case of miss delivery, service provider will collect and deliver to the proper Mission at their own cost without charging any extra service charge.
10. Service provider will give sufficient access in favors of concerned DIP/Mission official to the system deployed for this purpose.
11. Service provider will maintain the collection and delivery system throughout the contract period and hand over the system after the end of the contract.
12. Service provider will response real time basis to DIP/Mission's authorized personnel on any queries related to shipment and delivery of passports.
13. Online tracking system shall be established by service Shipment and delivery status at any passport.
14. 24x7 call center service should be in place in Bangladesh and in abroad at which DIP/Mission official can call free of cost to have information.
15. Service provider shall deliver passport to the concerned Bangladesh Mission within 48-96 hrs. Of pick-up from DIP. If fails service provider have to compensate 10% of the service charge.
16. All relevant expanses including TAX vat and customs duty for the purpose of service delivery shall be borne by the service provider.
17. Service charge will be deducted at certain percentage mentioned in the particular condition of the contract for the delay of delivering services.
18. The service provider shall be solely responsible for missing or damage of passports and confirm that packets shall remain closed and not to be opened till delivery to its destination.
19. The service provider shall provide an insurance appropriate to cover liabilities and damages to passport, while in their possession.
20. Client will visit at least 3 bond houses of the service provider in destination countries.
21. The service provider will submit report monthly on performance under the contract using the criteria stipulated above.

25	Price of tender document (Tk)	10,000 (ten thousand Tk only)			
	Package No.	Identification of Package	Location	Tender security (Tk)	Completion time (months)
	Single Lot Single package	Delivery of printed passports from personalization center, Dhaka & Passport Personalization Complex, Uttara Centre to Bangladesh missions in abroad.	Dhaka	15,00,000 (fifteen lac Tk only)	36 months

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

26	Name of official inviting tender	Director General
27	Designation of official inviting tender	Director General
28	Address of official inviting tender	Data and Personalization Centre, Department of Immigration and Passports Bhaban, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
29	Contact details of official inviting tender	Address: Department of Immigration and Passports, Passport Bhaban, E-7, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207. Telephone: +880-02-55006569. Electronic mail address: dperso@passport.gov.bd
30	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the Tender proceedings	

Haque 08-08-24
Mohammed Jahidul Haque
Assistant Director
For Director
Phone: +880-02-55006569

GD- 141

FDC has now become a grazing field: Uzzal

"The previous government has inflicted wounds on every part of the state, and BFDC (Bangladesh Film Development Corporation) is no exception," remarked veteran actor Uzzal. He has spoken to The Daily Star about various issues, including the censor board, the grant committee, and his expectations from the new government.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Some people say that the FDC of the past no longer exists.
Just as the former ruling party had destroyed the state, they also ruined all the institutions related to the arts and literature of the country by politicising them. BFDC has now become a grazing field. The floors of BFDC have been demolished, even though it was possible to develop the place, while keeping the floors intact. We have countless memories associated with each of these floors. The film industry has been heavily factionalised.

What do you think about the grants received all over these years?
Many undeserving artistes have received grants over the years. There has been politicisation here as well. Why have films been made by various ministries? This has led to a waste of public money.

Despite your illustrious career in the film industry for over five decades, you haven't been awarded a lifetime achievement honour or the Ekushey Padak.
If I wanted, I could have received major awards during the BNP government, but I did not. It is not in my nature. However, the previous government did not do so. There has been lobbying in grants, the censor board, national film awards, Ekushey Padak, and Independence awards. Yet, it was martyred President Ziaur Rahman who introduced the National Film Awards.

Could you elaborate on the establishment of the National Film Awards?
Probably in 1978, during the presidency of Ziaur Rahman, he was scheduled to visit the BFDC. Everyone was a bit surprised since there was no preparation or decoration for his visit. Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, who was then a minister, asked me to arrange a later event. However, we found out that the President was already on his way.

He arrived and on that very day announced the National Film Awards. He also made announcements for the support of distressed artistes and grants. However, the previous government did not remember this. At no point during the National Film Awards was his name mentioned.

> **There is significant inequality in Bangladesh. It is this inequality that led students to protest and achieve success. Just as the youth desire an egalitarian Bangladesh, I also want the same. The students have shown the way forward. Discrimination was the reason Bangladesh was created from Pakistan, at the cost of much bloodshed.**

Besides being a cultural personality, you have direct involvement with politics. What kind of Bangladesh do you want at this moment?
There is significant inequality in Bangladesh. It is this inequality that led students to protest and achieve success. Just as the youth desire an egalitarian Bangladesh, I also want the same. The students have shown the way forward. Discrimination was the reason Bangladesh was created from Pakistan, at the cost of much bloodshed. There was a disparity in political, social, cultural, and economic spheres. I do not want that inequality anymore. I want to see a beautiful Bangladesh free from inequality.

The students aimed to end quotas and give merit its rightful place. Many young people, including Abu Sayed, lost their lives for this cause. In the new Bangladesh, I hope that the talented can fully develop their abilities.

What are your expectations from the new government?
We are fortunate to have a Nobel laureate as the head of the interim government. He has global acceptance. The students brought about a significant revolution by ending autocracy. After that, the new government, referred to as the interim government, has taken charge. They are expected to bring about reforms and then hand over power to a government elected by the people through a fair election. I am optimistic about the new government, and hope they will deliver a free and fair election.

Widespread violence has been occurring throughout the country. What do you have to say about this?
For the last 15 years, there has been politicisation and repression. This has become known internationally, which has led to a strong stance in international politics. The police have not been on duty for some time, and some individuals are taking advantage of the situation, engaging in vandalism, arson, and looting. We do not support such actions. Our party has clearly warned against it. I want peace to prevail regardless of religion or ethnicity. We are all Bangladeshi.

Shah Rukh Khan honoured with Lifetime Award at Locarno

Last Saturday (August 10), Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan captivated Piazza Grande in Locarno, Switzerland, as he received the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award, known as the Pardo alla Carriera or Career Leopard, at the 77th Locarno Film Festival.

On stage, while accepting the award, Khan expressed gratitude for his career and fans, saying, "For 35 years, I've had the chance to be a villain, a champ, a superhero, a zero, a detective, and a resilient lover. I usually don't attend events like this. I'm not great at interacting with people, just at acting a little — not too much."

As per The Hollywood Reporter, Locarno organisers said the Lifetime Achievement Award honours his "outstanding career in Indian cinema, including over 100 films across diverse genres."

Ongoing unrest casts doubt on Farin's upcoming film

In early August, it was revealed that Bangladeshi actress Tasnia Farin is set to co-star with Kolkata's megastar Dev. The actress shared her excitement about this new project titled ***Pratiksha***, to be directed by Atanu Roy Chowdhury.

The future of the Dev-Farin starrer project has become uncertain following the recent change in the Bangladeshi government, brought about by a successful student movement.

Due to the current political climate, visas to India have been temporarily suspended too. This has raised concerns about Farin's ability to travel to India for the film's shooting.

Speaking about her upcoming film with Dev, Farin recently shared, "I've finalised a project titled ***Pratiksha*** where I'll be acting opposite Dev. The shoot is set to begin in November. However, the current situation of the country has led the Indian government to indefinitely suspend visas."

The actress further added, "I have no idea when the visa process will resume. This has made the entire film project uncertain. It feels like luck isn't on my side right now."

Ilias Kanchan commends students for traffic management

For nearly a week, the streets of Dhaka have been operating without the proper traffic police force. In their absence, students have taken it upon themselves to manage traffic regulations across the capital, earning widespread praise from the city's residents. Among those joining the students in this effort is the renowned actor and chairman of the Nirapad Sarak Chai (NISCHA), Ilias Kanchan.

"I've observed that none of the students are sitting idle, even for a moment," said Kanchan. "They have taken to the streets with a commitment to ensuring the safety of the public. Everyone should love and respect the work they are doing."

Kanchan also noted that while traffic chaos is often observed even with traffic police present, the streets have remained orderly under the volunteering students' supervision.

"I've also noticed that drivers are strictly following the students' instructions. They do so out of respect," Kanchan remarked.

Meanwhile, the actor himself took to the roads to control traffic as NISCHA has announced that in this time of national crisis, with traffic police absent, they are supporting the students' efforts. The organisation has also launched simultaneous traffic management initiatives through its branches across the country.

PHOTO: RATUL CHOWDHURY

'AWAAZ UDA-KOTHA KO'
Chobir Hat reopens after a decade

TASRIFA TRISHA

Chobir Hat, a longstanding hub for students and progressives, reopened after a decade-long closure, symbolising much more than a physical space—it embodies a cultural spirit. The inaugural concert of the "newly independent Bangladesh", titled ***Awaaz Uda-Kotha Ko***, has recently taken place at Chobir Hat in Suhrawardy Udyan.

The concert was organised by students and cultural activists on Saturday (August 10).

Closed during the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's regime, Chobir Hat regained life following widespread student protests demanding quota reform, leading to the resignation of Sheikh Hasina on August 5. This cultural revival culminated in the ***Awaaz Uda-Kotha Ko*** concert.

Commencing at 4pm, the open platform welcomed musicians, poets, filmmakers, photographers, artists, and liberal-minded individuals, enriching the event's atmosphere. The programme opened with Tulkalam band's rendition of ***Mone Pore Jay***, honouring martyrs of the anti discrimination student movement. Faria, from Tulkalam and an event organiser, highlighted their commitment to rebuilding Bangladesh. She emphasised the need for societal justice and well-being.

The newly formed band, HO3DiVE, performed Janis Joplin's ***Me and Bobby McG***, celebrating student sacrifices and freedom from the dictatorship's grip.

Jahir Rayhan's band presented ***Pakhi Ure***, echoing student-government tensions, advocating for free speech and rights in the digital age. Rapper Hannan captivated the crowd with his rebellious anthem ***Awaaz Utha***, reflecting on his recent imprisonment for speaking truth to power. Shezan followed with ***Kotha Ko***, another stirring anthem.

Musician and photographer Avishekh Bhattacharjee, invoking ***Inquilab Zindabad***, praised Generation-Z for their resilience during the protests, shifting his perceptions and affirming their vital role in shaping Bangladesh's future.

Popular singer Ahmed Hasan Sunny, along with R Bashar Lisan, Akil Ashraf, and Muiz Mahfuz, also graced the stage, each adding their unique voice to the concert's powerful message.

Syeda Nilima Dola, one of the event organisers of ***Awaaz Uda-Kotha Ko***", emphasised to The Daily Star the importance of preserving Chobir Hat as a cultural beacon, advocating for an inclusive Bangladesh free of discrimination.

Can we overcome the deficit in public health expenditure?

On June 11, 2024, the CSO Forum for Strengthening a Sustainable SRHR Ecosystem in Bangladesh, in collaboration with The Daily Star, organised a roundtable titled "Public Health Expenditure: A Critical Challenge in Ensuring Healthcare in Bangladesh." Here, we present a summary of the discussion.

CSO
The Daily Star
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON
Health Expenditure: A Critical Challenge in ensuring health care in Bangladesh
Date : June 11, 2024.
The Daily Star Centre, Dhaka

Dr. Sayed Rubayet, *Convener, CSO Forum and Country Director, Ipas Bangladesh*

According to Article 15 of our Constitution, the fundamental responsibilities of the state under the provisions of necessities include food, clothing, shelter, education, and medical care. Article 18.1 states, "The state shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties."

The revised budget for FY 2023-24 for health was Tk 29,783 crore, which is substantially lower than the proposed budget. This year's budget is Tk 41,407 crore which means that the per capita healthcare allocation is $20.6 through this budget.

Looking at the last 25 years, in 2000 the government per capita expenditure on health was $8, in 2010 it was $13.7, in 2021 it was $25.9, and this year it has been proposed to be $20.6. We have always seen that the allocation decreases in the revised budget for the health sector. The data for 2021 is used in this entire presentation as most countries' data is available up to 2021. The World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Health Expenditure database was updated on April 15 this year. According to this information, in Bangladesh, the government spent $26 per capita on health expenditures in 2021. In Myanmar, this expenditure was $48, positioning it just after Bangladesh. Following Myanmar are Pakistan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.

The WHO included 192 member countries in the list, identifying the 20 countries with the lowest per-capita government health expenditures. Bangladesh is ranked 19th lowest in per-capita government health expenditure. The Asian country closest to Bangladesh is Afghanistan. The rest of the countries are either in Africa or in war zones.

In the year 2000, the percentage of GDP used for health expenditure was 0.51 percent, then a few fluctuations occurred. It has been observed that since 2017, it has been repeatedly declining, and in 2021 it became 0.4 percent in a linear trend.

I have compared three timeframes with our neighboring countries from 2000, 2010, and 2021 so we can understand the trend. For Bangladesh, the government health expenditure is going down. In Bhutan, it is also going down but is in a better condition in comparison to GDP. In India, it has gradually improved, being 2.5 times higher than Bangladesh. Even though Sri Lanka is battling its own challenges, the country's government health expenditure is 4 times higher than Bangladesh's. No country is near Bangladesh at 0.4 percent. Except for Pakistan and Bangladesh, no country has less than one percent in health expenditure. Currently, Bangladesh holds the lowest position in the region.

If we look at the data from 212 countries regarding the proportion of GDP allocated by the government for health expenditure, Benin has the lowest health expenditure, followed by Bangladesh in the second position, then Haiti, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Togo. This image is not a promising one.

Among developed countries, Cuba tops the list in terms of government healthcare spending as a proportion of its GDP. The top ten also include countries such as France, Austria, USA, Sweden, Germany, and the UK. These countries are spending 9.3 to 12.6 percent of their GDP on their health expenditure.

In our political priorities and discussions, the health sector is the most neglected one, even in the media as well. The out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure is increasing day by day. In 2000, the expense was Tk 6 out of Tk 10, which has increased to Tk 7.4, meaning now the out-of-pocket expenditure stands at 74 percent.

The list of countries with the highest out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure is topped by Armenia at 79 percent. Bangladesh holds the sixth position due to substantial medical costs, an insufficient government health budget, and a near absence of financial protection for health-related events. Among neighboring countries, Myanmar and Afghanistan are in similar positions.

However, Nepal, India, and Sri Lanka have progressed substantially Bhutan and the Maldives are far ahead of us, spending only 19 percent and 14 percent, respectively.

In Bangladesh, catastrophic health expenditure (CHE) is increasing day by day. The government has committed to reducing out-of-pocket expenditure to 32 percent by 2030, in line with universal health coverage and SDG commitments.

Catastrophic health expenditure in Bangladesh has serious consequences. 24.6 percent of the Bangladeshi population spends 10 percent of their total expenditure on health, and this proportion increases to 61.7 percent if at least one household member utilizes an inpatient service.

In Bangladesh, 52 percent of people with at least one household member utilizing a public facility spend more than 10 percent of their total expenditure on health. This proportion increases to 65 percent among those using private facilities. Additionally, 11 percent of people spend 40 percent of their income on health, excluding food costs. If a household has a chronically ill member, this figure rises to 18 percent of the population. For families using inpatient services, 29 percent of the population spends 40 percent of their income on health. For those using public facilities, the proportion is 25 percent, and for private facilities, it rises to 32.6 percent of the population. This is driving people into poverty.

According to the 2016 National Survey on Household Income and Expenditure, 4.5 percent of the population fell below the poverty line due to health expenditures. This affected 8.6 million people. Consequently, the government has to invest significantly more in poverty alleviation programmes to help these people rise above the poverty line.

Due to poor health investment, our health system is becoming unable to meet the needs of the people and provide quality health services, causing many to seek healthcare services abroad. In 2019, 54 percent of medical tourists to India came from other countries, with one-fourth from Bangladesh for medical treatment. In contrast, the Maldives has made constant investments in health. Comparatively, 57.5 percent of Maldivians visiting India did so for medical purposes, which has reduced to 7.3 percent. We must ask ourselves: Can our citizens escape this insufficient investment?

Golam Mortaza, *Editor, The Daily Star Bangla*

In a recent newspaper article, I read about a significant shortage of medical technologists. While we need around 84,000 technologists, we currently have only about 24,000, with over 31 percent of government positions in this field remaining vacant. For the past 15 years, there has been no recruitment. Recently, around 800 people were hired , but due to severe financial constraints, they have not received any salary for the past 1 to 2 years, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Health and healthcare budgets are absent from the election manifestos of our country's political parties. Additionally, the mass media and civil society have failed to take an adequate critical stand against our policymakers seeking medical treatment abroad. As a result, this practice has become accepted as normal, despite its implications for our healthcare system. The national budgetary allocation for our healthcare sector decreases annually. This decline is partly due to our policymakers not taking this issue seriously, as they themselves do not use the health facilities within our country.. Instead of addressing the root causes, we often blame doctors for the shortcomings in our health sector. While we have excellent doctors, we lack proper medical management and infrastructure. It's crucial that we focus on improving these areas. We must continue to discuss these issues to influence our policymakers. The mass media should take a much more critical stance on such matters to drive necessary changes in our healthcare system.

Dr. Mohammad Mainul Islam, *Professor, Population Science, University of Dhaka.*

I would like to discuss the Perspective Plan (2021-2041), where the government aims to invest 2 percent of GDP in the health sector and 4 percent in the education sector by 2041. However, I believe investing now will bring us greater benefits sooner specifically before 2036-2037. Health and education are sectors that need major investment to turn the unskilled population into human capital benefiting the entire country.

Over time we see the money allocated for specific demographics gradually reducing proportionately. We have not even reached 1 percent growth and are currently at 0.7 percent. This is not being addressed according to the rising number of children, adolescents and older population.

Upon reviewing the budget, I found a lack of useful or in-depth data regarding these issues. If we look at public health, we see a demographic shift and an epidemiological transition where chronic diseases are overtaking and infectious diseases increasing personal expenditures. As time passes, the elderly population grows and many die from chronic illnesses. The degrading climate affects the quality of life and health of the population. Health indicators are deteriorating day by day with child mortality rising and maternal death rates not decreasing as expected. Data collection on these issues is also less effective than before.

The budget's ineffectiveness in the health sector stems from several issues: inadequate financial management, a complex procurement system and tendering process, delays in disbursing the last quarter of the budget, lack of leadership, absence of need-based budgeting practices, insufficient training for health workers, lack of educated health staff, and disparate procurement processes for capital expenditure.

Systematic improvement in the budget allocation, procurement and actualisation of government projects is crucial. The investment ratio in health and education should increase sooner to achieve faster benefits. We need to enhance managerial efficiency, delegate financial power, and reduce the complexity of the procurement process. Health should be viewed as human capital.

Kishwar Imdad, *Country Director, Marie Stopes Bangladesh*

I worked at a renowned private hospital for some time, and there I witnessed the staggering extent of out-of-pocket expenditure and the lengths to which people will go, regardless of their socioeconomic background. To lessen the suffering of these people and ensure equitable healthcare for everyone, there was supposed to be a pilot project focused on health insurance, which the health secretary also mentioned. However, it ultimately did not come to fruition. Countries like Canada have implemented healthcare programmes that deduct a certain portion from the paychecks of every job holder, which then funds healthcare for them and the masses. Taxpayers also contribute a portion of their taxes allocated specifically to the healthcare system. This model could be adapted in Bangladesh as well.

I firmly believe that a broader approach to tackling these challenges might not be as effective as focusing on specific facets of the problem one at a time and diligently addressing them.

I have worked at Marie Stopes, and I have firsthand experience with issues regarding reproductive rights and the benefits received by women. We have observed that the under utilisation of funds can occur due to protracted and complex procurement and tendering processes. We collected relevant data, submitted comprehensive reports, and made recommendations on how to tackle these situations. However, the lengthy evaluation process hindered the effectiveness of these initiatives. There are many factors to consider, but these two should be our foremost priority in ensuring a brighter future for the population: transforming the populace into human capital, and providing quality healthcare for all.

Dr. Ahmed Ehsanur Rahman, *Scientist, icddr,b*

Major portion of the out of pocket expenditure is spent for drugs; this is extremely difficult for the poor people particularly for chronic diseases like diabetes. There are instances where poor people ration medicine instead of taking regularly for chronic illness. While public hospitals handle deliveries and operations, private hospitals significantly outnumber them in service provision; 2.5-3 times more deliveries, 4 times antenatal care, and 12 times more operations take place in private hospitals in contrast to public facilities. The government faces challenges in regulating and supervising the vast number of private facilities. There is an urgent need to increase budget allocation not only for public healthcare facilities but also to collaborate effectively with private providers to ensure accessible and quality healthcare for all. Ministers, political leaders, and senior government officials should utilize the country's public health facilities for their own healthcare needs. This may help improve the quality of services at these facilities.

Ikhtiar Uddin Khandakar, *Director, Health and Nutrition, CARE Bangladesh*

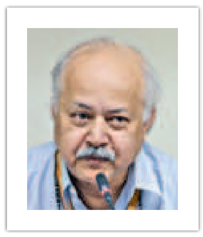
A major underlying problem is a lack of trust in the healthcare system, particularly in public healthcare. New positions need to be created and existing vacancies need to be filled to ensure adequate human resources. Investment in technology is paramount.

One such area is improving service quality. Another pressing shift is the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases, each imposing significant financial burdens on patients and their families due to required operations and medications. It is essential to identify specific areas where investment can yield optimal results. Primary healthcare must be a focal point, emphasizing family planning, nutrition, WASH, and other related services, which require systemic investment to meet local healthcare needs and reduce out-of-pocket expenses.

Developing accountability mechanisms through public representatives, in parallel with a centralized system, will enhance service quality.

Shishir Moral, *Journalist, Prothom Alo*

A civil society movement in favour of reducing the prices of medicines is crucial to reducing out-of-pocket expenditure in the healthcare sector. We also need to strengthen Essential Drugs Company Limited (EDCL) because if the government starts producing essential drugs, the prices are bound to go down, ultimately reducing out-of-pocket expenditure. Simultaneously, corrupt officials who are still dealing with the healthcare sector need to be removed from their posts.



Dr Shams El Arifeen, *Senior Director and Senior Scientist, icddr,b*

I don't think having our policymakers treated here at home will solve the issues in our healthcare system. In our country, the "VIP culture" takes precedence over everything, so those in important positions will be prioritised over the common people. Ultimately, they will never get to realise the struggles these people have to face while trying to access healthcare.

We need to revolutionise and reform our healthcare system from within. Unfortunately, we don't see healthcare being discussed in political discourses. Bureaucracy will never get the system to change, that is a job for political leaders.

Samia Afrin, *Project Director, Naripokkho*

We need to strengthen our monitoring mechanisms and ensure accountability to make our healthcare system work. Hospital management committees usually have a wide array of representation of public representatives at all levels. However, they do not prioritize the issue of healthcare. The common people need to be involved to hold our institutions accountable.

In every five-year plan, there is usually a huge chapter on healthcare the timely and effective utilization of the allocations are in need to be ensured with close monitoring and the expenditure should be reviewed by civil society instead of increasing the budgetary allocation in the sector, so that the learnings can be incorporated into the next plans.

Kaosar Afsana, *Professor, James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University*

We need a proper review of public expenditures right after the budget proposals every year. Our healthcare system is not only about the doctors. We need to work as a team, including other healthcare workers as well.

Our government should invest more in science policy interfacing so we can identify the gaps in our system, research how we can address the gap and compare our situation with other sectors. We can engage in dialogue with members of parliament to discuss health issues and involve them. The essential drug policy is an important agenda that needs more focus to reduce out-of-pocket expenses.

SM Shaikat, *Executive Director, SERAC Bangladesh*

We must realise the difference between need and right. Since healthcare is not recognised as a fundamental right in our Constitution, we cannot ask for legal help if we are denied medical treatment. The state can only try to make it more accessible for us, but it does not have a liability to ensure access to healthcare.

Our politicians also need some more literacy when it comes to health issues. They need to focus on policies that aim towards making people healthier rather than building infrastructures.

Sharif Mostafa Helal, *Executive Director, BWHC*

I agree that health service would improve if political leaders , MOH officials and other VIPs started availing the services offered to the common people from the public health facilities. Unfortunately, that is not how things work in our country. Recently I saw the news that a VIP went to a government eye hospital to seek treatment. While we were busy applauding the move, we conveniently forgot to address how common people seeking treatment at that facility might have been deprived of necessary medical assistance at the time the VIP was there. The reality is that the institutions active at the grassroots levels don't have adequate human resources to treat every patient.

Prof. Dr Sameena Chowdhury, *Past-President,OGSB*

Hospitals must provide appropriate and necessary facilities and create an enabling environment to encourage women to seek services. The lack of quality in hospital services often discourages recipients from seeking care. Improving service quality requires not only equipment and medicines but also changes in the overall system and in the behavior and practices of service providers.

Service providers should treat recipients with due respect and dignity, promptly providing necessary treatment. Recipients must be informed of all essential information in a timely manner, enabling them to make informed decisions and express their preferences regarding their treatment. Government initiatives are necessary to ensure 'women-friendly' services and to encourage recipients to seek care from public health centers, thereby reducing out-of-pocket expenses. Additionally, the government should allocate the necessary budget to support these initiatives.

Dr Esrat Jahan, *Regional Inclusive Health Specialist - South Asia, Handicap International*

In Bangladesh, chronic illness accounts for 51 percent of the current mortality rate, and 42 percent of persons with disabilities suffer from chronic illness. Consequently, out-of-pocket expenditure is higher for persons with disabilities than for other groups, with most living below the poverty line and facing unmet healthcare needs three times greater than the general population. Chronic illness is closely linked to life expectancy, with persons with disabilities having a life expectancy 10-20 years shorter than others. They often cannot access health centres, private health facilities are unaffordable, and government facilities are inaccessible. Service providers are not trained to meet their needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- » **Increase Budgetary Allocation:** The budgetary allocation by the government for the healthcare sector needs to be increased to meet the growing demands and ensure adequate resources.
- » **Ensure Efficient Utilization:** Proper and timely utilization of budgetary allocations for healthcare must be ensured to maximize impact and efficiency. The management capacity for budgeting, implementing health programs, ensuring accountability and delegating authority to local level is key for effective utilization of resources.
- » **Reduce Out-of-Pocket Expenditure:** Efforts should be made to lower out-of-pocket health expenditures for individuals, making healthcare more affordable. Prices of essential drugs need to be reduced; EDCL needs to be strengthened to reduce.
- » **Universal Health Insurance:** The government should provide universal health insurance coverage to ensure that all citizens have access to essential health services.
- » **Improve Data Management:** Proper management and accessibility of health data from both public and private sectors should be ensured for better decision-making and policy formulation.
- » **Address Climate Change:** Climate change issues should be integrated into the upcoming health budget to address the health impacts of environmental changes.
- » **Gender-Sensitive Budgeting:** Health budgeting needs to address issues from a gendered perspective, ensuring equitable access and addressing specific health needs of all genders.
- » **Support for Persons with Disabilities:** The health budget should adequately address the needs of persons with disabilities, ensuring they have access to necessary health services and support.
- » Civil society and mass media must push for a review of development plans and budgetary allocations for the healthcare sector.

Our proposed health budget lacks information on facilities for persons with disabilities. Moreover, there is no health insurance policy for them, and pregnant women with disabilities do not receive their allowances. We need to ensure a multidisciplinary approach to create an inclusive health budget.

Farhana Jesmine Hasan, *Senior Technical Advisor, SGBV, Ipas Bangladesh*

Gender budgeing is addressed at the policy level in our country's health budget,but the current infrastructure and system are not gender friendly. The health budget is divided into four categories: empowerment, participation, access, and public service, but the allocation is heavily skewed towards public service. We need to enhance the monitoring system from a gender perspective to ensure better public service for women.

Dr. Imran Ahmed Chowdhury, *Programme Head, BRAC*

Looking at the last 20 years, significant achievements have been made in the health sector. However, in recent years, major health indicators have stagnated. Investment in the health sector has also been stagnant for the past 10-15 years. To improve the health sector and align with both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our national plan, the government must increase efficiency in resource utilization and boost budgetary contributions to healthcare Without these changes, the maternal mortality rate (MMR) won't drop from 194 to 70 by 2030, and out-of-pocket costs won't fall to 30%.

The private sector plays a crucial role in the health sector. It's time they are brought under government regulations and laws. This will help to ensure quality control, define their roles, and guide their operations. It can also help partially control costs , and reducing out-of-pocket expenditures. The reluctance to collaborate between the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) and the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) must be overcome. Their budget allocation and utilization have been decreasing, as seen in past budget and health expenditure analyses. To address this issue, alongside the government's initiatives, the government should also play a significant role in the planning phase and in utilizing additional funding in the health sector for strengthening the health system through bilateral agreements within the development sector. The right skill mix must be considered. It's not just about increasing the number of nurses or doctors; it needs to be ensured that we have the pipeline to meet our targets. Investment in this area is crucial. Nationally, there are approximately 12-12.4 health related professionals per 10-12,000 people. This number decreases in rural areas and even more in hard-to-reach areas like Char and Haor. We need to move beyond just talking about "leaving no one behind" without a comprehensive plan for the well-being of these communities. This demand should not remain at the planning level; there are opportunities to raise this demand from the community itself. Lastly, with 41 districts now climate-vulnerable, compared to 19 coastal areas five years ago, there is a significant opportunity to address climate and health issues together, as health issues in these vulnerable areas will become more severe in the coming days.

Ayesha Akhter, *Legal Specialist, Gender Justice & Women Empowerment Cluster, Blast*

BLAST in a public interest litigation, highlighted a statistical report indicating that 95 percent of doctors at upazila-level Health Complexes do not stay at their workstations and instead reside in cities, primarily Dhaka.

Therefore, increasing the number of doctors and facilities is no enough, raher strong monitoring and accountability is required. Article 18.1 of Bangladesh Constitution focuses on public health necessitates giving importance to various components, paricularly food and nutrition being critical among them. However, the general trend among the lower middle class in our country is to allocate a larger portion of their budget to medical expenses, often at the expense of their food and nutritional budget. As both medical and food costs continue to rise, this approach is unsustainable unless we balance these two essential areas.

Mayisha Kabir, *Executive Board Member, RTMI*

Addressing both communicable and non-communicable diseases simultaneously presents a significant challenge. Many medical students from neighbouring countries study here and contribute to their own countries, indicating that our problem is not rooted in education. Solutions from abroad are unlikely to apply to our unique health sector challenges; instead, we need to develop our own strategies to address these issues.

Santa Islam, *Project Officer, Ain O Salish Kendra*

The 5 percent budget allocation for health has remained unchanged for over a decade, and its utilisation is not being effectively managed. Civil society can play a crucial role in properly monitoring the health budget, particularly in hard-to-reach areas and at the upazila level. We need to engage in evidence-based advocacy at the policy level, which requires accurate and comprehensive data.

The private health sector has grown significantly, but the lack of data from this sector creates a persistent gap in health sector discussions. After Covid-19, we anticipated emergency funds and preparations to handle future health crises, but a critical review of our health budget is needed to see if it meets these expectations.

Dr Wahida Siraj, *Director -Heath, Ipas Bangladesh*

Our health system's workforce structure is not proportionate to the demand for health care. We need to evaluate whether our system is prepared to meet this demand. While our infrastructure, from the central to the community level, is excellent compared to neighboring countries, our workforce and support team are not sufficient in number and simultaneously lacks the necessary skills to effectively utilize resources and carry out their functions.

Currently numerous programmes being implemented in the upazila and higher-level health facilities. . However, the management workforce has remained the same at the Upazila and district level since the British era. It is difficult to manage and supervise with this limited workforce and more personnel should be allocated for effective management. Otherwise unrealistic expectations can hinder progress.

I pose this question to the media and civil society and other stakeholders who have grave responsibilities: Instead of solely scrutinising doctors for healthcare quality, how conducive are the infrastructures and health management systems in place for them to succeed in providing quality services at minimum cost?

Dr Makduma Nargis, *Vice-President, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad*

Despite many intended healthcare reform projects, bureaucratic obstacles and inefficiencies persist, hindering our system's efficacy. If these fundamental issues are not addressed, our healthcare delivery will never reach its full potential.

During my tenure as joint secretary at the health ministry, I have noticed the continued existence of bifurcated service delivery and family planning systems in Bangladesh. This approach contributes to duplication and inefficiencies. Given our constrained health sector budget, maximising resource utilisation is paramount. This requires cohesive collaboration among all healthcare professionals, from doctors to primary caregivers, within a unified framework.

Secondly, decentralisation is often discussed but centralised decision-making remains dominant. This causes delays and gaps in addressing local issues promptly, impacting service delivery. Another crucial issue is the absence of policymakers in our current discourse. While grassroots and mainstream sectors engage in vital conversations, the absence of policymakers undermines the effective implementation of proposed solutions.

I have encountered situations where evidence-based studies compiled were overlooked by policymakers who wield the authority to act. Conversely, those implementing policies lack decision-making authority despite having immense knowledge of the issue derived from experience. This disconnect perpetuates unresolved issues.

Budget shortages are a reality, yet over-budgeting on certain programmes is also prevalent. During my tenure at a community clinic, significant funds remained unspent despite project completion, highlighting inefficiencies in budget utilisation. Pragmatic budgeting could mitigate such discrepancies and optimise resource allocation effectively.

As hypertension and diabetes rates surge in our country, timely provision of medicines in community clinics is crucial. However, interruptions in training due to conflicting government priorities have hindered progress. Effective integration of supervision, monitoring, and training across all levels is essential for improving service delivery and health outcomes.

In conclusion, addressing workforce limitations and enhancing training programmes are critical steps. Realistically, achieving comprehensive healthcare reform requires overcoming systemic challenges and aligning resources efficiently. Given the current state of our workforce and the practical constraints of our training programmes, I must realistically say that achieving this goal is not feasible at the moment.

Dr Farhana Dewan, *Co-Convenor, CSO Forum and President, OGSB*

Today, we discussed a critical issue: health expenditure. Drawing from my extensive experience across various medical colleges during my government service, I reflect on who typically relies on public hospitals—the most vulnerable population who have no other options. The dedicated service provided by doctors in these institutions often goes unnoticed on a broader scale.

To address medication costs, it is crucial not only to reduce prices but also to ensure their widespread availability. For instance, coordinating a comprehensive care plan for pregnant women over nine months could optimise medication usage, aligning specific needs with each trimester. Regarding community clinics, while impressive infrastructure exists at various levels, coverage gaps remain. Although doctors are required to serve in rural areas for two years post-MBBS, there should be provisions for promotion to encourage sustained commitment to these underserved regions.

To enhance service quality, we must focus on robust planning and training for healthcare providers. While many essential medications are now accessible, gaps persist in availability, for instance, leading to substitutes like Magsulf, a very simple medication. Addressing out-of-pocket expenses for patients, especially for essential surgeries, is crucial and it becomes so difficult for ordinary people to pay such hefty amounts.

It is important to note that efforts to minimise operation costs are essential, ensuring affordability without compromising quality. By optimising budget allocations and refining service delivery strategies, we can bridge these gaps in our healthcare system effectively.

Syed Abdul Hamid, *Professor, Department of Health Economics, University of Dhaka*

For budget allocation, we are supposed to receive 12-15 percent, but instead, we only get 5.2 percent. This is nearly 10 percent less than what is needed. Why is it so low? Why can we not spend the allocated amount effectively?

The finance ministry sets a budget ceiling for each ministry, typically a 5-10 percent increase from the previous year. The health minister cannot exceed this ceiling unless an emergency, such as Covid-19, arises. This macro-level budgeting process means that the actual needs of patients and doctors are not fully reflected or met. Despite the Medium-Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF) process, where projects are supposed to be planned and budgeted for over three years, this ideal scenario often does not match reality.

Another issue is that budget requests must be tied to specific items. In the health sector, we have a high demand for human resources, including doctors, nurses, and technologists, down to the supporting staff. Timely recruitment in the health ministry is essential, yet it involves multiple layers of approval from DG Health, public administration, and finance. This bureaucratic process often delays recruitment and hampers budget allocation.

Critical sectors such as maternal care, neuroscience, and cancer care are severely understaffed. For instance, we have around 200-250 oncologists when we need approximately 1,500. By creating positions and recruiting more professionals in these vital areas, we can justify higher budget allocations. Additionally, many clinical centres need upgrades, we lack dedicated medical stores, and facilities are often inadequate. Addressing these deficiencies requires a bottom-up approach and comprehensive improvement plans.

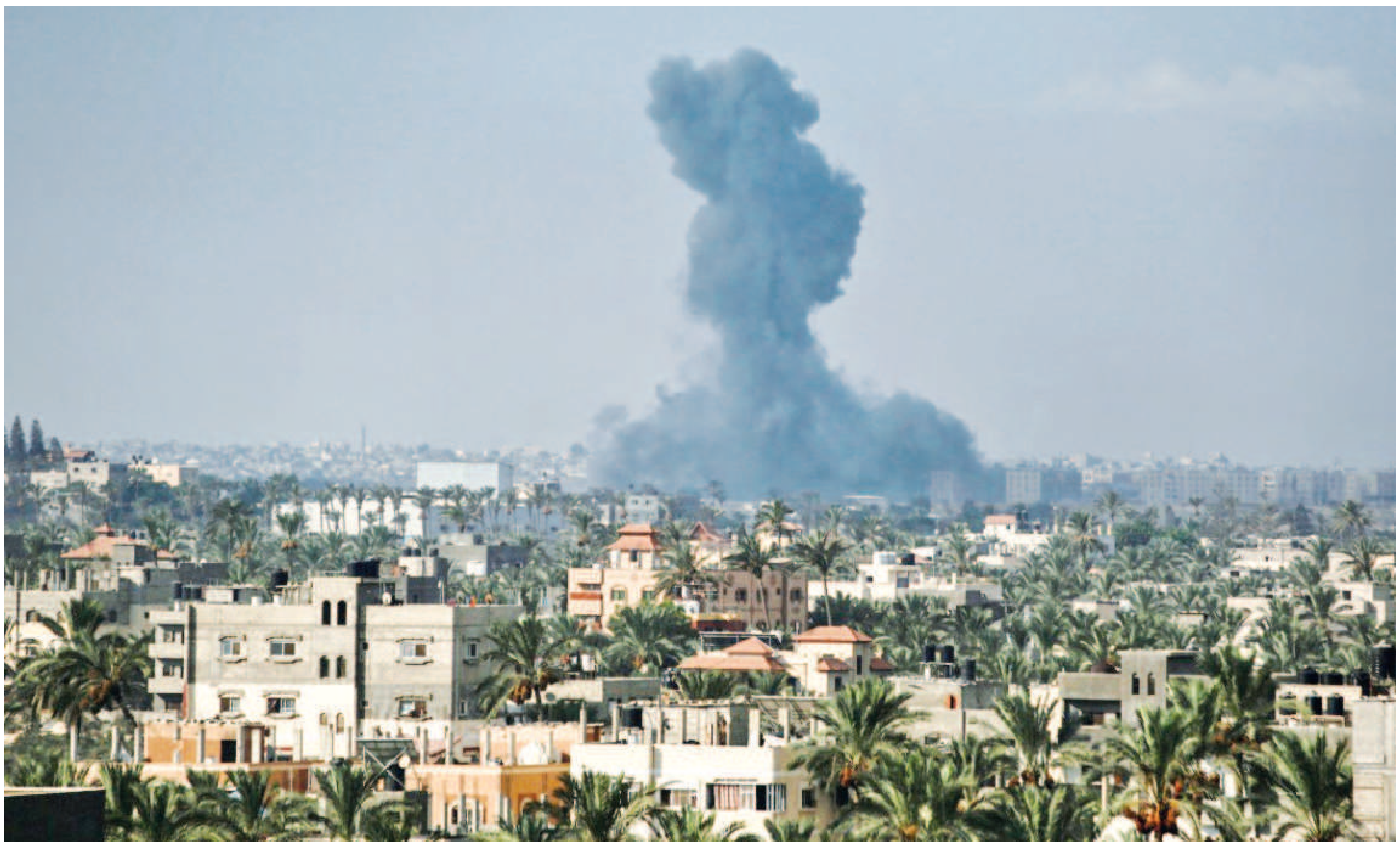
Why can we not spend the budget effectively? There are three main reasons. First, factors like finance, procurement, and audit processes are often beyond the Health Ministry's control. Second, internal issues within the health ministry itself contribute to inefficiencies. Third, poor communication between facilities and DG Health exacerbates these problems.

A significant issue is the lack of training for facility managers and administrators. We have repeatedly advocated for a dedicated training programme for these roles, focusing on procurement, accounting, and finance from day one in the BCS. Proper training would bridge knowledge gaps and improve efficiency.

Our current procurement system is flawed, designed more for engineering and construction than health. Addressing these malpractices and managing procurements effectively is crucial for improvement in the health sector. Only by tackling these fundamental issues can we hope to see substantial progress.

Tanjim Ferdous, *In-Charge, NGOs & Foreign Missions, Business Development Team, The Daily Star*

Today's discussion will shed light on the budget allocation for the health sector of this fiscal year, which is Tk 41,407 crore out of a total budget of Tk 7,97,000 crore. We will try to identify the areas within the health sector where this allocation is being directed, assess the efficient usage of the allotment, and determine what can be done to make the usage more efficient. Additionally, we will discuss how the current scenario supports the effectiveness of the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) ecosystem.



This picture taken from Deir el-Balah shows smoke billowing into the sky during an Israeli bombardment on the Hamad residential district and its surroundings in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

GOVT FORMATION IN IRAN

Pragmatist picked as top diplomat

REUTERS, *Dubai*

Iran's new president yesterday presented his cabinet to parliament for a vote of confidence, state media reported, proposing seasoned pragmatic diplomat Abbas Araqchi as foreign minister at a time of heightened regional tensions.

President Masoud Pezeshkian is shaping his cabinet at a time of an increased risk of escalation of the conflict in Gaza into a broader regional war, after the recent killings of Palestinian Islamist group Hamas' leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran and of Hezbollah military commander Fuad Shukr in Beirut drew threats of retaliation against Israel.

Following the death of hardline President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash in May, Pezeshkian won a snap election last month by promising to improve ties with the world, promoting a pragmatic foreign policy, and to ease social restrictions at home.

Pezeshkian's proposed cabinet lineup requires lawmakers' approval and parliament speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that parliamentary commissions will start reviewing his candidates today.

Araqchi, 61, who was Iran's ambassador to several countries, including Japan, played a key role in negotiating Tehran's 2015 nuclear agreement with six world powers, which then-US President Donald Trump exited in 2018 and re-imposed sanctions on Iran.

Araqchi later led Iran's negotiators during multilateral efforts - ultimately unsuccessful - to revive the pact via indirect diplomacy with Washington before he was replaced by hardline Ali Bagheri Kani in 2021.

The president's powers are limited in the Islamic Republic by those of the Supreme Leader, who is commander-in-chief of the armed forces, appoints the head of the judiciary and has the last say on major policies.

Abbas to visit Russia today

AFP, *Moscow*

Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas will visit Moscow next week to discuss the Gaza war with Russian President Vladimir Putin, a Palestinian envoy said.

Russia's state-run TASS news agency cited the Palestinian ambassador in Moscow as saying Abbas will arrive on Monday and meet Putin tomorrow.

Abbas heads the Fatah Palestinian movement.

Ambassador Abdel Hafiz Nofal said the two leaders would discuss events in Gaza since the October 7 attacks on Israel. "They will talk about Russia's role, what can be done."

He added: "We have a very difficult situation, and Russia is a country that is close to us. We need to consult each other."

Moscow for years tried to balance relations with all major players in the Middle East -- including Israel and the Palestinians.

But since the Israel-Hamas war and Russia's own offensive on Ukraine, Putin has moved closer to Israel's foes, Hamas and Iran.

'Children torn apart'

Israel strike rains hell on Gaza dawn prayers

AFP, *Gaza City*

White body bags littered the floor and mourning filled the air after a school housing displaced Palestinians was struck with Israeli missiles Saturday -- a horrific and increasingly common sight in the Gaza war.

Dawn prayers were shattered by the early morning triple air strike from Israeli warplanes, which gutted Al-Tabieen religious school and mosque in Gaza City.

In the hellish aftermath, body parts were strewn around the rubble and charred, bloodied bodies slumped in the wreckage of the two-storey complex.

Grim-faced volunteers piled corpses in blood-stained blankets into an ambulance, as seriously wounded men lay groaning on the ground.

Gaza's civil defence agency said at least 93 people were killed, 17 of them women and children, making it one of the war's deadliest strikes.

Israel's military disputed the death toll, saying the school was targeted with "precision munitions" because it "served as an active Hamas and Islamic Jihad military facility".

Such incidents have become a pattern in recent weeks. According to an AFP tally, at least 14 schools sheltering Gaza's displaced have been hit since July 6, killing more than 280 people.

"Peaceful people -- women, children, and youths -- were performing the Fajr prayer as usual when suddenly a missile hit them," said Abu Wassim, who lives nearby and came to survey the scene.

"They were reduced to remains. Children were torn apart, and women were burned. What can we say or do? What is in our power?"

As the sun climbed and mourners gathered, one man stroked the face of a dead child shrouded in a plastic body bag.

"They dropped a missile on them while they were just praying. Fear God, people! Fear God, Arabs!" a woman wailed over the body.

Another man looked lost as he held a small corpse wrapped in a blanket. Nearby, six body bags lay on the ground, three of them children. Tattered Qurans were piled on a window ledge.

"We woke up before dawn to the sound of a strike," said Sakr, a resident from the neighbourhood who gave just one name.

"We headed to the site and found body remains of civilians who were peacefully performing prayers. We found bodies of children scattered in the street."

Another man said: "You can't even recognise the bodies, there were scattered remains.

"The ones who were struck are displaced people taking shelter in a school. What's their fault? What have they done wrong?"

Mohammad Al-Mughayyir, director of the supply and equipment department of Gaza's civil defence service, told AFP that six schools in Gaza City had been targeted in the past week alone.

Israeli military spokesperson Lieutenant-Colonel Nadav Shoshani said that about 20 Hamas and Islamic militants were operating from the Al-Tabieen complex.

Later on Saturday, Gaza civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told journalists that the strike "directly targeted" two floors of the school.

The strike hit "the upper floor housing women and children and the ground floor that was used for prayers by the displaced people," he said.

Since October 7, Israel's military campaign in Gaza has killed at least 39,790 people, according to the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza, which does not give details of civilian and militant deaths.

China backs Iran's right to defend its 'dignity'

REUTERS, *Beijing*

China supports Iran in defending its "sovereignty, security and national dignity", Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi told Iran's acting foreign minister in a phone call yesterday, according to a statement by China's foreign ministry.

In the phone call, Wang repeated Beijing's denunciation of the assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on July 31, saying the strike had violated Iran's sovereignty and threatened regional stability.

Iran and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas have accused Israel of carrying out strike that killed Haniyeh.

Israel has not claimed or denied responsibility for the killing, which has fueled concern that the war between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip was turning into a wider Middle East war.

Iran has vowed to "harshly punish" Israel over the assassination.

Tensions between Iran and the West have also increased over Tehran's fast-advancing nuclear programme.

BRAZIL PLANE CRASH

All 62 victims body recovered

REUTERS, *Vinhedo*

Brazilian emergency crews has recovered the remains of the 62 victims aboard an airliner that plunged to the ground in the town of Vinhedo, near Sao Paulo the day before, killing all on board.

The bodies of most of the victims - 34 males and 28 females - had already been moved to Sao Paulo's police morgue for identification. The bodies of the pilot and co-pilot were identified earlier in the day, said Dario Pacheco, mayor of Vinhedo.

Four people with dual citizenship were among the victims, three Venezuelans and one Portuguese woman, said regional carrier Voepass, which operated the aircraft.

On Friday Voepass said the plane was carrying 57 passengers and four crew, but on Saturday the firm confirmed another unaccounted-for passenger had been on the flight, putting the number of casualties at 62.

The plane's so-called "black box" containing voice recordings and flight data was undergoing analysis.

The plane, an ATR-72 turboprop, was bound for Sao Paulo from Cascavel, in the state of Parana, and crashed around 1:30 p.m. (1630 GMT) in Vinhedo, some 80 km (50 miles) northwest of Sao Paulo. Despite coming down in a residential area, no one on the ground was hurt.

How to spot online fake news?

England mulling review of national curriculum in primary and secondary schools

AFP, *London*

The UK government said on Sunday schools in England could teach children how to spot extremist and online content spreading "putrid conspiracy theories", under planned changes to the national curriculum.

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson said she was launching a review of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools to introduce critical thinking across multiple subjects.

HOPE
NOT
HATE

It follows recent disorder in more than a dozen English towns and cities following the Southport knife attack, which officials say were fuelled by misinformation online and far-right agitators.

The stabbing spree, allegedly carried out by British-born Axel Rudakubana, who was aged 17 at the time, left three children dead. Police have not disclosed a suspected motive for the attack but said it is not being treated as terrorism.

Online speculation in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy falsely claimed Rudakubana was a Muslim immigrant.

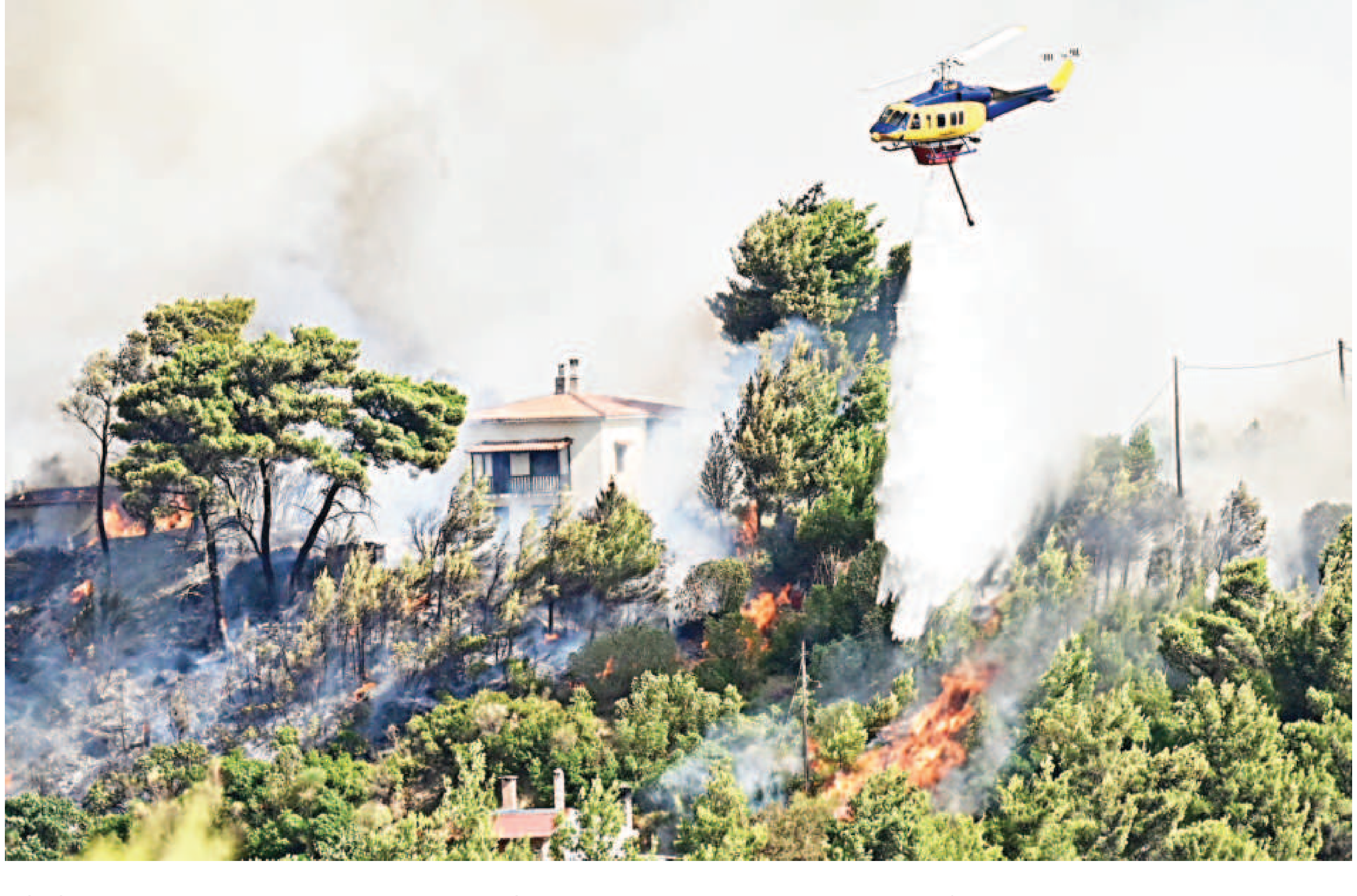
"It's more important than ever that we give young people the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge what they see online," Phillipson told the Sunday Telegraph newspaper.

"That's why our curriculum review will develop plans to embed critical skills in lessons to arm our children against the disinformation, fake news and putrid conspiracy theories awash on social media."

Under the envisaged changes, students would analyse newspaper articles in English lessons to help spot fabricated clickbait, while computer classes would include analysing statistics in context.

However, the review is not set to report its findings and recommendations until next year, meaning reforms would not come into force until the school year starting in September, 2025, according to the Telegraph.

The moves are set to be combined with tougher regulation of social media sites and online content, with Prime Minister Keir Starmer suggesting imminent action on Friday.



A firefighting helicopter makes a water drop as a wildfire burns in Varnava, near the capital Athens, Greece, yesterday. Residents in two areas near Athens were ordered to evacuate yesterday as dozens of firefighters battled to contain blazes fuelled by strong winds and hot temperatures.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Five pro-Iran fighters killed in Syria strike

AFP, *Beirut*

Five Iran-backed fighters were killed yesterday in a drone strike in Syria's east, near the Iraqi border, a war monitor said, adding it was not clear yet who was behind the attack.

"Five pro-Iranian fighters were killed and others were injured, some severely... after an unknown drone targeted the military vehicle they were in... near the Syrian-Iraqi border," said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The strike occurred in Syria's eastern Deir Ezzor province, where Iran wields significant influence and which is regularly targeted by Israel and the United States, according to the Britain-based monitor with a network of sources inside Syria.

In June, three pro-Iran fighters, including at least two Iraqis, were killed in an overnight air strike in eastern Syria near the Iraqi border, the Observatory had reported at the time.

WHEN WE VOTE
WE WIN
WE VOTE
WIN
HARRIS
WALZ
KAMALA

Supporters of US Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris cheer as she speaks during a campaign rally at an event in Las Vegas, Nevada, Saturday. Kamala Harris leads his Republican rival Donald Trump in three battleground states - Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan - by four points, according to polls by the New York Times and Siena College. PHOTO: AFP

MAJOR UKRAINIAN INCURSION

Thousands of troops 'trying to destabilise' Russia'

Moscow says hit Ukraine units 30km into Russian territory

AGENCIES

Russia yesterday acknowledged Ukrainian forces had pierced deep into the Kursk border region in an offensive that a top official in Ukraine said was aimed to "destabilise" Russia and "stretch" its armed forces.

Kyiv has deployed thousands of troops to the surprise operation, a Ukrainian security official told AFP, seizing the battlefield initiative after months of slow Russian advances across the east.

"We are on the offensive. The aim is to stretch the positions of the enemy, to inflict maximum losses and to destabilise the situation in Russia as they are unable to protect their own border," the security official said on condition of anonymity.

The shock assault, now in its sixth day, appeared to catch the Kremlin off guard, with Moscow's army rushing in reserve troops, tanks, aviation, artillery and drones in a bid to quash the incursion.

But it's army yesterday appeared to concede that Ukraine had been able to penetrate its territory by up to 30 kilometres (20 miles) in places.

In a daily briefing on the situation in the western Kursk region, the defence ministry said it had "foiled attempts" by Ukraine's forces to "break through deep into Russian territory" using armoured vehicles.

But it said some of those forces were located near the villages of Tolpino and Obshchy Kolodez, which are around 25 km and 30 km from the Russia-Ukraine border.

The Ukrainian official also said Russia's claims that Kyiv had deployed 1,000 troops were a serious underestimation.

"It is a lot more... Thousands," they said.

After days of official silence, President Volodymyr Zelensky acknowledged the offensive for the first time in his nightly address on Saturday, saying that Kyiv was "pushing the war into the aggressor's territory".

Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 and has waged an unrelenting campaign, occupying swathes of the east and south and subjecting Ukrainian cities to daily missile and drone attacks.

After re-capturing large areas in 2022, Kyiv has largely been on the back foot, increasingly struggling with manpower and arms supplies.

The assault on Russia's western Kursk region has been the largest and most successful cross-border offensive by Kyiv so far -- and the most significant attack by a foreign army on Russian territory since the Second World War.

Russia has used air power, artillery fire and drones in a bid to quash the advance.

It said Saturday that more than 76,000 civilians had been evacuated from border areas, with more leaving on Sunday.

Russia's rail operator has put on emergency trains from Kursk to Moscow, around 450 kilometres away, for those looking to flee.

An overnight Ukrainian missile strike on a residential building in Kursk city, around 80 kilometres from the fighting wounded 15, Russian officials said.

Ukraine's Sumy region has also come under retaliatory fire, and authorities there plan to evacuate some 20,000 people from the border zone.

SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE

Actions of China air force 'reckless'

Says Philippines

REUTERS, *Manila*

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. yesterday condemned Chinese air force actions in waters of the South China Sea claimed by both countries, calling the actions "unjustified, illegal and reckless".

Manila and Beijing accused each other on Saturday of disrupting their militaries' operations around the Scarborough Shoal in the first incident since Marcos took office in 2022 in which the Philippines has complained of dangerous actions by Chinese aircraft, as opposed to navy or coast guard vessels.

The Philippine military on Saturday condemned "dangerous and provocative actions" when two Chinese aircraft dropped flares in the path of a Philippine aircraft during a routine patrol around the shoal on Thursday.

The Chinese military's Southern Theatre Command countered that the Philippines had disrupted its training, accusing Manila of "illegally intruding" into its airspace.

On Sunday, Marcos urged China to act responsibly both in the seas and in the skies.

The Scarborough Shoal is one of Asia's most contested maritime features and a flashpoint for flare-ups over sovereignty and fishing rights.

End the UK riots

Parents of murdered girl urge

REUTERS, *Southport*

The parents of one of three girls murdered at a Taylor Swift-themed event in northern England last month called for an end to the nationwide rioting that followed their deaths at an emotional funeral for their young daughter.

Alice da Silva Aguiar, 9, and two other girls died and eight were injured after being stabbed in an attack at the event at the seaside town of Southport two weeks ago.

Days of riots followed in Southport and in towns and cities across the United Kingdom, triggered by false online posts wrongly identifying the suspected killer as an Islamist migrant. A teenager, born in Britain, has since been charged and police say the incident is not being treated as terrorism.

Resignation statement

FROM PAGE 16

changed', they will have to be changed," he said.

Yunus has said he wants elections "within a few months", but Joy warned of risks if they were delayed.

"It's in their best interest to hold elections... to have a return to a legitimate government that has the legitimacy of the people and true authority," he said.

"Otherwise, it's just going to devolve into chaos."

Hasina swept the January elections but only after a poll denounced as neither free nor fair and boycotted by genuine rivals after a crackdown during which thousands of opposition party members were arrested.

Members of Hasina's millions-strong Awami League have gone into hiding since she fled. There have been reprisal attacks against them and party offices have been torched.

But Joy said the party was critical to the political future of the South Asian nation of some 170 million people.

"We have tens of millions of followers; they're not going anywhere," he said.

"You're not going to be able to establish democracy in Bangladesh without the Awami League. It will never be accepted by half the people of the country at least."

"It's going to be between the BNP and the Awami League," Joy said. "We need to work together."

He sought to divert blame for his mother's ouster onto others in government.

"Were mistakes made? Of course," he said. "They were made by people at the bottom, or in the chain of command... Blaming my mother for it is unfortunate."

While accepting that police officers who fired on protesters had gone too far, he argued that there was violence on both sides.

"Some of the police used excessive force but there were attacks on the police too -- police members were killed as well. The violence wasn't one-sided," he said.

"And then as it escalated further, the protesters started attacking police with firearms, weapons."

He alleged unidentified foreign forces had supported the protests, a claim for which he provided no evidence.

"I believe, at this point, it is from beyond Bangladesh," he said.

Law enforcers

FROM PAGE 16

personnel on Saturday and warned that it would not take any responsibility for any such incidents in future. Those who commit any wrongdoings will be handed over to the law enforcers, said the statement.

The statement also mentioned that Sheikh Hasina is well, and she requested all to hold peaceful programmes.

In another development, Gopalganj AL General Secretary GM Sahab Uddin Azam, at an emergency meeting, requested party leaders and activists not to consider the army as an opponent.

The meeting also decided to observe the National Mourning Day on August 15 in a befitting manner, said meeting insiders.

EDCL
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ঢাকা-১২০৮।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমটি প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাহিত জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করছে :-

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমান
০১।	ইডিসিএল/ ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/দরপত্র/২০২৪/৩৩১ তারিখঃ ১১/০৮/২০২৪ইং	i. Cellulose Acetate/nitrate (pore size:0.2μm)	৬০০ পিস
		ii. Cellulose Acetate/nitrate (pore size:0.45μm) (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	৬০০ পিস

সিকিউরিটি/ আর্নেষ্ট মানি	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরৎযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহনের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
২.৫%	টাকা ১,০০০.০০ (এক হাজার টাকা) প্রতি সেট	২৮/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	২৮/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকলিন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্য্যালয় হইতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাইবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, যাহাদের ভ্যাট রেজিষ্ট্রেশন নাই তাহাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহন করার প্রয়োজন নাই।

দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র শিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হইবে না।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, প্রকিউরমেন্ট
পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

(৫ ইঞ্চি ৪ কলাম)

The People's Republic of Bangladesh
National board of Revenue
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity project 1:
National Single Window Implementation and strengthening Customs Modernization
IDEB Bhaban (10th floor),160/A, Kakrail, Dhaka

Memo no. 1(192) Active items/ Hardware /NSW/2024/2175 Date: 11.08.24

Subject: Addendum to bidding document for supply and Installation of Hardware and Infrastructure (network, communication, cabling etc.) and standard software for NSW solution; other network, communication equipment, structure, Hardware and cabling: Server & Storage and Network & Security components for NSW Server Room & DR. Bangladesh Regional Connectivity project 1: Request for Bids (RFB) No. NBR-GD2A.1.

Addendum No. 3

This is for the information of all Bidders concerned that the following amendments have been mad for the procurement mentioned in the subject above;

Ref	Existing Entry	Amended entry
Sl No. of 6, SPN ITP-23.1& 26.1	The deadline for Bid Submission is: Date: August 13,2024, Time :14.00 hours. Date & Time for Bid Opening August 13, 2024, Time :14:30 hours	The deadline for Bid Submission is: Date: August 29,2024, Time :14.00 hours. Date & Time for Bid Opening August 29, 2024, Time :14:30 hours

All the terms and conditions of bidding Documents (RFB) NBR-GD2A. 1 shall remain unchanged. This Addendum No. 2 shall be considered an integral part of the Bidding Documents and shall be binding on all Bidders who have obtained or will obtain the Bidding Documents from the Purchaser.

(Abul Bashar Md Shafiqur Rahman)
Project Director
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity project 1:
National Single Window Implementation and strengthening Customs Modernization
Email: pdnsw.nbr@gmail.com

GD-142

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Locate and release disappearance victims

Their families deserve answer, justice, and closure

For over a decade, hundreds of families in Bangladesh have lived with the unbearable pain of not knowing the fate of their loved ones. These individuals—mostly critics and political rivals of Awami League—disappeared during its 15-year rule, allegedly abducted by state agencies. The government's fall has now reignited the hopes of their families, but it is a tragic reflection of our times that there is still no end date on their never-ending misery. According to a report, over 100 such families formed a human chain on Saturday, demanding information about the whereabouts of their loved ones. They held up photos of their missing sons, husbands, and fathers, some of whom disappeared as far back as 13 years ago.

These families deserve answers, justice, and closure. Unfortunately, they are yet to have the chance to move in that direction. Although the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) authorities already said that there are no detainees in their Dhaka facility, popularly known as "Aynaghor", the release of some former prisoners has raised hope that many of the disappeared could still be alive in other secret internment centres of the security forces. The DGFI reportedly promised to form a joint commission to inspect 23 other facilities across the country to see if the victims of enforced disappearance were there. The question is, how many detention-cum-torture cells are there, really? How many of the prisoners held illegally over the years are still alive? How many perished in obscurity?

In a report in 2021, the Human Rights Watch said there was no trace of nearly 100 out of the 600 people who had disappeared during Hasina's rule. The number of the disappeared could be more than 700, according to Odhikar, which says some 150 are believed to remain missing. Clearly, because of the cloak of secrecy in which those behind the illegal operations wrapped themselves, there remains a huge information gap which could complicate any future effort to shine a light on all such cases and indeed to pursue justice for the security officers and services responsible.

Besides enforced disappearance, the Awami League regime had also been regularly accused of allowing extrajudicial killings and custodial torture, and so the interim government must start the process of establishing justice for all such activities. The immediate priority, of course, will be to locate and release all enforced disappearance victims. For too long, these people and their families have endured unimaginable suffering, which must come to an end. The authorities should also set up an independent justice mechanism with the UN's support to investigate each of the incidents, and put the perpetrators on trial. After Sheikh Hasina's ouster, the nation finally has a chance to unearth the full horrors of enforced disappearance and rectify the state machinery involved.

Urgent bank reforms are crucial

Recover bad loans, punish those who exploited the sector

Since the fall of the Awami League regime, there have been several chaotic incidents in the banking sector—from the resignation of Bangladesh Bank (BB) governor and other top officials to the conflicts between rival groups at the Motijheel branch of Bangladesh Islami Bank yesterday—sending out an alarming signal. These incidents are but an indication about how quickly a sector, long lying on the edge of the precipice, can unravel when push comes to shove.

A recent report by Prothom Alo sheds light on what led to the woeful state of this sector. It talks about the BB's questionable steps taken during the erstwhile government to keep several failing banks afloat by providing liquidity support without collateral; alleged unethical connections of the BB governor and deputy governors with top loan defaulters; and the change of ownership forced on several banks including the Islami Bank, creating an environment of mistrust. Moreover, the BB's choice of lending foreign currency loans from the reserve to various influential businesses through the export development fund, without proper evaluation, also resulted in many classified loans. Just think: 20 local businesses currently owe BB about $70 million taken out of the foreign currency reserve!

The default loan amount reported by BB—Tk 1.822 trillion—is also under scrutiny. Experts estimate that the actual figure would be close to four trillion, considering rescheduled and bad/written-off loans and those currently under legal dispute. Meanwhile, depositors of the failing banks, many of which were forced to change ownership, cannot withdraw their savings. Yet, the owners of the banks are taking out loans under different names.

While some of these irregularities were mentioned in the BB's own reports, several central bank officials allege that many such activities have remained out of BB's and Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit's regulatory radar. This raises serious questions about the responsibility and ethics of top officials of not just the central bank but also the governing bodies of several private and public commercial banks. There is no doubt that political appointments in the banking sector, incorrect or manipulative accounting practices, nepotism, and lack of transparency in the lending process brought the sector to its current state.

It is, therefore, imperative that the interim government urgently launches an investigation to find out the actual amount of default loans, and identify and bring to book the big defaulters along with officials who aided these questionable borrowings. Also, the government must prioritise depositors' interests and prevent any further withdrawal of money by the unholy nexus of unscrupulous owners, borrowers, and defaulters that are bleeding the sector dry.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Phonograph was invented

On this day in 1877, American inventor Thomas Alva Edison made perhaps his most original discovery, the phonograph, and his early recordings were indentations embossed into a sheet of tinfoil by a vibrating stylus.

The fall of a dictator should not give rise to another

Saad Hammadi
is fellow at the Balsillie School of International Affairs. His X handle is @saadhammadi.

SAAD HAMMADI

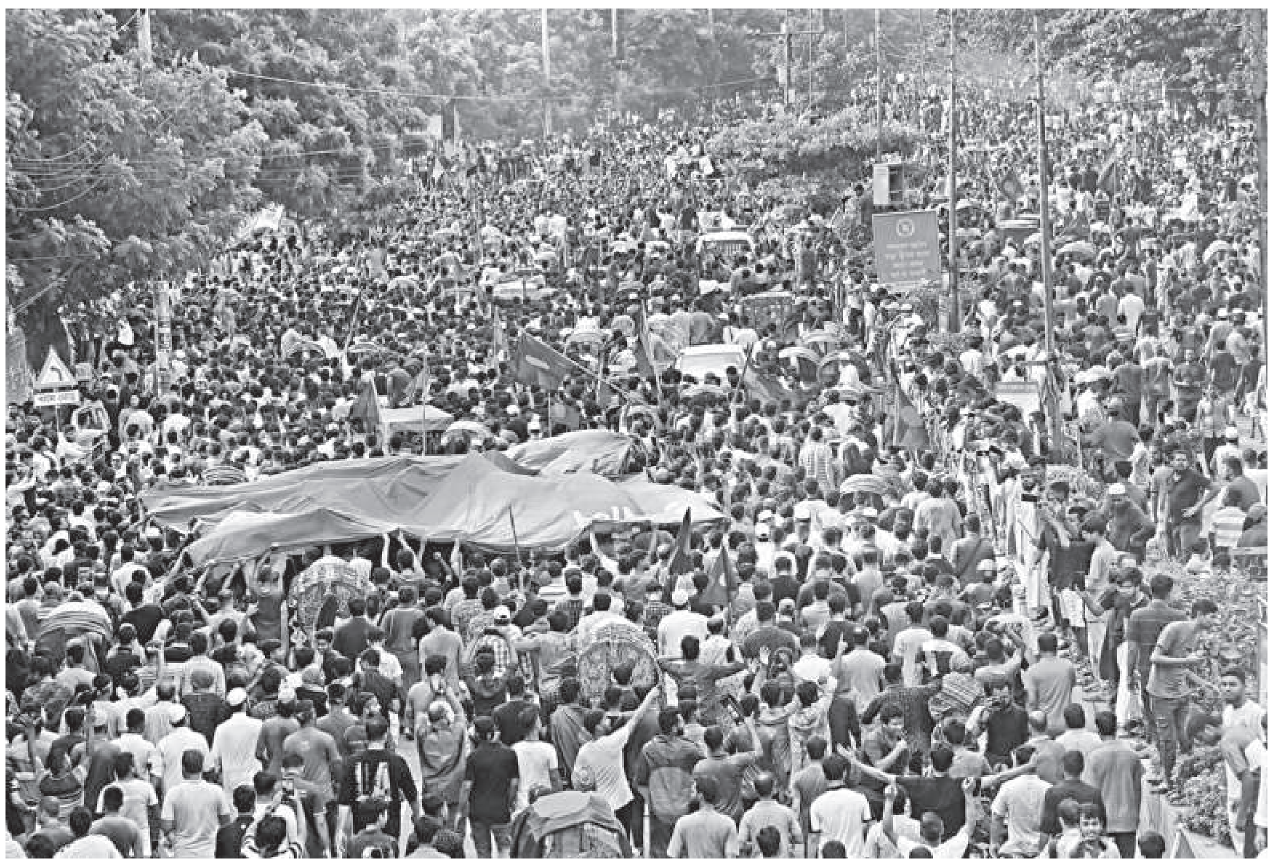
The new administration under the leadership of Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus has the aspirations of many entrusted upon him to deliver justice, create the space for a functioning economy and democracy, establish rule of law, and a transparent and accountable government. The recent violence and history of coups and staged elections give an eerie feeling that the country is not completely out of danger.

The blood and sacrifice of hundreds of people freed Bangladesh from the tyrannical leadership of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. It is even more important now that Hasina and those in the command responsibility during her time in the government are not let off the hook and are brought to justice and accountability for the unlawful killings, detention and torture of hundreds of people in the country. More than 500 people were killed in 23 days since July 16, according to *Prothom Alo*. The violence against minorities after Hasina's exit must also be subject to investigation.

The interim government of Bangladesh has the opportunity to do this by proactively inviting the United Nations to establish a commission of inquiry and extending its full cooperation with the procedure. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk has reiterated his office's support for a comprehensive investigation. The international community must press for the same to uphold global justice and accountability under the rules-based international order.

Justice and accountability do not begin with Sheikh Hasina and her government only. The political parties that have ruled the country before her time, too, have committed serious human rights violations and promoted a culture of impunity. There is both fear and frustration that the traditional political parties will exploit this moment to return to power and make matters worse, given their competing track records of corruption and crimes.

For the longest time, the people have shown tremendous resilience to put up with corruption, politicised judiciary, and repressive laws and law enforcement that resulted in egregious human rights violations including torture, enforced disappearances, and unlawful killings. The crimes under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina must not subside those committed by her predecessors.



The young generation that has led the movement for systemic change deserves nothing short of a leadership that breaks away from the ugly legacy of the traditional political parties. FILE PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

The young generation that has led the movement for systemic change, and was subsequently joined by the wider population, deserves nothing short of a leadership that breaks away from the ugly legacy of the traditional political parties. The fall of a dictator should not give rise to another. The Yunus-led government must ensure that Bangladesh does not fall back on the dictatorial aspirations of political parties and ideologies that undermine cultural, political and religious freedoms.

The young generation must be afforded with safe and secure environment, free of intimidation and oppression, to come up with new ideas, leaders and political parties that are representative of gender, age, ethnic, religious and socioeconomic diversity. A gender-balanced leadership is indispensable in this process to ensure diversity, inclusivity, and representation. Reforms should be considered in the electoral process to ensure representation of the people.

Constitutional reforms will be required to ensure free and fair elections and reinstate the function of an interim government to administer the transition to a democratically elected government in the future. A national referendum can guide some of these decisions as the basis for public consensus. Institutional reforms will be required throughout the administration to develop systems for transparency and accountability in the process.

The interim government must immediately scrap all repressive provisions under laws such as the Cyber Security Act (CSA), drop the charges against all those accused under the problematic provisions of the law as well as its predecessors—the Digital Security Act (DSA) and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act. New laws and constitutional reforms must be drafted in line with international human rights law and standards and should be adopted through wider public consultation.

It is a relief to see that some of the people have been freed from the secret detention facilities of the security agencies—some after nearly a decade of their enforced disappearances. Their release in the middle of the road with eyes blindfolded are attempts by the perpetrators to evade criminal responsibilities. The detention facilities must be dismantled and those who were in charge of the facilities must be investigated and brought to justice.

The economist in Muhammad Yunus is now most required to stop the free fall of the economy and recover the state at a time when even the global economic and political orders are extremely chaotic.

The interim government must be afforded the time to make foundational changes that are inevitable for a smooth transition to a democratically elected government and for the country to move forward. This cannot be an indefinite period. The interim administration must set a deadline for itself. The success of the new leadership will depend on the trust and confidence it is able to build with the people.

It's time to look forward with our fashion partners

RMG NOTES

Mostafiz Uddin
is the managing director of Denim Expert Limited. He is also the founder and CEO of Bangladesh Denim Expo and Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE).

MOSTAFIZ UDDIN

In the aftermath of the former prime minister's resignation, the country is now ready to put the challenges of the last few weeks behind it. The nationwide curfews had been withdrawn on August 6, and since then, banks, schools, factories, etc. have been re-opened and people have started their normal daily lives. The apparel factories of the country have resumed production on August 7.

So, what does all this mean for our country? The focus of this article is from a business perspective. However, the people of Bangladesh can attest to how the past few weeks of civil unrest have certainly taken their toll on an emotional level as well.

My overriding message, as somebody who lives and works in Bangladesh, is that our garment manufacturing sector remains very much *open for business*. But first, we need to look at what the business community needs from our state and non-state institutions to help Bangladesh regain the confidence of its international business partners.

As stated earlier, it has been a very challenging time, but I believe that the resignation of the former prime minister and the installation of the army chief might help to restore stability. It is time to start looking forward.

Bangladesh gained its independence from Pakistan in 1971, meaning that we are still a relatively new country and the path to development has been a bumpy road. However, Bangladesh's recent problems are part of a larger historical pattern of political and social challenges. Thus, the country's history of overcoming adversity and its commitment to economic development should provide a foundation for optimism.

Over the years, the garments industry of Bangladesh has established itself as one of the key powerhouses in the country, bringing in vital export earnings. In the fiscal year 2022-23, garment exports from Bangladesh earned $47.38 billion and the value is expected to grow year-on-year.

Despite the recent political unrest, Bangladesh's garment industry still remains a cornerstone of our economy. The industry accounts for more than 80 percent of the country's export earnings and provides employment to millions of people, particularly women.

Let us also not forget the sector has played a crucial role in lifting millions out of poverty and improving living standards. There are ambitions to increase exports well beyond US$50bn and, in doing so, lift many millions more people out of poverty.

But in order to achieve those goals, we need the support of the international community, and the backing of international fashion buyers.

> **Going forward, our leaders need to own the conversation. Historically, public relations have not been one of Bangladesh's strong suits. However, how we project ourselves to the international community is vital given the present situation.**

It goes without saying that the international community may have read newspaper reports or even seen video footage of the political unrest that has occurred over the last few weeks, and have developed concerns about placing their orders here. Therefore, we simply cannot assume that the support from the international community will be readily available—it must be earned.

To maintain or regain the trust of the international business community, I believe three things need to happen over the coming weeks.

The first is that our country's new leadership needs to outline a clear roadmap for how Bangladesh will avoid further disturbances moving forwards. What safeguards do they have in place, which actors will be involved in bringing all parties around the table, and how can we ensure the unrest of the past few weeks does not happen again?

Secondly, we need transparency and openness. We cannot keep the international business community in the dark about developments in our country. Silence on these key issues can have a negative impact, as it creates a vacuum. This can lead to the spread of rumours and mistruths, which has happened in the past few weeks.

Going forward, our leaders need to own the conversation. Historically, public relations have not been one of Bangladesh's strong suits. However, how we project ourselves to the international community is vital given the present situation. Clear, authoritative, and unambiguous messaging will be key from this point onwards.

Finally, we need a unified voice—we need solidarity. Partnership and collaboration are in all of our best interests right now. We need to present a united front and disagreements must be sorted out swiftly for the greater good.

My concluding message to clothing buyers is to stand by us at this critical juncture and to continue placing orders with confidence as we head into the vital Christmas order season. Your partnership and support are more vital than ever.

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Misinformation campaigns and the future of Bangladesh-India relations

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ZILLUR RAHMAN

VISUAL: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

After the fall of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina last week, Bangladesh was thrown into a critical state of instability and uncertainty. There was no government till Dr Muhammad Yunus took oath as the chief adviser of the interim government on August 8. During this period, the country saw an outburst of violence and crime, which was the outcome of both pent-up political frustration against the ruling party of 15 years and the result of some bigotry, and the machinations of bad actors trying to take advantage of the lawlessness for personal gains. One of the most dangerous situations that can happen in a country is the chaos, crime, and destruction that take place after an authoritarian force is forced to abdicate. Unfortunately, Bangladesh is in such a situation.

However, this issue is not just a domestic phenomenon. Several influential groups inside Bangladesh's largest neighbour have taken the initiative to create a narrative that this momentary lawlessness caused by the thoughtless abdication of the former prime minister is the prelude of a Bangladesh where bigotry and religious fundamentalism are going to flare up.

It almost feels like, with the fall of Sheikh Hasina, some elements in India are behaving as though India has suffered a great loss. It is my humble opinion that, instead of immediately choosing to take the easily monetisable culture-war talking points, the enlightened Indian cultural leaders should first push for a democratic Bangladesh where actual political discourse can take place without fear of getting killed or disappeared by security forces.

The main platform where such notions are being sensationalised at the moment is X, formerly known as Twitter. Many verified accounts on X are reporting rumours as actual news and sometimes just outright propagating fake news. What's worse is that this propagation of fake news has also been noted in Indian mainstream media, as well as among popular Indian social media personalities.

It is true that there have been concerning reports of violence against minority communities. Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad reported 205 incidents of persecution of members of minority communities across 52 districts. Gobinda Pramanik, general secretary of Bangladesh National Hindu Mahajot, recently made a video statement about the matter, in which he said that, after Sheikh Hasina's resignation on August 5, the Hindu community in Bangladesh thought they would be attacked in a massive way and there would be incidents of arson. According to the general secretary, houses of some Hindu leaders of the Awami League who were very active, as well as those of some Muslim leaders, were attacked. He also stated that some opportunistic people attacked a few local temples. Coordinators of the anti-discrimination student movement called for protection of the minority communities, which was answered by many. Leaders of BNP, Jamaat and other parties, too, instructed their functionaries to ensure that Hindu homes were not attacked and temples were protected.

But against this backdrop, we saw Republic TV from India spreading rumours and making strange claims.

The West Bengal Police, in a statement posted from its official Facebook page, stated that the way some local TV channels are reporting on the current situation in Bangladesh is clearly communally inflammatory and against the norms of the Press Council of India. The West Bengal Police urged viewers to exercise their own judgement when viewing this type of coverage and keep in mind that the authenticity of the footage shown by the channel is not verified by any neutral third party. They requested people not to fall into the trap of one-sided, hateful and misleading propaganda.

The sudden upsurge in misinformation and disinformation on Indian social media coincidentally aligns with a seemingly coordinated rise in criminal activities and vandalism all over Bangladesh. Inside the country, some people are also taking to social media and calling this another attempt by pro-AL forces in India, as well as RAW, to fabricate a narrative of communalism in order to plunge Bangladesh into further unrest and instability. Needless to say, there is no evidence for any of this. Rumours beget rumours. This kind of misinformation treadmill needs to be stopped immediately lest it leads to further instances of violence, and makes the people-to-people divide between Bangladesh and India even worse.

Although it seems the Indian authorities have overtly asked for people to stop propagating fake news regarding what is happening in Bangladesh, there are many in India who firmly believe that Bangladesh is about to fall under a fundamentalist rule the moment the next general elections are held. It almost feels like, with the fall of Sheikh Hasina, some elements in India are behaving as though India has suffered a great loss. It is my humble opinion that, instead of immediately choosing to take the easily monetisable culture-war talking points, the enlightened Indian cultural leaders should first push for a democratic Bangladesh where actual political discourse can take place without fear of getting killed or disappeared by security forces. The people of Bangladesh don't need to be kept "in check" by a convenient autocrat. That is the narrative of a now-disgraced political party that has proven to lie repeatedly to the people and the world to keep power. The people of India must not fall for this narrative ever again.

India must realise the shortcomings of its foreign policy regarding Bangladesh. These should be fundamental lessons from history. Never trust a dictator to keep power. A robust and mature democracy is the only reliable international partner. Right now, India needs to revamp its approach towards Bangladesh entirely. Now is the time for genuine track 2 diplomacy. It is time for genuine people-to-people relations to ensure long-term, sustainable friendship with its most significant geostrategic partner. And this kind of change must start at home.

Can the government govern itself?

The importance of institutions in democratisation and good governance

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SARZAH YEASMIN

Party interests and national interests have seldom aligned in the history of Bangladesh, and because of the "party-archies" there is an acute dearth of strong and credible institutions in the country that can create a landscape for fairer politics. It is still premature to say that the public have won without there being any concrete agenda for correcting the historical wrongs. Institution-building and institutionalisation of best practices are a decades-long process; so regardless of the promise this transitional moment holds in the history of the country, we should tread forward with some caution. The question is, can the government govern itself? In Bangladesh's case, that is a clear no. There is engagement, enthusiasm, and energy around the issues of substance, but the political vacuum might lead the country in a regressive direction if, ultimately, we have to turn towards the vanguard of old leadership. No work has been put into developing party institutions. The problem with parties in Bangladesh is that their activism relies on backward-looking and person-centric politics and revolves around a single leader. Cultish attitudes such as pledging allegiance to one leader over the state are performative, and such performance is normalised in Bangladeshi politics.

The reason why robust political institutions have not been built during the country's lifetime is because the state apparatus is used to serve the party in power, not the people. This is a part of the broader political culture, and it will be a difficult journey out. People do not want to replace dictators with dictators. Tangible liberation is only possible when Bangladeshis can meet their full potential, when minorities do not need special protection, when people can express their views without the fear of backlash; we are not there yet. In a democratic, free and fairer Bangladesh, Bangladeshis can be pro-any social or political party, pro-any brand, and advocate for their ideologies without repercussions. The political bifurcation and polarisation in the country is murky because it is not based on differences of any substantial policy issue between the opposing parties. Each party, while in power, has depleted the state of its resources to cater to the top leadership's and party's goals at the expense of national interests. They have broken and bent their own laws without remorse and have blamed the opposition and mysterious third-party actors for failure and unrest.

Students fought for equality and justice. Valorising looting and misogynistic language takes away from the strong ethical ground on which the student movement is established. While the former ruling government was in power, there were many unsubstantiated claims that the movement had been hijacked by the opposition and "miscreants," but there is more danger of misappropriating the goals and the language of the movement now that it has accomplished a tangible political outcome. The iconoclastic nature of desecrating the founding father's statue is deeply disturbing—denying the founding narrative of the nation because we seem not to see beyond the euphoria of this moment. Regardless of Awami League's atrocities, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has his own indelible place in the birth of this nation.

The public display of disdain does not bode well and is not conducive to creating a culture where democracy can flourish. We need to come out of our culture of belittling, shaming, looting, and euphoric mob violence if we really want good and reliable leadership, because at the end of the day, leaders are the reflection of their people, and vice versa. A dictator cannot be a dictator without support. We need a radical change in how we envision good and effective leadership and build institutions that can allow good leadership. A strong leader is not one who projects power through terror. A strong leader knows how to initiate institutions, how to adapt, listen, delegate, how to activate people to meet their potential, and take a back seat when it is necessary. The country could go in any direction, although the participation of students and civil society in creating a framework for the interim government shows promise.

So, what should be the expectation from the interim government? The country is in shambles as it grapples with significant economic and political challenges further intensified by the current vacuum. The interim government needs to prioritise institution-building since it is only an interim government, so that the country can be ready to be handed over to good leadership. It needs to prepare the country for a democratic and fair government and simultaneously create a political culture that fosters good leadership through setting precedents of collaboration. The country cannot move forward without addressing regulations that allow political parties to drain state resources and use terror to secure party interests. Establishing good governance and effective public service delivery should be the interim leadership's prime goals. We are in a moment of negative peace—an undesirable government has been ousted—but that does not mean that historical wrongs will be addressed adequately. Nothing guarantees progress unless we implement measures of accountability and build institutions that are capable of being fair, transparent, non-partisan, and impartial in fulfilling their functions regardless of which party takes power.

Nothing guarantees progress unless we implement measures of accountability and build institutions that are capable of being fair, transparent, non-partisan, and impartial in fulfilling their functions.

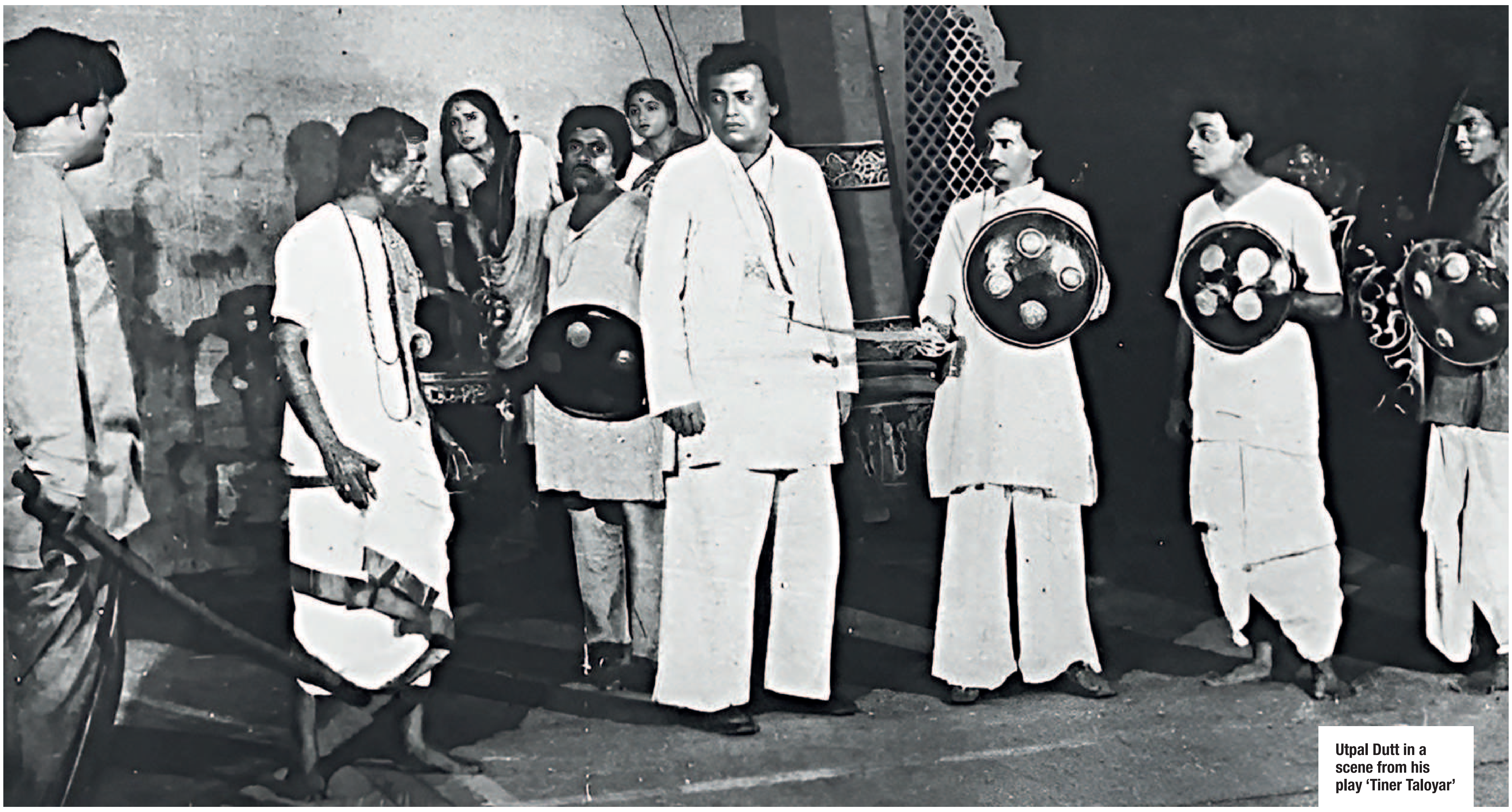
FILE PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

In a study exploring democratisation in 15 post-conflict societies that include countries like Bosnia, Cambodia, Liberia, and Timor Leste, it was found that the design of the interim governments is foundational in determining the democratisation prospects and processes of countries after a period of conflict or shock. Factors such as inclusion of conflicting parties and diverse actors in the transitional government, putting institutional constraints on the executive and decentralisation of power and governance to local levels have led to higher successes in democratisation, as power-sharing de-escalate risks of subsequent conflicts. Delegation of power provides more definite channels for transparency and accountability and more chances for civic participation. The point about conducting a fair election soon has been mentioned repeatedly, both by military and political establishments and movement actors. However, the template of a fair election assumes that there are credible processes, institutions, options, and state capacity in place to conduct and sustain a fair election. Premature elections can lead to an outcome with non-democratic actors and unfair power-grabbers. Election is the end point of the interim government; therefore, much more work needs to be put into this major assignment that would determine the success of this transitional moment.

Bangladeshis do not want a transfer of power from criminal regimes to criminal regimes, so the choices that voters have at the ballot box would be most important. Choice should not be limited to the lesser of the two evils. As Sarjis Alam, one of the leaders of the anti-discrimination student movement, aptly says, the movement is against the system of oppression, not a particular oppressor. The purpose of a democratic election would fail if it is used to elect an undemocratic leader.

The meetings that the army chief had with different political parties and civil society representatives to ponder on the future of the country are the kinds of meetings that should be part of the regular political practice. Governments should consult with the opposition and the public, work on laws, regulations, and national strategies collectively so that they can align with national interests. Practices of finding common ground and collective participation should be instilled in institutional mechanisms and processes for decision-making. There should be opportunities for civic engagement and scope for compassionate and smart leadership so leadership can be efficient in its response to the public—so that being in the streets is not the only way to get the country moving. Historically, Bangladesh has had vibrant student movements, but that has not translated into a vibrant democracy so far. The interim government, along with sustained efforts from students, will be instrumental in creating the landscape for effective democracy during this post-conflict phase.

The model of the transitional government often determines what comes next. One likely political challenge for the upcoming transitional government will be containing oppositional and retaliatory forces and bypassing episodes of unrest that curb chances of establishing an effective democracy. The point of the anti-discrimination movement is to break away from the vestiges of the old regimes and build an independent nation where public dignity is protected, where people's potential is met. This transitional moment will be vital in fashioning an effective succession—a legitimate, viable and a fair one, so that the mass atrocities that have been normalised throughout our political history are never repeated. Bangladeshis need institutions that they can trust, a system in service of the people, a government that can govern itself.



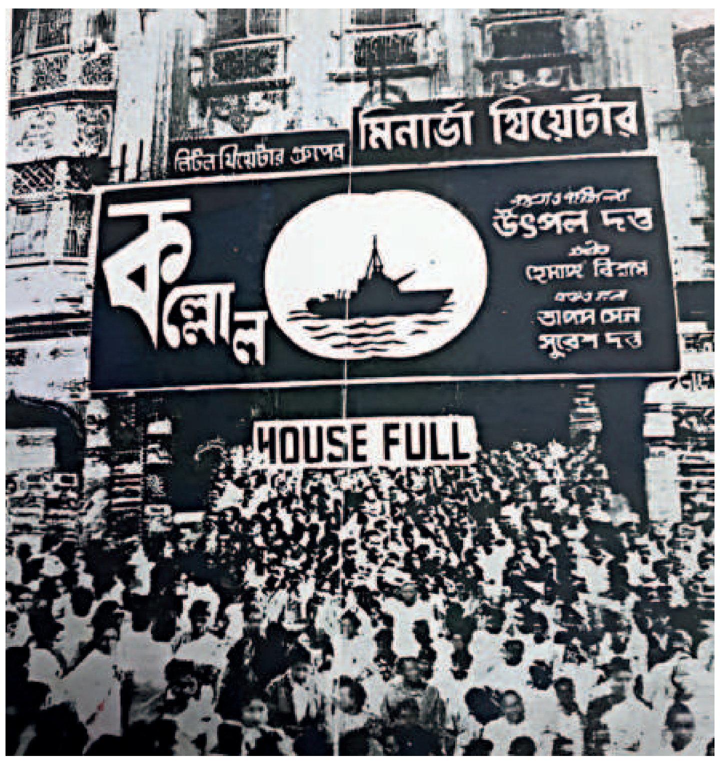
Utpal Dutt in a scene from his play 'Tiner Taloyar'

Utpal Dutt and Postcolonial Political Theatre

Utpal Dutt differentiated between fact and truth by focusing on their connection with social conflict and argued that fact remains mere bourgeois truth when abstracted from the context of continuous social conflict between the haves and the have-nots and conversely that fact can become a revolutionary truth when it intertwines the realities of conflict, and sides unerringly with the have-nots.

MALLARIKA SINHA ROY

The inspiration for decolonization, as a philosophical term, writes Achille Mbembe, was the 'active will to community' which can be translated as something like 'to stand up on one's own and create a heritage'. The impetus for decolonization in theatre, as it moved from re-instituting indigenous traditions in place of colonial modernity, to retrieving indigenous systems through 'provincializing Europe' as Dipesh Chakrabarty aptly defines, came from different quarters. The Cold War context provided a range of influences, from western European and north American theatre experiments to socialist realisms and socialist internationalism, as well as the inter-cultural practices emerging from Asian-African alliances. The modern Indian theatre drew on these multiple modernities. The outcome was a significant shift away not only from traditional forms of folk theatre and classical Sanskrit drama, but also from the modern colonial theatre in terms of canon formation, actor training, circulation of texts and performances, reception, patronage, and criticism. Institutionally, as part of the 'will to community', a new cultural bureaucracy, often functioning closely with the administrative one, sustained this shift from the local to the national level.

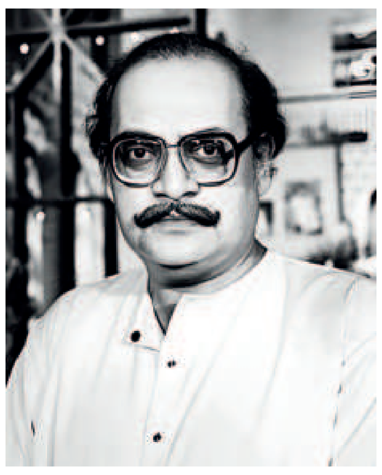


A sea of heads on Beadon Street in front of Minerva Theatre during the 'Kallol' days

Utpal Dutt (1929-1993) embodied this shift. With the exception of direct involvement in cultural bureaucracy, he straddled the process of decolonization, forging a political theatre of the postcolonial contemporary for modern India. When he emerged as a promising theatre-maker and performer in the city of Calcutta in late 1940s, the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA henceforth), as part of the communist movement in India, had already established itself as a formidable force in cultural politics and the idea of progressive political theatre had started to gain ground. Before his inevitable shift towards IPTA in 1950-51, Dutt was a member of British thespian Geoffrey Kendal's touring Shakespeareana International which, performed Shakespeare's plays in metropolises and *mofussil* towns across India. Theatre critic Samik Bandyopadhyay notes that the democratic nature of this travelling theatre troupe was crucial in shaping Dutt as an artist. After touring with Kendal, Dutt started his own English theatre group in Calcutta, The Amateur Shakespeareans, and won critical acclaim for modernised productions of *Romeo and Juliet* (1948) and *Julius Caesar* (1949).

Dutt's acute sense of the need to engage with the process of decolonization was the reason behind his abandonment of English theatre even after such bravura productions. English theatre in Calcutta was a decidedly elite practice and he turned away from it to begin his stint with IPTA, joining the central Calcutta squad of IPTA as a director and actor and performing in different productions like Tagore's *Bisarjan* (performed in 1952) and Ritwik Ghatak's *Dalil* (1951) as well as in various street-corner plays like *Bhoter Bhet* (1951).

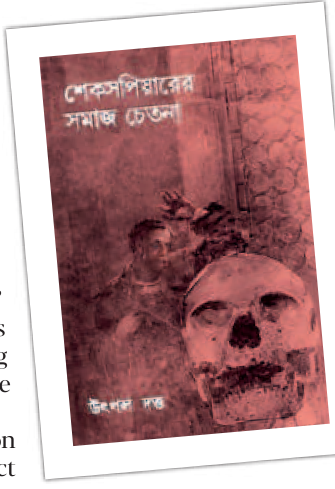
The experience of making theatre with IPTA while engaging with communist politics and Marxist philosophy, though short-lived, became foundational in Dutt's subsequent journey as a political theatre artist. He created his 'Little Theatre Group' (LTG) and, in 1953 leased the Minerva theatre in Calcutta as its permanent home. LTG began with classic Tagore plays, translations of Shakespeare and Russian theatre, and social farces by the nineteenth-century playwright Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Their production of *Macbeth* (1954) became particularly successful and received invitations for performances even in remote villages, smaller towns and working-class areas. LTG finally found its feet on the Bengali stage with Dutt's *Angaar* (1959), a play about the lives of coal miners that culminates in a mining disaster and references a recent catastrophe in the Baradhemo coal mine. *Angaar* became hugely popular not only for its intensely political theme but also because of the sophisticated scenography, sound and lighting design employed. The climax of *Angaar*, an exemplary feat of stagecraft depicting the despair of seven miners trapped underground waiting to be drowned, is described by Bharucha as an 'epiphany of grief' in which the spectacle of a calamity becomes a source of entertainment and is applauded. Dutt, in his later assessment of his own work, was critical of *Angaar* because it could not represent the truth of miners' resistance, but was limited to displaying the facts of their huge exploitation.



Utpal Dutt (March 29, 1929 - August 19, 1993)

This tension between truth and fact shaped Dutt's vision of political theatre, which he called revolutionary theatre. He differentiated between fact and truth by focusing on their connection with social conflict and argued that fact remains mere bourgeois truth when abstracted from the context of continuous social conflict between the haves and the have-nots and conversely that fact can become a revolutionary truth when it intertwines the realities of conflict, and sides unerringly with the have-nots. His aim was to represent revolutionary truth because, in his view, presenting only impartial facts risked reifying bourgeois power, and he wanted his theatre to be an agent of change, and thus a factor in the revolution. This meant recounting as many instances of such change as possible, especially historical moments when exploitative regimes are challenged by the poor, the colonized and the 'native'. He aspired to portray the full complexity of power relations at intersecting points in the context of social conflict. This is the reason Dutt so often revisits histories of anti-colonial revolts against the British in India, revolts against other imperial powers in other geo-political contexts, and rebellions against experiences of domination. His stint in the Bengali folk theatre form Jatra, from 1971 to 1988, bears the same marks of revolutionary intent in highlighting historical moments of resistance against colonial/authoritarian regimes.

'One of the ironies of political theatre', observes Rustom Bharucha, 'is that it thrives during the worst periods of repression'. Discussions of political theatre, consequently, need to be continually informed by understanding of the nature of repression and period-specific details of each socio-political situation. In order to make sense of the cultural critique offered by political theatre, the critic has to engage with the defining characteristics of the postcolonial contemporary. This need becomes even more acute in the case of an artist like Dutt because he explicitly identified his project as a revolutionary theatre, that 'addresses these working masses and must adjust its pitch, tone and volume accordingly' in order to agitate for revolutionary social transformation. That his revolutionary theatre was dismissed by a large number of critics as communist propaganda did not dishearten Dutt, but rather he wore the term 'propagandist' as a badge of honour and declared 'to hell with the so-called critics who find our plays naive, melodramatic and loud'.



The recent revivals of his plays from 2018 to 2023 by various theatre groups, including People's Little Theatre that Dutt had created in 1971 after LTG dissolved, invite us to revisit the phase of interconnected histories from a different angle because the impetus to return to Dutt's plays adds another thread to the interconnected histories. This new thread intertwines twenty-first century experiences of the rise of the right-wing, the global south gig-economy, and the coming of a new generation of postcolonial intellectuals. Taken together these threads compel contemporary theatre-makers to bring Dutt's work back to the stage.

Let me list some of these revivals, with the caveat that this list is not exhaustive. I have already mentioned the revival of *Titu Mir*. Along with *Titu Mir* came *Ghum Nei* (1959), a play on the significance of the workers' union, which is now regularly performed by the theatre group Iccheymoto to warm receptions and has received awards for its sets, sound and performance. Sourav Palodhi, the director of the 2023 revival, has argued that this play has contemporary resonance because it underlines the importance of the workers' collective voice in sustaining the secular ethos of Indian democracy (Palodhi 2023). Similarly, *Barricade* (1972), which comments on the rise of authoritarianism against the backdrop of the rise of Nazism in Germany, was revived by the theatre group Chakdaha Natyajan in January 2022 to comment on the contemporary crises of religious fundamentalism and political violence in India. Another Dutt play *Ekla Chalo Re* (1989) which re-tells the history of Partition and the subsequent religious riots through the historical moment of Gandhi's assassination in 1948, was successfully revived by the group Swapna Sandhani in 2019.

Finally, Utpal Dutt's legacy remains dependent on and is shaped by these new interpretations of his theatre. His work created a reservoir of memory and his plays and his approach to theatre-making, provide a constant reminder of the importance of history in fashioning the present. The future, however, is being shaped here and now by a new generation of directors, actors and dramaturgs who are making Dutt relevant again, and interpreting his work in ways that facilitate better understanding of the conceptual and material spaces the new postcolonial generation occupies. The process of decolonization in the political theatre of Utpal Dutt, thus remains a vital part of an ongoing movement where every act of thinking and performing is revising, recreating, reinterpreting history. Instead of romanticizing the past, this movement is taking shape as a critical multi-dimensional re-looking at the past, as a working method for making sense of collective political and artistic struggles.

Mallarika Sinha Roy *is an Assistant Professor at the Centre for Women's Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.*

What to WATCH

Sony Sports 2
Birmingham Phoenix vs Trent Rockets
Live from 11:30 pm

Shakib stays, Taskin returns for Pakistan tour

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was called up and pacer Taskin Ahmed returned to the Test fold after over one year's gap as Bangladesh named a 16-member squad for the upcoming two-Test series against Pakistan, scheduled to begin on August 21 in Rawalpindi.

Many fans on social media were vocal against Shakib and called for his ouster from the team following his silence during the students protests. However, the selectors decided to choose the 37-year-old for the tour.

"The emphasis was on picking our best players for this version. This is a well-balanced squad," chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu was quoted in a press release yesterday.

Shakib, who recently played in the Global T20 league in Canada, is expected to join the side directly in Pakistan ahead of the series.

Meanwhile, Taskin returns to red-ball cricket after having asked to opt out of Test assignments in February for the remainder of 2024 to manage his workload following a shoulder injury.

However, the right-arm pacer has been named only for the second Test in Karachi, starting on August 30, as the selectors first want to test the pacer's mettle in red-ball cricket in Bangladesh 'A' team's second four-day game against Pakistan 'A', beginning on August 20 in Islamabad.

"We have selected five pacers mindful of the fact that Taskin will only play the second Test. He hasn't bowled in a Test since June last year [against Afghanistan] and we have decided to include him in the 'A' Team for the second four-dayer against Pakistan 'A' to get him into the rhythm for longer version matches.

"Our attack has variety with bowlers who can bowl fast and also swing the ball and I am really looking forward to seeing them perform against world class batsmen," Lipu said.

Mushfiqur Rahim, who missed the last Test series against Sri Lanka at home due to a fracture on his right thumb, returned to the Test side and has already departed for Pakistan to play the first four-day game for Bangladesh 'A' from August 13.

Shahadat Hossain Dipu and Mushfik Hasan missed the cut from the last Test series.

Despite Bangladesh's poor record in Pakistan, Lipu was hopeful that this group of players can bring success.

"Pakistan are very tough opponents, especially in their home front and it will be a challenging tour for us. It is good that we will get additional time to prepare in Lahore. Also, some players who are in Pakistan already with the Bangladesh 'A' side, will join the national team for the Test series. Their experience of the conditions should come in handy."

SQUAD

Najmul Hossain Shanto (Captain), Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Zakir Hasan, Shadman Islam, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Liton Das, Mehedi Hasan Miraz, Taijul Islam, Nayeem Hasan, Nahid Rana, Shoriful Islam, Hasan Mahmud, Taskin Ahmed, Syed Khaled Ahmed

No headway yet on Women's T20 WC hosting

SPORTS REPORTER

Asif Mahmud, the Youth and Sports Adviser of Bangladesh's newly formed interim government, informed the ministry will "address state-level matters" with both the Chief Adviser to the interim government, Prof. Muhammad Yunus, and seek guidance from the United Nations to facilitate the hosting of the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup.

Mahmud took office for the first time yesterday and met with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) officials before addressing the media.

"We have talked to BCB about the Women's T20 World Cup. The most important thing is ensuring security, and to achieve that, there are state-level matters that need to be addressed," Mahmud told reporters at the Secretariat yesterday.

"We will have detailed discussions with Prof. Yunus. He is a sports-loving person, and of course, he will assist us and ensure security at the state level. We will also consult with the UN regarding their suggestions, as there are travel restrictions for a few countries," added the 26-year-old.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has been monitoring the situation in Bangladesh following mass protests in the country that eventually led to the fall of the Awami League government.

Bangladesh is scheduled to host the mega event from October 3 to October 20, but there are significant concerns about security following weeks of unrest. In case the tournament needs to be relocated, ICC is reportedly considering alternative options, with India, UAE and Sri Lanka being the likely candidates.

The Youth and Sports Adviser has also asked BCB -- in presence of its Chief Executive Nizamuddin Chowdhury, along with seven directors -- to explore the possibility of appointing an interim board president under ICC's framework, given that BCB President Nazmul Hassan is currently absent.

Mahmud further informed, "For a federation to function effectively, all of its organs need to operate. The president holds an important responsibility. However, the BCB is an autonomous federation, and we cannot impose decisions on it but can exchange suggestions.

"We want to make the necessary changes, but at the same time, we need to follow due process."

'HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?'

REUTERS, *Paris*

Dutchwoman Sifan Hassan sprinted through the finish of the marathon and straight into the pantheon of Olympic greats on Sunday, completing her astonishing Olympic agenda with a gold medal after taking bronze in both the 5,000 and 10,000 metres.

A hundred years on from Paavo Nurmi's five golds in Paris, the 2024 Games got the athletics hero they had been waiting for in Hassan, who became the first since Czech Emil Zatopek in 1952 to medal in those three events.

"Every moment in the race I was regretting that I ran the 5000m and 10,000m. I was telling myself if I hadn't done that, I would feel great today," she said.

"From the beginning to the end, it was so hard. Every step of the way. I was thinking, 'Why did I do that? What is wrong with me?' If I hadn't done it, I would feel so comfortable here."

Hassan stunned fans three years ago when she attempted a rare Olympic treble in the 1,500m, 5,000m and 10,000m - taking bronze in the shorter distance and winning the two longer races.

She earned headlines again this time around, signing up for those three events as well as the marathon for Paris.

Throngs of reporters tuned in to hear her announce which she would actually run, with few predicting she would really try the gruelling distance road run on top of the two longer track events.

"For anyone else this would be insane," retired sprint legend Michael Johnson declared. But not for Hassan, who has built a reputation as one of her sport's toughest fighters.

And 36 hours after the 10,000m wrapped up across town at the Stade de France, Hassan was on the starting line, becoming the first woman to attempt all three - and admitted she was scared to try it.

She battled with Tigst Assefa of Ethiopia and managed to shake her off in the last stretch, crossing the finish line in an Olympic record time of two hours, 22 minutes and 55 seconds.

All told, the two-time marathon major winner raced a total of 62.2 kilometres (38.65 miles) in Paris.

"When I finished, the whole moment was a release. It is unbelievable. I have never experienced anything like that. Even the other marathons I have run were not close to this," she told reporters.

"I couldn't stop celebrating. I was feeling dizzy. I wanted to lie down. Then I thought, 'I am the Olympic champion. How is this possible?'."

Hassan's outstanding grit has won over not only fans, but her rivals, too.

"She's just awesome. Who can do that? Who can come from track and win the marathon?," said Kenya's Sharon Lokedi, who finished fourth.

"I feel like I just want to be her."

PARIS 2024 OLYMPICS MEDAL COUNT

Rank	Teams	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	USA	40	44	42	126
2	China	40	27	24	91
3	Japan	20	12	13	45
4	Australia	18	19	16	53
5	France	16	26	22	64
6	Netherlands	15	7	12	34
7	Great Britain	14	22	29	65
8	Republic of Korea	13	9	10	32
9	Italy	12	13	15	40
10	Germany	12	13	8	33

PARIS 2024
Women's Marathon - Final
HASSAN S 2:22:55
SALPETER L 2:22:58
CHUMBA E 2:23:10
2:26:15
2:22:55
HASSAN

LeBron 'super humbled' by third gold

AFP, *Paris*

LeBron James said his third Olympic gold felt the best of them all as the NBA's all-time leading points scorer helped the United States beat France 98-87 in the final on Saturday.

The Los Angeles Lakers superstar returned to the Olympics after a 12-year absence, notching 14 points, 10 rebounds and six assists as Team USA held off a battling France to make it five successive men's basketball golds.

"It's a big moment for USA basketball," said James. "I'm just living in the moment. I feel super humbled that I can still play this game and play it at a high level, play with 11 other great players, and a great coaching staff go out and do it for our country."

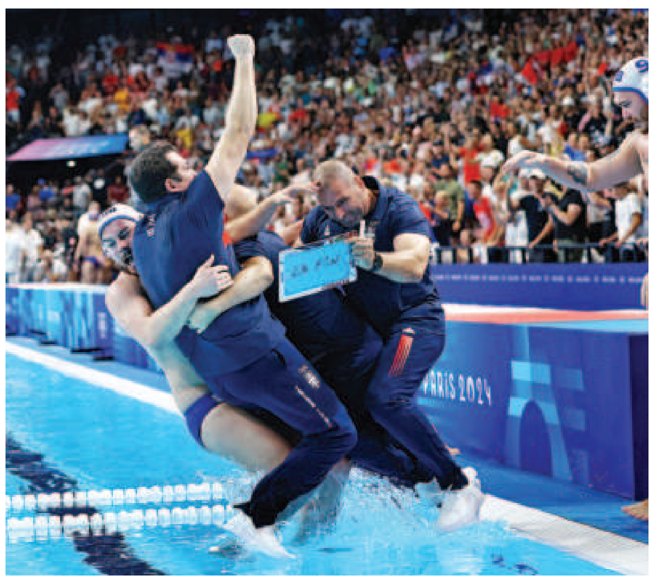
The US beat France for the second Olympic final in a row, with James back in the squad and four-time NBA champion Stephen Curry making his tournament debut.

"It was great. I think you wouldn't want it any other way to be able to face off against the host team. It was a great atmosphere," said James.

The 39-year-old won bronze as a teenager at Athens 2004 and was part of the "Redeem Team" four years later that took gold in Beijing. James appeared again at London 2012 but had not played at the Games since.

"It's the best one because it's the one that's right now," said James, suggesting it would be his final Olympics.

"I can't see myself playing in LA (in 2028). Although I also didn't see myself playing in Paris. But four years from now, I can't see it," he said.



Serbia players and coaching staff celebrate their 13-11 victory over Balkan rivals Croatia in the final of men's water polo on the last day of Paris Olympics at the La Defense Arena yesterday. The win extended Serbia's reign over the sport with a third successive gold medal. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Resignation of BFF's Salahuddin, Kiron demanded

SPORTS REPORTER

Defying inclement weather, members of Bangladeshi Football Ultras (BFU), a fan group of Bangladesh football, gathered at the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) headquarter in Arambagh yesterday, demanding the immediate resignation of BFF president Kazi Salahuddin and women's committee chairperson Mahfuza Akter Kiron.

Approximately 50 BFU members turned up as part of their 'March to BFF' programme braving the rain, chanting different slogans.

BFU has been campaigning for the resignations of Salahuddin, Kiron and senior vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy, who stepped down on Thursday soon after the resignation of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in the face of vigorous protests.

BFU members now want Salahuddin and Kiron to follow Murshedy's footsteps and exit the federation.

"I want him [Salahuddin] to willingly resign from his post like Abdus Salam Mursedy," said BFU general secretary Mehedi Hasan Ovi in front of the main gate of the BFF House yesterday.

"Kiron time and again threatened the women's footballers and she is using the sentiments for the women's footballers to accumulate wealth for herself. We demand Kiron's resignation as well.

"They are trying to tag us as extremists, dangerous for football. But we are ready to counter the dirty games Salahuddin is playing, whom we respect as a legendary footballer but he has been a failure as an organiser," he added.

WE ARE ULTRAS

Though the BFU demanded the resignation of only Salahuddin and Kiron, former footballer and coach Shafiqul Islam Manik thinks the entire BFF executive committee needs to step down.

"I think the whole BFF executive committee should resign because no one can avoid their responsibility for the failure of the country's football," said Manik, who had once contested for the BFF president post.

Manik also added that every party should be wary of FIFA's regulations over government interference in football federations, a sentiment echoed by former footballer and coach Hasanuzzaman Khan Bablu.

"I think change in a systematic way is better because there is a FIFA binding. FIFA had suspended Bangladesh in 2001 after interference of the then government. We should not do anything that forces FIFA to ban Bangladesh," Bablu said.

"I think the interim government will form a dynamic leadership in a systematic way as the BFF election is approaching close."

Although the next BFF election set to take place in October, former footballer Ashraf Uddin Ahmed Chunnu thinks, "The entire BFF committee should resign before the election because it is a demand of the time."

Adviser of the youth and sports ministry in the interim government Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan has yet to comment on the matter but reiterated that the current government is determined to bring a systematic change everywhere.

"We want to reform the entire country. This reform is not about changing an individual from a position. We want to change the system."

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USA pip China in medals table

AFP, *Paris*

The United States pipped China for top spot in the battle of medals yesterday as Paris prepared to bring the curtain down on one of the most successful Olympic Games in history.

In a thrilling finale that capped 17 days of spellbinding action, the United States women's basketball team squeezed past France 67-66 to clinch the last gold of the Games.

The win -- the eighth consecutive Olympic women's basketball won by the USA -- ensured the Americans finished level with China on 40 golds each as the games drew to a close.

The USA however finished on top of the overall medal table with a total of 126 medals, with China in second place on 91.

The final day began with a gripping women's marathon victory by the Netherlands' long-distance running star Sifan Hassan, who overhauled Ethiopia's Tigst Assefa to take gold by three seconds in an Olympic record of 2hr 22min 55sec.

Wrestling, weightlifting, water polo, volleyball, modern pentathlon, handball, and track cycling were the other sports to crown Olympic champions on the last day.

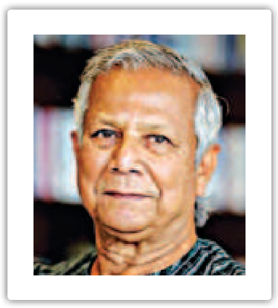
Hungary's Michelle Gulyas ran and shot to Olympic gold in the modern pentathlon, with home favourite Elodie Clouvel roared on to clinch silver.

In weightlifting, China's jubilant Li Wenwen lifted her coach into the air instead of the bar, having already secured gold.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Athletes enter the stadium during the closing ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis yesterday. A star-studded ceremony took place in front of around 71,500 spectators to crown an event that has been broadly acclaimed as one of the greatest editions of the Olympics ever held.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Prof Yunus acquitted in graft case

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus has been acquitted in a graft case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), four days after being cleared of charges in a labour law violation case.

Meanwhile, Nurjahan Begum, the recently sworn-in health adviser and another accused in the graft case, was also acquitted.

The development came yesterday, three days after the council of advisers in the interim government led by Prof Yunus took the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

ATTACKS ON MINORITIES

Form special tribunals to try culprits

Demand leaders of minority communities

STAR REPORT

Leaders of the minority organisations yesterday demanded the formation of special tribunals to expedite the trials of those who were involved in the attacks on minorities and compensation for the victims.

They placed the demands at the demonstrations that continued for the third straight day in the capital and elsewhere in the country, organised under the banners of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council and Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad.

In the capital, the central rally was held in front of the National Museum.

"This is our country. We were born here. We will give our lives, but we will not leave this country," said Basudev Dhar, president of the Puja Udjapan Parishad, while speaking at the rally.

Following the rally, the protesters brought out a procession, which ended at the Central Shaheed Minar premises, where another rally was held.

There, they placed several other demands, which included the allocation

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Israel faces anger over Gaza school 'massacre'

More Gaza evacuations ordered; Palestinians and UN say nowhere in Gaza safe

AFP, *Gaza City*

Israel yesterday faced international condemnation for its strikes on a school in Gaza used for internally displaced people.

At least 93 people were killed in the attack. AFP could not independently verify the toll which, if confirmed, would be one of the largest from a single strike during 10 months of war between Israel and Palestinian militants since Hamas's October 7 attack.

The bombardment of Al-Tabieen religious school and mosque drew criticism from across the Middle East and beyond alongside calls for a ceasefire, after international mediators invited the warring sides to resume talks towards a long-sought truce and hostage-release deal.

- Israel issues massive evacuation order in Khan Younis
- Tens of thousands made to leave homes in darkness
- Palestinians and UN say nowhere in Gaza is safe

Civil defence rescuers in the Hamas-ruled territory said three Israeli missiles hit the complex in Gaza City while people were performing dawn prayers. The military confirmed it had used "three precise munitions".

Mahmud Bassal, spokesman for the civil defence agency, said 11 children and six women were among the 93 who died at the school shelter, "and there are many unidentified body parts".

"They dropped a missile on them while they were just praying," said one woman, mourning over a dead child shrouded in a plastic body bag.

Israel's military said it had "precisely struck" Al-Tabieen, later adding that intelligence suggested "at least 19 Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists were eliminated".

Hamas denounced it as a "dangerous escalation", while the Palestinian group's Lebanese ally Hezbollah called it a "horrific massacre".

Iran, which backs both militant groups and had accused Israel of wanting to spread war in the Middle East following high-profile killings in Tehran and Beirut, condemned what it called a "barbaric attack".

"Those who were inside the mosque were all killed," said local resident Abu Wassim. "Even the floor above, where women and children were sleeping, was completely burned."

BNP leader Salahuddin returns after nine years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed returned to Bangladesh yesterday from India, where he ended up under mysterious circumstances over nine years ago.

To give him a warm welcome, thousands of party members gathered at Dhaka's Shahjalal International Airport, where he landed at 2:15pm after departing from Delhi at 11:00am.

Upon his return in a changed political landscape after the ouster of the Awami League

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Scientists invent new way to make Mars habitable

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists want to sprinkle engineered dust particles across the Martian atmosphere, warming it up so that it could be made habitable.

The groundbreaking idea is one of a number of revolutionary ways that scientists have proposed to terraform Mars, so that it could be made more like Earth and perhaps even serve as a home for humans.

At the moment, the Martian surface is inhospitable: it is punishingly cold, blasted by deadly UV rays, the soil is salty, the air is thin, and there is no evidence that anything currently lives there.

The new method is more than 5,000 times more efficient than previous schemes, the scientists behind it say.

It makes use of resources that are easily available on Mars – rather than requiring us to transport materials from our planet, or digging them out of the Martian ground.

Researchers warn that the proposal would take decades to actually work. But many other proposals could be impossible because of the vast amount of work required to make them happen.

The first proposals for terraforming Mars started in the early 1970s. In the 50 years since, researchers have suggested a host of different ways of making it more like Earth, none of which have got off the ground.

Resignation statement news 'fake'

Says Joy about Hasina; 'mob rule being allowed'

STAR REPORT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy yesterday doubled down on his earlier claim that his mother did not resign.

"The recent resignation statement attributed to my mother published in a newspaper is completely false and fabricated," he said in his verified X handle.

"I have just confirmed with her that she did not make any statement either before or since leaving Dhaka," he wrote.

Meanwhile, in an interview with AFP, he thanked New Delhi for "saving her life", accused the interim government of allowing "mob rule" and warned of chaos ahead without swift elections.

Hasina, 76, fled by a helicopter to longtime ally India in a culmination of a student-led uprising on August 5.

"Right now in Bangladesh, you have mob rule," Joy told AFP from Washington.

He pointed to the ouster of top officials, including the chief justice, central bank governor and police chief, following protesters' demands.

"If the mob tomorrow says, 'no, we want this person in the interim government

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

PHOTO: REUTERS

Displaced Palestinians flee Hamad City following an Israeli evacuation order in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

'Law enforcers not our enemy'

Gopalganj AL says errant people to be handed over to police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Faridpur*

Gopalganj Awami League has asked leaders and activists of the party and its associate bodies not to hold any programme blocking roads and interrupting daily life.

It also asked them to hold peaceful events and not to carry any homemade weapons, said a press release yesterday.

The directives came a day after at least nine army personnel were injured and a military vehicle was torched during a clash in Gopalganj following an AL procession demanding the return of party President Sheikh Hasina to the country.

"Remember law enforcement agencies are not our enemy," said the press release, asking not to use any power against them.

The district AL regretted the untoward incident that happened with the army

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

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US orders carrier group to hasten ME arrival

P7

The banality of evil and the Messiah of a new dawn

P9

Startups seek reforms and stability from interim govt

P10

Salahuddin 'not resigning', will seek fifth term

P11

Interim govt to get necessary time for polls

BNP, Jamaat, 5 other parties tell Yunus

SAJJAD HOSSAIN *and* RASHIDUL HASAN

Seven political parties, including the BNP and Jamaat, yesterday said Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim government can take the time necessary for creating an atmosphere conducive to holding a free and fair election.

Along with the BNP and Jamaat, Amar Bangladesh Party, two factions of Gono Adhikar Parishad, Bangladesh Jatiya Party, and National Democratic Movement told Prof Yunus this at separate meetings in the state guest house Jamuna.

During the meetings, in which advisers Asif Nazrul, Adilur Rahman, Farida Akhter, Nahid Islam, and Asif Mahmud were present, the parties were asked if the National Day of Mourning should be observed and whether August 15 should remain a public holiday.

Sources who were present at the meetings said all the parties opined that August 15 should not be observed as a day of mourning, and the public holiday is not needed.

However, no decision was made in this regard, they said.

Sources who were present at the meetings said all the parties opined that August 15 should not be observed as a day of mourning, and the public holiday is not needed.

Emerging from the meeting, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, who led an eight-member delegation to the meeting, told journalists, "We have given this interim government the time required to create a proper environment for holding an election."

He said they did not discuss the election and that the BNP did not mention any specific time frame for holding the next election.

Fakhrul said his party was extending its full support to all the activities of the interim government.

Sources in the BNP said the party urged the chief adviser to have all the cases against its leaders, including those against party chairperson Khaleda Zia and acting chairman Tarique Rahman, withdrawn.

Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman, who led an 11-member delegation to the meeting, told the media that his party's discussions with the interim government focused on national issues, not party specifics.

"We are hopeful that the interim government will solve various problems within a reasonable time," he said.

Andaleeve Rahman Partho, chairman of the Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP), said, "The fall of the Awami League [government] occurred through a revolution, and it will take some time for the situation to stabilise.

"For the last 15 years, everything the Awami League government did was illegal. Now, it's time to repair the state. We don't want to rush to an election. Whatever good this government does, we will support."

Chairman Bobby Hajjaj of National Democratic Movement (NDM) said, "We urged the advisers to remove the representatives in local governments and appoint administrators.

"We suggested changing the deputy commissioners

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Policemen, along with student volunteers, controlling traffic in the capital's Dhanmondi-3. Police officials yesterday returned to the streets and their stations yesterday after abstaining from their duties since August 4 in fear of attacks on them following the violence centring the anti-discrimination protests.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

RECENT VIOLENCE

Firearms looted from at least 22 DMP stations

Says commissioner

STAR REPORT

Firearms were looted from at least 22 police stations in the capital, and the number may increase after the end of the ongoing assessment, said DMP officials.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mainul Hasan said those stations were completely damaged by vandals and arsonists.

"Many of the looted arms and ammunition were surrendered to the army, Rab, and Ansar officials. We're now assessing how many are still missing," he told The Daily Star last night.

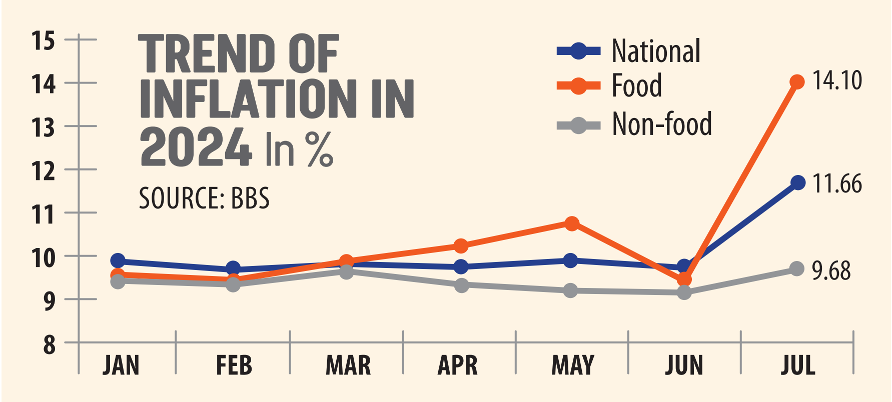
A high official of the DMP, requesting anonymity, said there were instances where arms were taken away from police officials who were attacked while they were trying to return to duty or workplaces.

The DMP yesterday urged those in possession of illegal arms and ammunition to surrender to the nearest police station, adding that possession of those is a punishable offence.

Another 30 police stations had their gates either burned down or damaged in similar attacks.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Food inflation tops 14pc for first time in 13yrs



REJAUL KARIM BYRON *and* MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

Bangladesh's worsening economic crisis has spun off a price shock with food inflation crossing 14 percent in July for the first time in 13 years.

Part of the reason was a nationwide supply chain disruption caused by weeks of deadly protests that led to the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

The consumer price index that includes food and non-food inflation rose 1.94 basis points to 11.66 percent in July from the previous month, according to data released by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics yesterday.

Moderate inflation is a fact of life, but higher inflation hurts fixed-income people badly. Consumers lose purchasing power faster at a higher rate of inflation. People are forced to chip away at precious savings.

"July was a month of turbulence and economic disruption. Supply chains broke down because of shutdowns, curfew, and internet blockage. These adversely affected the supply of goods in various markets," said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

The statistical agency published inflation data after Bangladesh formed an interim government following the end of Hasina's 15-year regime. Hasina fled the country in the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Bangladesh experiencing a student-led revolution

Says Prof Yunus

AFP

Bangladesh is experiencing a student-led revolution after the ouster of premier Sheikh Hasina, said interim government chief Muhammad Yunus.

"This is a revolution, a student-led revolution," the Nobel laureate told a news briefing on Sunday.

"There's no doubt about [that] because the business of the whole government collapsed."

Yunus, 84, arrived back in Bangladesh from Europe on August 8 after he was called by the student leaders of the protests that toppled Hasina and asked to steer democratic reforms.

"I said, 'I respect you, I admire you. What you have done is absolutely unparallelled'," he said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Star BUSINESS

Several banks are clinically dead: CPD

Several banks in Bangladesh are clinically dead but are being kept alive through bailouts, said Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

Banks on the verge of collapse should be allowed to shut down, she said while presenting a paper at a media briefing yesterday.

Some third and fourth-generation banks that were awarded licences during Awami League-led government's 15 years in power are now ailing, Fahmida said.

"Additionally, several previously good banks have experienced an unfortunate decline in their performance after hostile takeovers by crony capitalists," she added.

STORY ON B1

'Let's begin anew from the ruins'

CJ urges colleagues to work without fear

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Syed Refaat Ahmed

Newly appointed Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed yesterday called for a fresh start from the ruins.

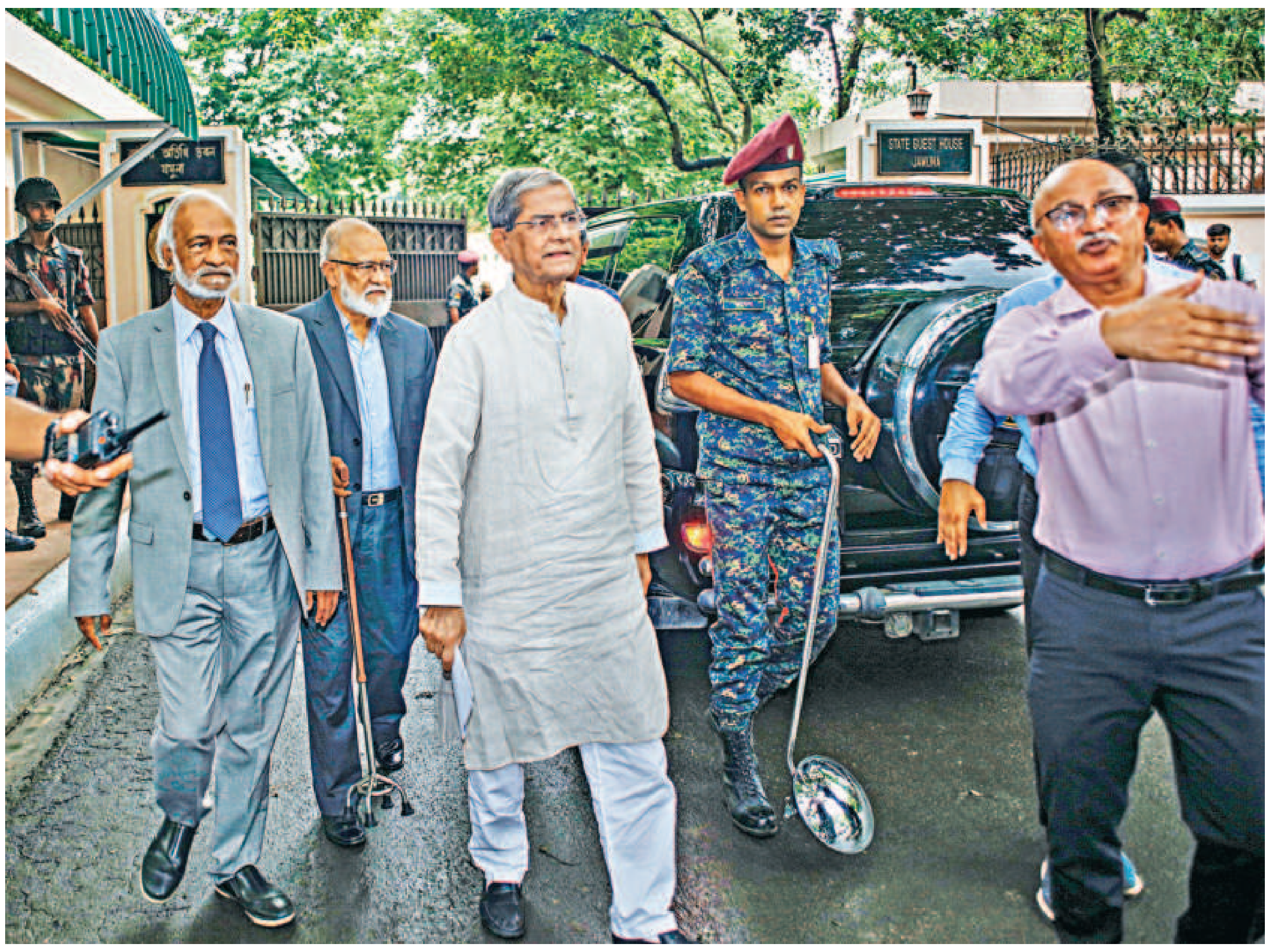
At a reception in the Supreme Court, he described the historic victory of the student movement as a golden opportunity for the judiciary to stand by the oppressed.

He urged his colleagues to work without fear and warned them against deviation, injustice or breach of etiquette.

"You are all aware of the reasons behind the student movement against discriminations that resulted in the mass uprising. At this moment, we are standing on a pile of rubble. Our sense and values of justice has been destroyed and distorted in the judicial process over the years.

"Dishonesty instead of integrity,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



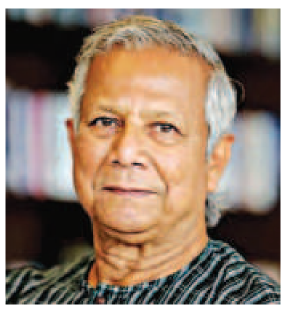
Top BNP leaders including Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir leaving State Guesthouse Jamuna in the capital yesterday after a meeting with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

Engage young people in all tiers of govt

Chief adviser asks top bureaucrats

BAHARAM KHAN *and* MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday directed top bureaucrats to find out ways to utilise the power of the young people at different tiers of the government.

During a meeting with the senior secretaries and secretaries of 25 ministries and divisions, he also asked them to ensure that no official travels abroad "without special urgent needs", said meeting sources.

"All should work realising the young people's expectations regarding the changes they brought," a secretary quoted Yunus as saying.

The chief adviser holds the portfolios of the 25 ministries and divisions.

The meeting which lasted for one and a half hours began at 11:00am at the state guesthouse Jamuna.

A secretary who was at the meeting said the chief adviser ordered all government offices to start working in full swing.

He also asked the officials concerned to maintain

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

PBI to probe the killing of Abu Sayed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

The murder case of Abu Sayed, a student of Begum Rokeya University, who was killed in police firing during the anti-discrimination student movement in Rangpur, has been transferred to the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI).

The case has been moved from Rangpur city's Tajhat Police Station to the PBI following an order from the Police Headquarters yesterday, confirmed ABM Zakir Hossain, superintendent of police at Rangpur PBI.

In the afternoon of July 16, Sayed, 23, was shot and killed during the quota reform protest near his university.

Video footage shows police shooting Sayed, who posed no physical threat to the law enforcers. He died soon afterwards.

But contradicting what is evident, the First Information Report (FIR) filed by police said Sayed was not a victim of police firing.

আমাদের নতুন SECULAR বাংলাদেশ

As student volunteers repaint the city, this particular wall mural in Dhaka University's TSC read, "Amader notun secular Bangladesh [Our new secular Bangladesh]". The photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Troops to return to barracks once police resume normal duty

Says army chief

STAR REPORT

Soldiers will return to barracks once the police resume full-scale operation across the country, Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman said yesterday.

He said this during a press briefing after inspecting the activities of the army's temporary camp at Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna city around 4:00pm.

Prior to this, he exchanged views with the top government officials of the division and district.

The army chief said that things have improved in terms of law and order in the country and that things will soon return to normal.

"If the situation continues to improve, all regular forces will carry out their counter-terrorism operations," he said, reports UNB.

Regarding attacks on minorities, the army chief said around 30 instances of attacks on minority communities have been committed in 20 districts to date.

The majority of these crimes, he continued, were politically motivated and involved the looting and arson of temples.

In this context, he urged the political parties to put the interests of the people before violence.

Food inflation tops 14pc for first time

FROM PAGE 1

face of mass protests led by students.

Elevated consumer prices have a long life in Bangladesh. Since March 2023, the overall inflation has stayed over 9 percent.

While economists blamed the price surge in July on the supply chain breakdown, they also raised questions over the statistical agency's past shoddy data that kept inflation relatively subdued. The actual data could be much higher. The economists have now urged the government to reveal the real inflation data as Hasina's rule ended.

The price spike came largely from food inflation in both urban and rural markets. Non-food inflation also increased, albeit at a much slower pace than food inflation.

Hussain said the increased uncertainty due to political turmoil may have created a "precautionary demand" for essential items.

"It is natural for people to try to stock up when they are not sure about the functioning of markets and the availability of goods even if markets are open. This may have created additional pressure on prices."

The "fearless disclosure of the truth" may be another reason for higher inflation, he said. "The BBS may have felt no inhibition in releasing the numbers without massaging under the changed political circumstances."

Prof Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling, concurred with Hussain and accused Hasina's government of manipulating inflation data.

"The statistical agency didn't publish the real data and showed the 'reduced value' to give political advantages to the government," Raihan said. "We raised the issue with the government as well."

He also pointed to the supply chain disruption since mid-July when student protests turned deadly. As a result, the low- and fixed-income people were the first to take a hit from a sudden price spike.

Bangladesh experiencing

FROM PAGE 1

"'Because you ordered me to do this, I take your order'," Yunus said he told them.

Several top allies of Hasina, whose iron-fisted tenure ended with her abrupt resignation and flight to neighbouring India a week ago, subsequently stepped down.

Among them were the former chief justice of the Supreme Court and the central bank governor.

They had been issued ultimatums to quit their posts by students but Yunus said their resignations had been conducted legally.

"They want to have a new court," he said of the students. "So they went there and asked the chief justice to resign and put their pressure on him."

"I'm sure they will find the legal way to justify all of this, because legally... all the steps were followed," he said.

Hasina, 76, fled by helicopter as protesters flooded Dhaka's streets in a dramatic end to her long rule.

Her government was accused of widespread human rights abuses, including the extrajudicial killing of thousands of her political opponents.

"Finally, at this moment, the monster is gone," Yunus said.

However, despite the groundswell of public goodwill towards him, Yunus warned that his interim government faced difficult decisions ahead.

"The moment you start making decisions, some people will like your decisions, and some people will not like your decisions," he said. "Obviously, that's the way it works."

Yunus made the comments during an off-the-record media briefing on Sunday night at a state building being used as a temporary seat of government.

His office agreed to their publication on Monday evening.

Yunus won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his pioneering work in microfinance, credited with helping millions of Bangladeshis out of grinding poverty.

He took office as chief adviser to a caretaker administration made up of all civilians except a retired brigadier-general.

He said last week that he wanted to hold elections "within a few months".

Firearms looted from at least 22 DMP stations

FROM PAGE 1

According to sources, at least 15,000 bullets were plundered from a police station in Uttara alone.

Another DMP official said a similar incident occurred at Badda Police Station.

According to various police sources, many police stations outside the capital suffered the same fate.

MORE COPS JOIN WORK

The Police Headquarters yesterday said that 628 of the 639 police stations across the country were operational.

In a press release, it also said that 108 of 110 police stations in metropolitan areas resumed work, while 520 of 529 police stations in districts began functioning again.

However, the presence of traffic police was still thin, while many cops remained absent from their stations and other units despite their strike being called off.

At some 11 stations, necessary logistics, furniture, and equipment were destroyed, and those couldn't start operations, the PHQ said, adding that it would take two to three days for those to become functional.

Police personnel refrained from discharging their duties following attacks on them after the violence centring the anti-discrimination student protests, which led to Sheikh Hasina's ouster on August 5.

Many cops were killed during the attacks, while video evidence shows them shooting unarmed people at point-blank range.

Mohammad Mohsin, officer-in-charge of the capital's Tejgaon Police Station, said that while most of their officers joined the station, only those on duty wore their uniforms.

Till 5:30pm yesterday, 21 general diaries filed by service seekers were registered with the police station, but no case was filed.

He also said they started patrolling the main roads on a limited scale yesterday for the first time since August 5.

Visiting Tejgaon Industrial Area Police Station, this correspondent found many officers in plainclothes.

The station's OC ABM Moshiur Rahman said all their officials joined on Sunday but many are too traumatised and afraid to wear the uniform.

Meanwhile, a limited number of traffic police, along with student volunteers, Ansar members, and firefighters, were seen controlling traffic in the capital and elsewhere.

In Narayanganj, five out of the seven police stations began operations, with 70 percent of their officers joining the workplace.

Amir Khasru, an additional superintendent of police in Narayanganj, said traffic police began duties on a limited scale after 2:00pm.

In Sylhet, cops returned to duty as law and order was restored. Some traffic police personnel returned to the streets and were being assisted by scouts and Bangladesh National Cadet Corps members.

In Dinajpur, only six out of 20 traffic police were on duty on different roads yesterday, while all the stations in the district began operations.

In Munshiganj, five out of seven police stations resumed operations.

A traffic sergeant said people appreciated seeing them back on the roads.

Our correspondents in Bogura, Gazipur, Patuakhali, Kushtia, Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Brahmanbaria, Pirojpur, and Jhalakathi also reported that police stations in those districts have resumed operations, while traffic policemen were also seen discharging duties along with the student volunteers.

Home Affairs Adviser Brig Gen (retired) Sakhawat Hossain yesterday told reporters that people can inform him in case the police did not record any complaints or GD, or if they found any irregularities.

(Our district correspondents contributed to this report.)

Engage young people in all tiers of govt

FROM PAGE 1

regular contact with the international organisations and ensure Bangladesh's participation in the activities of those ogranisations.

Briefing reporters at the Secretariat after the meeting, Mohammed Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, senior secretary at the public administration ministry, said the chief adviser instructed that prompt decisions should me made regarding the purchase of fertiliser, electricity, fuel and other related items so that the food supply chain remains smooth and uninterrupted.

Prof Yunus also instructed all officials to act responsibly while making decisions, said Mezbah.

He said the chief adviser directed the secretaries to prepare within seven days a priority list on the work to be done to bring normalcy to the country fast.

The secretaries were also instructed not to bring up all matters, except for those very important, before the chief adviser for the time being, Mezbah said.

The senior secretary said they put forward the issue of many jobseekers not being appointed, even after passing the BCS exams (from 28th to 42nd) and being recommended by the Public Service Commission for government jobs.

"We hope that we will be able to make a decision on their appointments within a day or two," he said.

According to public administration ministry sources, there are around 400 such candidates.

Mezbah said they also informed the chief adviser that many administration cadre officials were "deprived" of promotions over the last few years.

Former cabinet secretary Ali Imam Majumdar, who was appointed as a special assistant to the chief adviser yesterday, will work on the issue, he said.

According to sources, the Superior Selection Board will hold a meeting soon to consider the promotions of those officials.

However, officials who are facing departmental cases and those punished on different charges, including corruption, will not be considered for promotion.

The cases of officials who were "deprived" of promotions due to their "political links" will be given special consideration, said a top official.

Around 275 senior assistant secretaries, deputy secretaries, and joint secretaries are demanding promotions and their list was presented before the chief adviser, said public administration ministry officials.

The public administration ministry also drew the attention of the chief adviser to the demand of a group of jobseekers for cancellation of the 46th BCS examination and three other recruitment exams for non-cadre jobs.

"The chief adviser said he will make a decision in this regard after discussing the matter with the Public Service Commission," said the top official.

Interim govt's major task is to sue Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

organised by the Forum for Bangladesh Studies.

He said if the present government cannot file the case due to an impaired judicial system, it can go to the United Nations or International Criminal Court (ICC).

"The case can be referred to the ICC, if a country is unwilling or unable to conduct proper proceedings."

Different bodies, including civil society, can go to the ICC directly to lodge the case over crimes against humanity, said Prof Riaz.

He demanded that three former ministers -- Obaidul Quader, Asaduzzaman Khan, and Anisul Huq -- be held accountable for "grossly violating human rights by issuing shoot-on-sight orders against unarmed people".

Prof Riaz also sought the dissolution of the current National Human Rights Commission and the formation of a new one, comprising those who have fought for human rights over the last 15 years.

"This new commission should record the testimonies of those who have been rescued from 'Aynaghor' and victims of enforced disappearances over the last 15 years ... It is essential to keep documents of these incidents and identify those responsible."

He asserted that the previous government deliberately and systematically broke down the administrative structure and called for the formation of an independent commission to hold those responsible accountable.

Another main task of the interim government, he said, is to hold a free and fair election as soon as possible to hand over power to public representatives.

"The current government needs to clarify its goals and vision to the public," he said, calling upon political parties to understand the people's aspirations and act accordingly.

Prof Riaz urged the media to publish reports that reflect the true aspirations of the masses and asked the students and the ordinary people to be careful about any actions that go against the aspirations.

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman demanded an investigation under the United Nations into the killings during the recent violence.

"The primary goal of the government is to fulfill the mandate of the people by establishing people's power, transparency, and accountability, and the right to vote," he said, calling upon all to refrain from taking revenge.

Apart from holding elections, the government must ensure freedom of opinion and expression, the freedom to participate in any parties, press freedom, the right to access information, and the right to privacy, he added.

He demanded repeal of all draconian laws and the overhaul of institutions that have been politicised.

Iftekharuzzaman emphasised that people do not want "Aynaghor" or "Hawa Bhaban".

"Political parties and their affiliated bodies must prepare a code of conduct, the government employees' code of conduct has to be updated, the provision for allowing black money to be legalised must go, and the corrupt must be held accountable," he said.

He spoke for keeping educational and service-providing institutions free from political influence.

Mirza M Hasan, a senior research fellow at the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development at BRAC University, said they want a government where checks and balances are maintained between the state and society.

He also asked for the reintroduction of the rules and regulations enacted during 2007-08, which were repealed by the former government.

He spoke for a broader approach to democracy, including a bicameral parliament, and a provision in the constitution for establishing a minimum wage for workers.

Badiul Alam Majumder, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), called for reforms in government institutions and law enforcement agencies.

He urged political parties to pursue a political settlement involving members of civil society.

Journalist Monir Haider conducted the webinar where Faiz Ahmed Taiyeb, a sustainable development and public policy critic, presented the keynote paper.

Interim govt to get necessary time

FROM PAGE 1

and superintendents of police, and reforms to the Election Commission.

"We have received assurance from the chief adviser that neither the Awami League nor its people will be given power."

The convener of a faction of Gono Odhikar Parishad, Reza Kibria, said, "The interim government will work for as long as it takes to stabilise the situation in the country and create an environment conducive to polls."

Nurul Haque Nur, who led another faction of the Gono Odhikar Parishad, said they placed a 14-point demand before the chief adviser. "We have urged the swift implementation of reforms and preparation of a roadmap for national elections."

ON AUGUST 15

AB Party Convener AFM Solaiman Chowdhury, who led a three-member team at the meeting, said observing National Day of Mourning goes against the spirit of the proclamation of independence and the July uprising.

"Actually, we had only one thing on the agenda at today's meeting -- whether August 15 should be observed as national mourning day," party's Joint Member-secretary Asaduzzaman Fuaad told The Daily Star.

"This administration is an extraordinary government that took over following the mass uprising and ouster of a dictatorial regime. Therefore, the mood and feelings of the student and young protesters on the streets should be respected," Fuaad said he had told the chief adviser.

The party argued that no public holiday is observed for Abraham Lincoln or the founding fathers of the US or Winston Churchill in Britain.

Reza Kibria said, "There is no reason to have a holiday on August 15. We know that the Awami League tried to make August a month of mourning for us, but we liberated the country and regained independence on August 5. Therefore, it is necessary to cancel the public holiday.

"Today's discussion mainly focused on observing August 15. There is no justification for this day. Dr Yunus will make the final decision on whether this day will be observed."

Nur said, "We have requested a review of various important decisions made by the government...

"All political parties that participated in today's meetings, including ours, have said that August is a month of national revolution. We want to observe this month as a month of revolution. It is not a month of mourning. It is a month of happiness and peace."

The Awami League has been observing the day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's assassination as National Day of Mourning. In 2001, the BNP-led four-party coalition government cancelled the holiday.

However, the High Court later ruled that the cancellation of the holiday was invalid.

This was the first day of meetings between the chief adviser and different political parties since Yunus-led interim government took office on August 8 following the fall of Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5.

Ganatantra Mancha and Islami Andolan also had meetings with the chief adviser yesterday, but this paper could not reach them for comments.

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Traffic cops return to Dhaka streets after six days

Work in tandem with students

STAR REPORT

Traffic police have resumed their duties on some roads in Dhaka yesterday morning after about a week of absence following the Sheikh Hasina government's ouster.

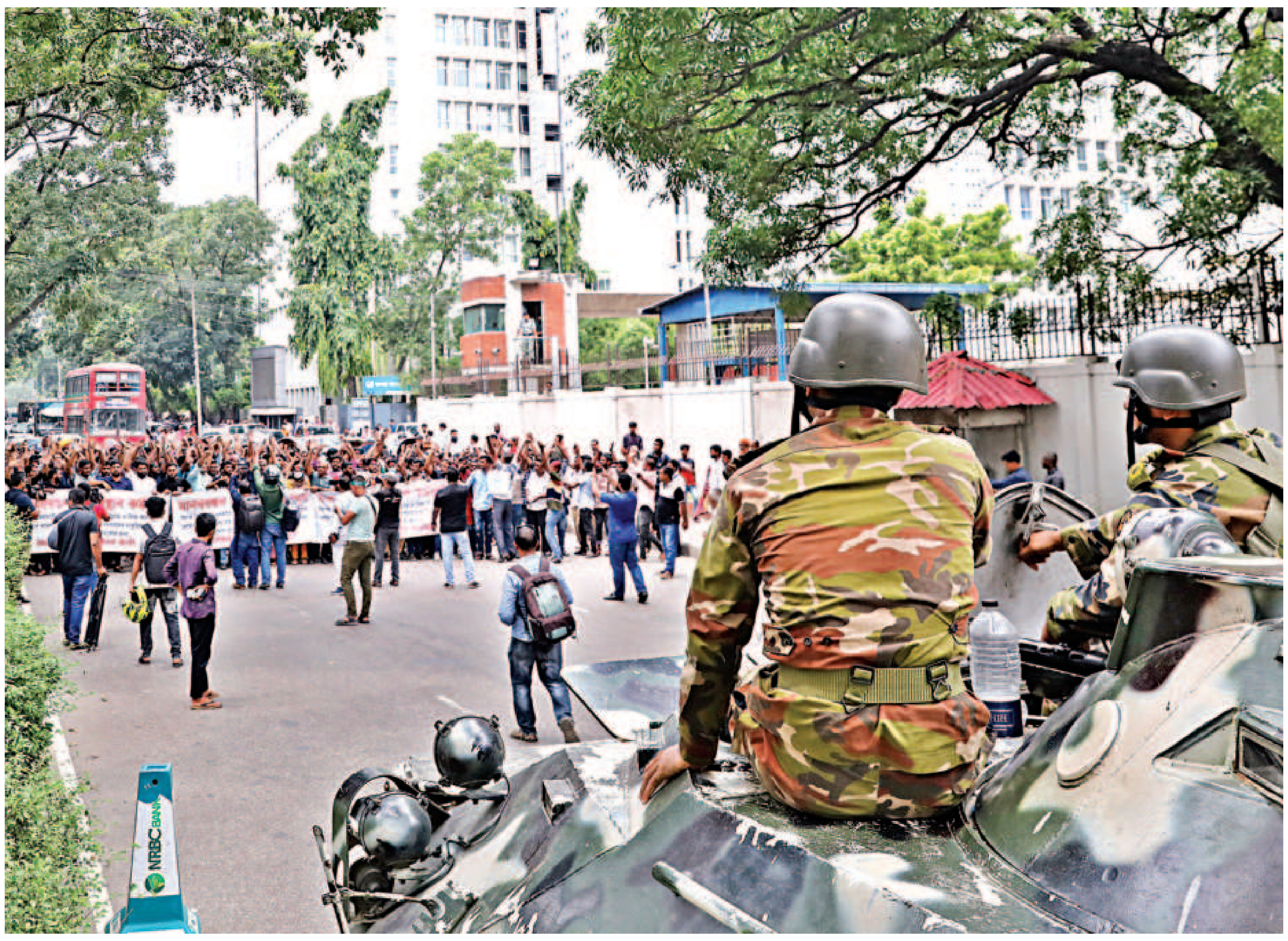
They have returned to the streets after police called off their strike following a meeting at the home ministry on Sunday.

Traffic police were seen on busy intersections including Karwan Bazar, Khamarbari, Farmgate, in various spots on Mirpur Road and Dhanmondi-3. They were working in tandem with students, who have been performing the duties of traffic police since Hasina resigned as prime minister amid a mass uprising on August 5.

Employees of police administration announced a work abstention from August 6 to press for a number of demands following clashes between protesters and police during the anti-quota movement.

Police presence on streets had been thinning since before that date. Many also reported to their stations yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Police officials who were terminated during the Awami League regime bring out a procession on the Abdul Gani Road yesterday, demanding reinstatement.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Ali Imam Majumder special assistant to chief adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former cabinet secretary Ali Imam Majumder has been appointed as the special assistant to Chief Adviser of the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus.

A circular of his appointment was issued yesterday evening.

He will enjoy the status of an adviser.

Ali Imam Majumder confirmed the matter to The Daily Star last night.

He is the first such appointment since Yunus-led interim government took charge on August 8, four days after the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina amid a mass upsurge led by students.

ATTACK ON HINDUS

Protests continue across country

STAR REPORT

People from minority communities across the country yesterday continued their protests for the fourth consecutive day against violence and attacks on them.

In Dhaka, several hundred people gathered at the Shahbagh intersection at around 4:30pm and staged a demonstration for around two hours.

They shouted slogans demanding an end to violence against them and justice for the attacks on their houses and religious institutions.

Vehicular movement through the intersection was halted during the protest.

In Noakhali, Hindus staged a demonstration for two hours from 3:00pm at the Town Hall intersection in the district headquarters.

In Dinajpur, a group of people under the banner "Sachetan Nagorik Samaj" formed a human chain and organised a protest at Biral upazila.

Minority communities have been staging demonstrations in different districts, including the capital, since Friday, protesting the ongoing violence against them.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

FIRING ON PROTESTERS

'Police to probe senior officials'

Home adviser expresses concerns over use of 7.62mm rifles by civilians

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities will take measures against senior police officials, who used excessive force to subdue protesters during July and August. Sources in the police and home ministry confirmed the development to this newspaper.

There were allegations that police used lethal weapons against students and general people as per directives of a section of senior cops.

In reply to a reporter's query about junior cops' demanding action against the seniors, Home Affairs Adviser Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hossain yesterday said it is not possible to take action against anyone just after saying that the person is guilty. "There is a need for an inquiry."

Asked about the location of the senior cops, he said, "It will come out... definitely come out."

"Everyone is bad, it is not right... they were forced to do it. Many of them are now realising [their mistakes]," he said at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka after visiting Ansar members who suffered injuries during the mass upsurge that toppled Sheikh Hasina.

CIVILIANS CARRYING POLICE RIFLES

Meanwhile, Sakhawat said a major investigation is necessary to identify the youth in civilian clothing, who were seen carrying 7.62mm rifles, a type of firearm that only the police and Rab are authorised to use.

"I find it very strange. From what I've heard, it seems that the Ansar members suffered less from police fire than from civilians wielding 7.62mm rifles," he said.

Doctors showed him the ammunition that injured the Ansar members, which included both shotgun pellets and bullets from the same types of rifle, he added.

"This is very concerning. Firearms

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Perpetrators of attacks to face justice

Says religious affairs adviser; ministry launches hotline

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Religious Affairs Adviser to the interim government AFM Khalid Hossain yesterday condemned recent attacks on religious institutions belonging to minorities.

He promised that justice would be delivered.

During a press briefing at the secretariat, Khalid confirmed that complaints had been received about attacks on minority homes and religious sites. He assured ongoing support for these communities.

Hossain announced that deputy commissioners are compiling a list of damages. The finance ministry will finalise details of assistance for victims by today. The chief adviser will also meet leaders of religious minorities this afternoon.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs also launched a hotline for reporting attacks to ensure the safety of religious institutions, reports UNB.

The new hotline number is 01766-843809.

'Reorganise, don't stir up any trouble'

Home adviser tells AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Affairs Adviser Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hussain yesterday advised the Awami League leaders and activists not to do anything that may put their lives in danger and to reorganise the party with fresh faces.

He was talking to reporters after visiting injured Ansar members at the Combined Military Hospital.

"No one has banned your [AL] party. Banning any party is a bad culture," he added.

Mentioning the contribution of AL, the home adviser said, "We cannot deny it. Reorganise the party, participate when the election comes."

"People of the country have not forgotten [AL misrule] so easily. Give them time, they may forget. Those who you considered your leaders are now on the run," he said.

Sakhawat urged all political parties to take measures to stop conflicts, including attacks on minorities. He also said the ministry would help all political parties if they initiate reforms and bring fresh faces.

The home adviser said former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was not forced to leave the country, she left willingly.

Addressing Hasina, he said, "This is your country; why don't you come back. Your citizenship was not revoked. You have served

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

AL supporters, activists plan to observe the Mourning Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Grassroots activists and supporters of the Awami League are planning to pay tribute to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on National Mourning Day this Thursday across the country.

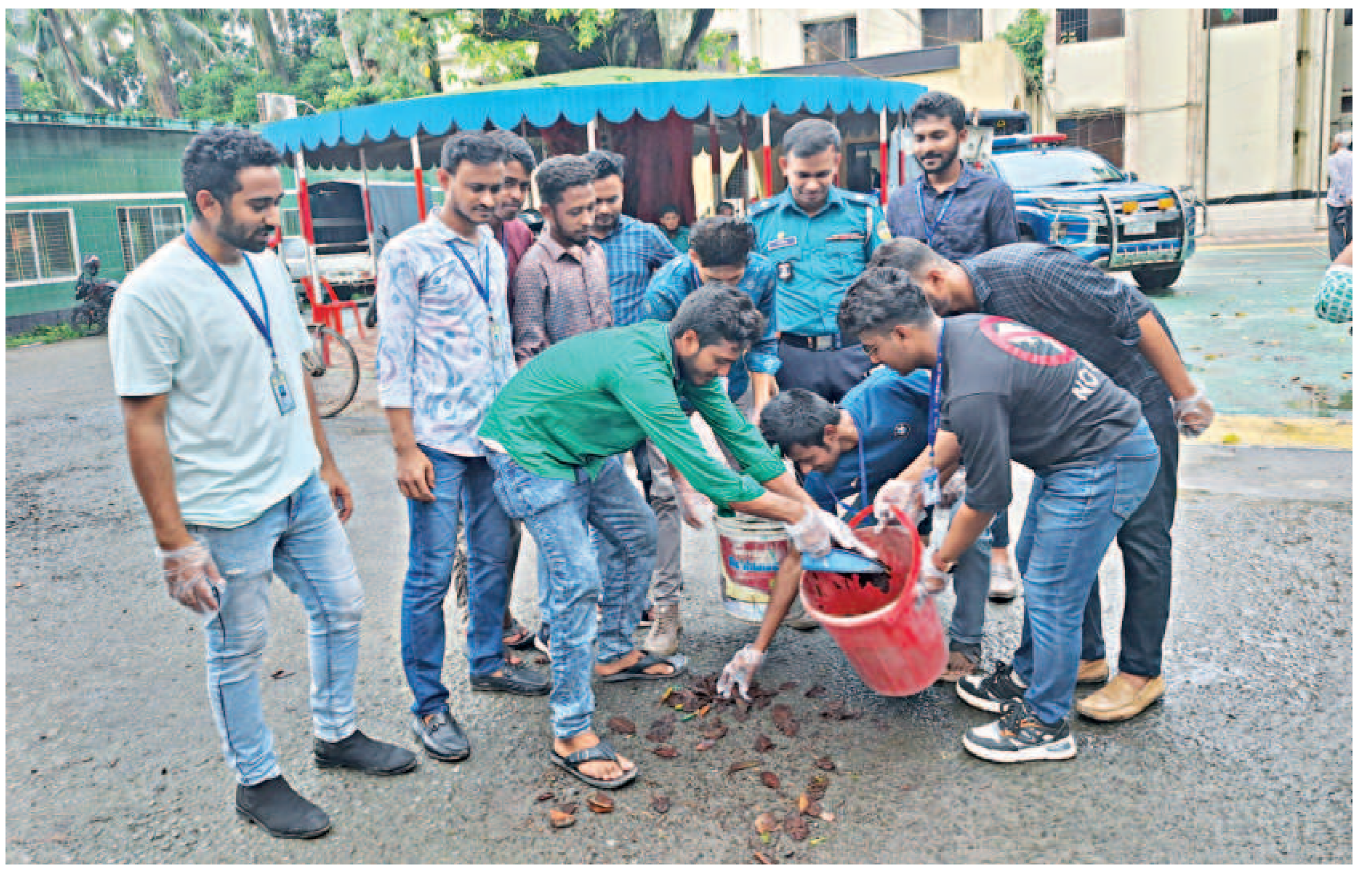
Mostly former Chhatra League leaders and a section of party grassroots have already taken the initiative to pay tribute to Bangabandhu at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi 32, which was attacked and set on fire immediately after the fall of the AL government on August 5, according to sources.

Since Sheikh Hasina left for India, the AL has been in disarray.

Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy has already urged countrymen to pay their tributes peacefully to Bangabandhu on August 15.

AL activists and supporters in the capital have been instructed to gather at Dhanmondi 32, while others are asked to observe the day in their own areas.

Organisers are using social media to circulate leaflets in this regard.



Students of Government Barisal college clean the streets in front of the Kotwali Model Police Station yesterday. Students across the country have taken up various social activities to look after their respective neighbourhoods following the August 5 mass uprising.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Try Hasina in int'l crimes tribunal

Demand student leaders, call for ban on student politics

DU CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the students against discrimination platform yesterday demanded that the government file a case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her associates in the International Crimes Tribunal for "killing students and people".

They came up with the demand at a protest rally organised at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture on the Dhaka University campus.

They also demanded a ban on organisation-based student politics on all campuses, citing various terrorist activities of Chhatra League in the educational institutions.

Criticising the advisers of the interim government, coordinator Hasnat Abdullah said, "We had seen the advisers talking about rehabilitating the murderers [Sheikh Hasina and other AL leaders]. We want to remind these advisers that you have come to power through the student-people uprising."

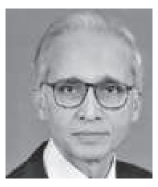
"We will not hesitate to oust you just the way we made you advisers," he warned.

Hasnat also said those who want to rehabilitate AL in this country will be resisted by the students and people.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Enamul Haque Chowdhury passes away

CITY DESK



Former Managing Director of Agrani Bank, Enamul Haque Chowdhury passed away on August 10.

He was laid to rest in Sylhet.

Chowdhury began his career in 1965 by joining United Bank.

He also served as the managing director of Sonali Bank and Shilpa Bank (now Bangladesh Development Bank).

The CEO of Agrani Bank PLC Md Murshedul Kabir expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Chowdhury.

In his condolence message, he extended heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family of the deceased.

Try Hasina in int'l

FROM PAGE 3

Addressing the media, he said, "We have a cordial relationship with the media. The role of media in making our movement global is undeniable. But we can see that some media are trying to rehabilitate those fallen. We urge the media to realise the people's pulse."

Speaking at the event, Akhter Hossen, former social welfare secretary of Dhaka University Central Students' Union and convener of Gonotantrik Chhatra Shakti, said, "Sheikh Hasina has fled the country but is still hatching various conspiracies while sitting abroad."

He also asked the students to get prepared to protect the minorities.

Protests continue

FROM PAGE 3

They placed an eight-point demand, including the formation of special tribunals to expedite the trials of those who were involved in the attacks on minorities and the formation of a minority protection commission.

Other demands include the formation of a separate ministry for minorities and the enactment and implementation of strict laws to prevent all forms of attacks on minorities.

According to statistics from Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad and Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad, there have been at least 205 incidents of attacks on members of minority communities in 52 districts since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5.

Reorganise, don't stir

FROM PAGE 3

as the prime minister for 21 years. You left the country willingly, no one asked you to do so... we all respect you."

He, however, warned that there would be no gain in stirring up trouble and rather it would only agitate people further.

Sakhawat said after the fall of Jatiyo Party leader HM Ershad, he was given the option to either leave the country or go to jail. Ershad chose to go to jail and thus saved his party.

Coming back to AL, he said, "It is a big party. I have a lot of respect for the party, which used to belong to the middle class secular people."

"The leader of such a great party [Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman] led this country to independence. There is no doubt about it. No one should have doubts... This party had collapsed in such a way that the leaders and workers had to go into hiding."

Mentioning that around 400 to 500 people from all sides including police and Ansar were killed, he said, "We don't want anymore deaths."

Pointing at AL, he further said, "Don't do this. I am requesting you not to be manipulated by someone. Don't ruin this party for personal gain. This was Bangabandhu's dream, you have no right to destroy it. It is the property of Bangladesh."

"If you dream that you will come back with a counter revolution, that would require the blood of thousands of people. If you want to take that responsibility, then I have nothing to do."

The adviser said the students, not any political parties, were behind the revolution which toppled Hasina's regime.

"They have given their lives, which you could never have done -- standing in front of a police officer's gun. They have no regrets. They [the youth] will confront you [the counter-revolutionaries]. Please keep the country independent."

Defamation case against Tarique

FROM PAGE 5

Sangsad, filed a defamation case of Tk 20 crore in the court as a complainant. Due to the long absence of the complainant, the judge dismissed the case under Section 247," said Qayyum.

According to the case, in a discussion meeting organised by the UK BNP on December 15, 2014, Tarique Rahman said Sheikh Mujibur Rahman returned to Bangladesh on January 10, 1972, with a Pakistani passport.

"Tarique also called him a 'Razakar' and 'Pakbandhu'. With that, Tarique had undermined the reputation of the country and the freedom fighters, along with Bangabandhu himself," said the case statement.

The court then issued an arrest warrant against Tarique.

In response to the acquittal of Tarique, Advocate Khandkar Nasir Uddin, upazila BNP organising secretary, said the case was politically motivated to harass the defendant.

Although the complainant in the case has been absent from the court for eight years, the former Awami League government used the court to uphold the arrest warrant, he added.

3 more VCs resign

FROM PAGE 5

the resignation of the VC and other officials of the university administration.

During the protests, students padlocked the VC's bungalow, office, and the offices of the proctor and provosts.

The proctorial body and hall provosts had stepped down from their posts amid the protest.

Meanwhile, the KUET VC and pro-VC Prof Sobahan Mia resigned from their posts yesterday. Their resignation letters were emailed to the president. Prof Mihir cited personal reasons behind this step, while Prof Sobahan mentioned illness, alongside personal reasons. The VC in his letter appointed Prof Mohammad Mashud of the mechanical engineering department to be the acting VC.

Yesterday, the DUET VC and pro-VC Abdur Rashid also resigned from their posts.

Additionally, the university's registrar Himangsu Bhowmik, and its department directors Md Nazrul Islam (student welfare department) and Md Mostafizur Rahman (physical education department), have resigned.

Himanshu confirmed the news around 8:00pm.

With the three, at least 16 VCs have so far resigned from their positions.

Police to probe senior

FROM PAGE 3

are issued to the police, but a youth in plainclothe opened fire in the Ansar's area. This is very serious -- does that mean we had armed civilians?" he questioned.

When asked about armed Awami League members carrying firearms and opening fire on protesters, Sakhawat responded, "I don't know about any league. Prohibited firearms were not supposed to be outside. Only the police and Rab were authorised to use these rifles. How did these firearms end up in civilian hands?"

"I saw another video of a civilian youth carrying a 7.62mm rifle and walking away. That means the rifle was not returned," he said.

"These rifles are missing," he said, urging everyone to hand over unauthorised firearms to the nearest police station by August 19.

THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Earlier, Inspector General of Police Mainul Islam said action would be taken against police officials who did not follow the accepted principles of applying force and violated human rights, as per police regulations.

The junior cops also demanded a trial against superiors, and a lawful inquiry about the use of firearms and bullets during the protests.

"We are taking action as per legal rules," the IGP told The Daily Star on Sunday night.

According to police protocol, officers are first supposed to ask a large gathering to disperse by blowing whistles.

If this does not work, they are to attempt to push the crowd away.

If that also fails, police can use batons. The next step is to use tear gas, and if that proves ineffective, they are instructed to fire blanks.

If the police believe their lives are in danger, they are permitted to shoot; however, there is no provision for firing a gun at an unarmed person, according to a police official citing the protocol.

Despite this, the police's excessive use of force against students and ordinary citizens has resulted in over 400 deaths, including students.

At least 42 police officers have also lost their lives, according to Police Headquarters.

Service seekers in limbo

FROM PAGE 5

will be recovered," said another CCC official wishing anonymity.

Even the CCC mayor is not going to the office, said the officials, adding that it has further deepened the crisis.

"Without the mayor's consent, all vital decision regarding the city corporation's activities, including the tender process of important projects, remain pending," said an official of CCC's engineering department.

Contacted, Sheikh Mohammad Tauhidul Islam, CCC's chief executive officer, said the councillors went into hiding for security reasons while the mayor has been absent from the office for same issue.

"I have instructed all the secretaries in the councillors' offices to join office immediately," he also said.

"We have already resumed cleaning activities in the city under the supervision of the conservancy department. Hopefully, normalcy will return to other departments from next week," Tauhidul added

Following the CCC CEO's instruction, some secretaries joined a few offices yesterday but most of the councillors' offices remained closed, said sources.

The issuance of documents and other services continued to remain suspended.

WFP
World Food Programme
বিশ্ব খাদ্য কর্মসূচী
wfp.org

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Call for Expressions of Interest For contracting NGOs for WFP's 2025-2026 Partnership cycle (from January 2025 to end 2025/26) To implement the Humanitarian Assistance Programme in Bangladesh to Enhance Food Security, Nutrition and Resilience

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) invites experienced local/national/international NGOs to submit an Expression of Interest for the implementation of "Humanitarian assistance programmes to enhance food security, nutrition and resilience."

About the Programme:
Under the Country Strategic Plan (2022 – 2026), WFP will support Bangladesh on its path to ending hunger and reducing malnutrition by 2030 through four strategic outcomes (SO):

- **SO1:** Populations affected by crisis in Bangladesh are able to meet basic food, nutrition and other essential needs during and after crises.
- **SO2:** The nutrition needs of women, children, and vulnerable groups in Bangladesh are met through national institutions that have enhanced capacities to design and implement gender- and nutrition-sensitive social safety net programmes by 2026.
- **SO3:** Vulnerable communities in Bangladesh are more resilient to shocks and natural disasters owing to enhanced national disaster management capacity and flexible nutrition- and gender-sensitive social safety net programmes by 2026.
- **SO4:** Vulnerable crisis-affected populations in Bangladesh benefit from enhanced coordination and improved common services during and after crises.

WFP, through its partners, currently provides humanitarian assistance to approximately 1.2 million people in Bangladesh. In collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), other UN agencies, and NGOs, WFP is also working in various sectors namely Food Security, Nutrition, Emergency response and Common Services. In the most vulnerable Bangladeshi communities and the camps, WFP will continue to: i) provide humanitarian food assistance to the Rohingya population every month through E-vouchers; ii) build the resilience of refugees and local communities through skills development, livelihoods, market linkages, food assistance for assets and volunteer services; iii) support schools and learning centres with school feeding and capacity building for relevant national institutions; iv) implementation of an integrated package of malnutrition prevention and treatment interventions and nutrition services targeting children aged 6-59 months and pregnant and lactating women; v) implement safety-net programmes; vi) implement disaster risk preparedness and response to protect the food security of vulnerable population; vii) implement Food and Nutrition Security Programme in Urban areas; viii) provide lifesaving food assistance during Emergency Response to any disaster in any geographical location in Bangladesh (through the provision of a standby emergency roster).

Conditions for entry:
The organization must have:

- A fully filled-in profile in the UN partner Portal (UNPP)
- Legal status (valid registration certificate with NGO Affairs Bureau)
- Experience in the geographic area for which it applies
- Experience in implementing food, nutrition, education (specifically school feeding), cash-based transfers and/or market-based interventions
- Experience in community mobilization and resilience building activities
- Experience in emergency preparedness and response
- Organization's strategic objectives that are aligned with WFP's strategic priorities; SO1 to SO4 mentioned above
- Adequate resource capacity (financial human resources and procurement)
- Relevant sector experience (Food, Nutrition, Logistics and Common Services)
- Strong project management experience
- Adequate financial capacity to conduct the required activities supported by an audited financial statement
- Strong relationships with local administration and relevant local and regional institutions

Application Process:
Interested parties are advised to monitor the UN Partner Portal (https://www.unpartnerportal.org/dashboard) for opportunities published for Bangladesh (Calls for Expressions of Interest – CFEI / Request for Proposal - RFP – under Partnership opportunities) during the period between July and September 2024. Please note, unlike previous years, that these partnership opportunities require a full proposal from the outset.

All interested local/national/international NGOs with a valid registration certificate from the NGO Affairs Bureau must ensure that their Organizational Profile on the Portal is fully updated with all the latest information and documents, and they must actively apply to the WFP partnership opportunity with a full proposal. Applications must be submitted through the UN partner portal within the timeframes given. A detailed guideline for creating an organizational profile in UN Partner Portal is available at https://supportcso.unpartnerportal.org/hc/en-us/sections/360000940774. Please note that there are no fees for applications and that applying is free of charge.

In case interested NGO's encounter any technical difficulties with UNPP, please contact bangladesh.flataskforce@wfp.org.

BFCC

Biman Flight Catering Centre বিমান ফ্লাইট ক্যাটারিং সেন্টার

INVITATION OF INTERNATIONAL TENDER NOTICE NO. 63/2024

01	Agency	Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd.		
02	Invitation for	Procurement of Fruit Juice (Apple, Mango & Tomato) 01 Ltr aseptic pack, Foreign.		
03	Invitation for Ref:	30.34.0000.063.15.004.24		Dated: 07-07-2024
04	Tender document selling date	**From 14-08-2024 to 24-09-2024 (During office hours).**		
05	Tender receiving date and time	**Date: 25-09-2024**	Time: 1200 Hrs BST	Note: The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without assigning any reason thereof. If any unavoidable situation arises during specified date then tender selling/closing/opening date will be shifted to next (working) day without further notice.
06	Tender opening date and time	**Date: 25-09-2024**	Time: 1500 Hrs BST	
07	Selling address of schedule (local)	(i) Address: a. Manager Finance, Biman Flight Catering Centre, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka b. Manager Cash & Banking, Balaka Bhaban, Biman, Bangladesh Airlines, Dhaka.		
08	Selling tender document (foreign)	(ii) Address: Manager Finance, Biman at Dubai, Bangkok, Singapore, London, Jeddah, Riyadh and Kuala Lumpur.		
09	Receiving tender document	a. BFCC Main Security Gate, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. b. Biman Balaka Bhaban, Security Counter Gate (Ground Floor), Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka.		
10	Price of tender document (Tk)	USD 25.00 eqvt. BDT 2,500.00 (Two thousand five hundred) only per set (non-refundable).		
11	**1) Location**	**2) Tender security amount (USD/BDT)**	**3) Supplying period**	
	BFCC/Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka	USD 4,300.00 eqvt. BDT. 5,00,000.00 (Five lac) only (refundable).	01 (one) year	
12	Procuring entity & fund	General Manager, BFCC, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. BIMAN/BFCC's own fund.		
13	Official inviting tender	Dy. General Manager, BFCC, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. Phone: 880-2-8901760-64 Ext-13, Fax: 880-2-8901638		
14	Tender schedule and other related information will be available in Biman website: www.biman-airlines.com for ready reference.			

GD- 154

Dy. General Manager, BFCC

actionaid

Tender Notice

ActionAid Bangladesh invites sealed quotations from qualified vendor/supplier for purchase of Seed and Non-Seed materials at Rohingya Refugee Camp at Ukhiya and Teknaf. The details are as follows-

SL#	Name of Items	Quantity
1	Seed & Non-Seed Materials (Green Skills Development Project)	1 Job

The Tender Schedule will be available for collect at ActionAid Cox's Bazar Office (House No-752, Ward- 11, Jhawtola, Masjid Road, Cox's Bazar- 4700) from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm during office hour of 13-19 August 2024 (Working Day). Alternatively, interested suppliers/vendors can obtain the schedule from the following website.

Website	
Seed & Non-Seed Materials (Green Skills Development Project)	https://actionaidbd.org/tender-notice

Quotation needs to be submitted in sealed envelope **on or before 20th August 2024 by 11:00 AM at above locations.**

The authority of ActionAid Bangladesh reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations without assigning any reason whatsoever.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, DPHE. STORE DIVISION
CHARERHAT, KHALISHPUR.KHULNA.PHONE # 762159.
E-mail: khulna_store@yahoo.com

Invitation For Re- Tender(Works)

Re-Tender Notice (01)/ 2024-25

Memo No: 46.03.4700.028.07.001.19- 63 **Date:12/08/2024**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System portal(http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Office of the Executive Engineer, Store Division, Khulna.

Tender ID No	Tender Package	Description of Goods	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
1008059	APP/K/S/08	Repairing of Godown shade Roof at DPHE, store Division, Khulna (FY:2024-2025)	25-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	26-Aug-2024 Time: 11:00	26-Aug-2024 Time: 11:00

This is an online Tender, Where only e-Tender Will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted.

১২/০৮/২০২৪
(Md. Khairul Hasan)
Executive Engineer,
DPHE, Store Division, Khulna.

GD- 157

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পরিসংখ্যান ব্যুরো
অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি ২০২৩ প্রকল্প
পরিসংখ্যান ভবন (১০ম তলা)
ই-২৭/এ, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭
www.bbs.gov.bd

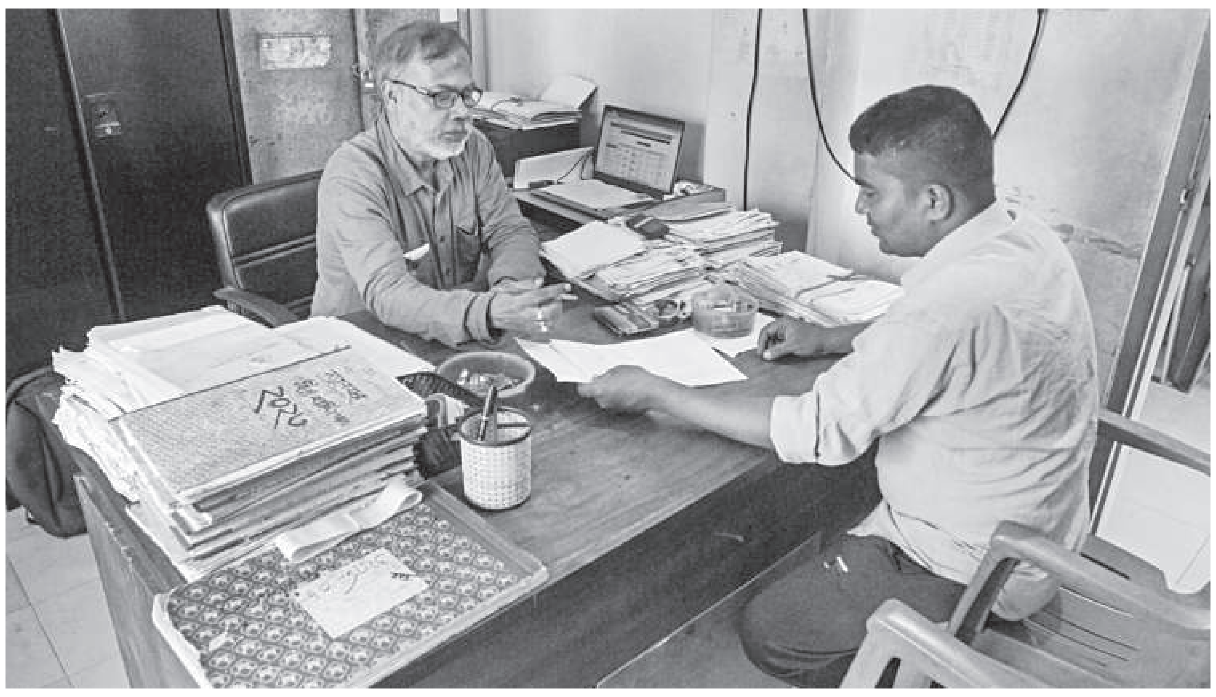
Request for Expression of Interest (EoI)

১	মন্ত্রণালয়	পরিকল্পনা মন্ত্রণালয়
২	বিভাগ	পরিসংখ্যান ও তথ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা বিভাগ
৩	ক্রয়কারী সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পরিসংখ্যান ব্যুরো
৪	ক্রয়কারী সংস্থার নাম	এস এম শাকিল আখতার
৫	Request for Expression of Interest for	SD-2: সিনিয়র আইটি, নেটওয়ার্কিং ও সাইবার সিকিউরিটি কনসালটেন্ট
৬	FoI Ref. No.	৫২.০১.০০০০.৬৩৫.০৭.০৩৬.২৪-২০২০
৭	তারিখ	১৩/০৮/২০২৪
৮	ক্রয় পদ্ধতি	SIC
৯	বাজেট ও টাকার উৎস	জিওবি
১০	প্রকল্প কোড	২২৪৩০৭৯৯০০
১১	EoI দাখিলে শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৮/০৮/২০২৪
১২	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	i. সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্ট পদে নিয়োগ প্রত্যাশী প্রার্থীকে কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স/তথ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা/প্রকৌশল/তথ্য প্রযুক্তি/পরিসংখ্যানে ২য় শ্রেণির অনার্স ডিগ্রী বা সমমানের সিজিপিএ সহ ২য় শ্রেণির মাস্টার্স ডিগ্রীধারী হতে হবে। উপর্যুক্ত বিষয়ে পিএইচডি ডিগ্রীধারীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।
১৩	অভিজ্ঞতা	তথ্য প্রযুক্তির ব্যবহার, সফটওয়্যার ও ডাটাবেজ উন্নয়ন, ডাটা ক্যাপচারিং, ডাটা প্রসেসিং, ডাটা এনালাইসিস ও রিপোর্ট প্রণয়নে ১০ (দশ) বছরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে i . আগ্রহী প্রার্থীকে পরিসংখ্যানিক তথ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা, টেবুলেশন, সফটওয়্যার ও ডাটাবেজ উন্নয়ন এবং পরিচালনায় অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। ii. স্ট্যাটিসটিক্যাল সফটওয়্যার যেমন: SPSS, CSPro, Stata এবং R ব্যবহারে বিশেষ দক্ষতা থাকতে হবে। iii. আগ্রহী প্রার্থীকে Java/PHP, MySQL এবং Oracle ডাটাবেজ ব্যবহারে বিশেষ দক্ষতা থাকতে হবে। iv. বাংলা ও ইংরেজি লেখা ও বলায় বিশেষ পারদর্শী হতে হবে।
১৪	বয়স	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা হবে ৫০ (পঞ্চাশ)) বছর।
১৫	দায়িত্ব	i. অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি পরিচালনার জন্য প্রকল্প দলিল (কর্মপরিকল্পনা অনুযায়ী আঞ্চলিক ও আন্তর্জাতিকমান বজায় রেখে সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্টকে প্রকল্প পরিচালকের নির্দেশনায় প্রকল্প টিমের সাথে একাত্ম হয়ে কাজ করতে হবে। ii. অর্থনৈতিক শুমারির প্রকল্প দলিল অনুযায়ী সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্টকে অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি ২০২৩ পরিচালনার জন্য একটি হলিস্টিক আইসিটি প্ল্যান প্রস্তুত ও তা সঠিকভাবে বাস্তবায়ন করতে হবে। iii. সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্টকে অর্থনৈতিক শুমারির আইটি সিস্টেমে ডাটা ক্যাপচারিং, ডাটা প্রসেসিং, ডাটা এনালাইসিস, টেবুলেশন, রিপোর্টিং এবং অংশীজন প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে আইটি লিঙ্ক স্থাপন নিশ্চিত করতে হবে। iv. অর্থনৈতিক শমারি ২০২৩ সফলভাবে বাস্তবায়নের জন্য ডেভেলপকৃত আইটি সিস্টেমটি উপযুক্ত এবং এটি যাতে সর্বদা সঠিকভাবে কাজ করে বিষয়টি সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্টকে নিশ্চিত করতে হবে। প্রকল্প দপ্তর/টিম এক্ষেত্রে তাঁকে সর্বাত্মক সহযোগিতা করবে। v. প্রকল্প পরিচালকের নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী প্রয়োজনীয় সকল ধরনের রিপোর্ট সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্টকে প্রস্তুত করতে হবে। এক্ষেত্রে প্রকল্পের আইটি টিম তাঁকে সর্বাত্মক সহযোগিতা করবে। vi. অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি প্রকল্প দলিল অনুযায়ী যথাসময়ে অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি পরিচালনা, প্রকাশনা প্রস্তুত ও প্রকাশনার জন্য জাতীয় পরামর্শককে সর্বাত্মক সহযোগিতা প্রদান করবেন। vii অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি বাস্তবায়নে সদর দপ্তর ও মাঠ পর্যায়ে নিযুক্ত কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারী/তথ্যসংগ্রহকারীগণকে অর্থনৈতিক শুমারির সফটওয়্যার ও ডাটাবেজের ওপর যথাযথ প্রশিক্ষণের ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণে সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্টকে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ দায়িত্ব বহন করতে হবে। প্রকল্প দপ্তর এক্ষেত্রে তাঁকে সর্বাত্মক সহযোগিতা করবে।
১৬	সময়কাল	সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্ট এর কার্যকাল হবে ১২ মাস। প্রকল্পের মেয়াদ বৃদ্ধি করা হলে পরামর্শকের মেয়াদ বৃদ্ধি করা হতে পারে। উল্লেখ্য, প্রকল্পের প্রয়োজনে কর্তৃপক্ষ এ সময়কালের হ্রাস-বৃদ্ধি করতে পারবে।
১৭	আউটপুট	অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি সংক্রান্ত নিম্নোক্ত কার্যাবলী সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্ট প্রতিপালন করবেন i. অনলাইনভিত্তিক বিএসবিআর; ii.অংশীজন প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে আইটি লিঙ্ক স্থাপন; iii. অর্থনৈতিক শুমারির চূড়ান্ত প্রতিবেদন প্রস্তুত ও প্রকাশ; iv. অন্যান্য প্রতিবেদন প্রস্তুত ও প্রকাশ।
১৮	রিপোর্টিং কর্তৃপক্ষ	অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি ২০২৩ সংক্রান্ত সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্ট তাঁর কর্মকান্ডের জন্য সরাসরি প্রকল্প পরিচালক ও মহাপরিচালক, বিবিএস এর নিকট দায়বদ্ধ থাকবেন।
১৯	সম্মানি/পারিতোষিক	সিনিয়র আইটি ও নেটওয়ার্কিং কনসালটেন্টকে অবশ্যই অর্থনৈতিক সুমারি ২০২৩ প্রকল্প এর সাথে চুক্তিবদ্ধ হতে হবে এবং প্রকল্পের অনুমোদিত দলিল।অনুযায়ী কর্মমাসের পরবর্তী মাসের ১৫ তারিখের মধ্যে প্রতিবেদন জমাদান সাপেক্ষে তিনি বাংলাদেশি টাকায় সম্মানি/পারিতোষিক প্রাপ্য হবেন।
২০	কনসালটেন্ট এর সংখ্যা	১ (এক) জন।
২১	EoI আহবানকারীর নাম ও পদবি	এস এম শাকিল আখতার, প্রকল্প পরিচালক (যুগ্মসচিব), অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি ২০২৩ প্রকল্প।
২২	EoI আহবানকারীর অফিস ঠিকানা	প্রকল্প পরিচালক, অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি ২০২৩ প্রকল্প, পরিসংখ্যান ভবন (১০ম তলা), ই-২৭/১৫, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭।
২৩	EoI আহবানকারীর যোগাযোগ ও তথ্য প্রাপ্তির স্থান	ফোন নং: ০২-৫৫০০৬৮৪৫, e-mail: ec24.bbs.gov.bd, www.bbs.gov.bd, www.cptu.gov.bd

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীকে EoI জমা দেয়ার আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হলো। প্রার্থীকে সকল একাডেমিক সার্টিফিকেটের ফটোকপি এবং অভিজ্ঞতার সনদসহ প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র জমা দিতে হবে। প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই EoI/আবেদনের সাথে জীবন বৃত্তান্ত এই EoI এ উল্লেখিত ১২ এবং ১৩ নং অনুযায়ী নিজের শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা এবং প্রয়োজনীয় অভিজ্ঞতা উল্লেখ করতে হবে। ক্রয়কারী সংস্থা প্রাপ্ত EoI গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা রাখে।

১২/৮/২০২৪
এস এম শাকিল আখতার
প্রকল্প পরিচালক (যুগ্মসচিব)
অর্থনৈতিক শুমারি ২০২৩ প্রকল্প
ফোন: ০২-৫৫০০৬৮৪৫
ইমেইল: ec24.bbs.gov.bd

GD- 155



Following the CCC CEO's instruction, some secretaries joined a few offices yesterday but most of the councillors' offices remained closed. The photo was taken at the office of ward-8 councillor. PHOTO: STAR

Service seekers in limbo

Most councillor offices remain closed in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Suman Haldar, a resident of Jamal Khan area of port city, went to the office of ward 21 councillor of Chattogram City Corporation on Sunday to collect his child's birth certificate, but had to return empty handed as the office was closed.

"This is the third time in last one week that I had to return empty handed from this office as it has remained closed," said Suman.

Rashedul Islam, who went to the ward 15 office for a certificate to take his brother abroad for treatment, faced a similar situation.

All 41 ward councillors' offices across the CCC areas have remained closed since August 5, causing much sufferings to service seekers.

According to CCC sources, all necessary paperworks including birth certificate, nationality certificate, character certificate, inheritance certificate, succession certificate are issued from the CCC councillors' offices as those require the signature of councillors of respective wards.

At present, none of these documents can be issued with the offices remaining closed.

A closed councillor's office in the port city. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Visiting different areas in the port city, this correspondent found the councillors' offices for wards 15 (Bagmoniram), 16 (Chawkbazar), 17 (West Bakalia), 20 (Dewan Bazar), 21 (Jamal Khan), 25 (Rampur), 32 (Anderkilla) and 33 (Firingi Bazar) closed on Sunday.

According to locals, many of the offices went through looting, vandalism and arson since August 5, and the councillors and other officials have not been working over security concerns.

None could confirm when the offices will reopen and services will resume.

Preferring anonymity, an official of CCC said after the government resigned on August 5, there was a spree of looting and vandalism at almost all the 41 ward councillors' offices, and necessary documents related to the CCC services were destroyed.

Since then, these offices have remained closed, while the councillors have been hiding due to insecurity and political reasons, and officials and staffers have stopped going to the offices.

"Many necessary documents, which people had submitted to these offices, were burnt in the arson attacks. We are not sure how the loss

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

CCC ward offices face Tk 4.31cr loss

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

The damage to valuables in the Chattogram City Corporation ward offices during the August 5 violence has been estimated at over Tk 4.31 crore, according to CCC sources.

Ward 41 (South Patenga) suffered the most, with losses estimated at Tk 1.55 crore. The second most affected was ward-9 (North Pahartoli), with damages amounting to Tk 1.5 crore.

Miscreants reportedly targeted nearly every CCC ward office following the fall of the Awami League government on August 5. Even offices of councillors for reserved seats were not spared.

Due to security concerns, CCC ward councillors and the mayor have been absent from their offices since the attacks. The mayor's residence in Bahaddarhat was also attacked on August 4 and 5, along with the homes of several ward councillors.

CCC Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Mohammad Tauhidul Islam said along with vandalism, many important documents and valuables were damaged.

The estimates were based on ground assessments, he added.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 13

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-41	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-44	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

KULAURA UPAZILA IN MOULVIBAZAR

Services at a standstill as most UP chairmen flee

MINTU DESHWARA

Most union parishad chairmen in Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila, who are also Awami League leaders, have gone into hiding following the fall of Sheikh Hasina due to a mass upsurge.

As such, essential public services at the UP offices have been at a standstill.

Vandalism at the UP offices, alongside existing security concerns, further exacerbated the situation as no one could ascertain when the services will resume.

This in turn resulted in a backlog of requests for certificates, as those cannot be issued without signatures from the respective UP chairman, thereby preventing residents from completing important official processes.

The chairmen who have gone into hiding include Wadud Box (Hajipur union), Akbar Ali Sohag (Routgaon union), Mosaddik Ahmad Noman (Kulaura Sadar union), Md Abdul Malik (Tilagaon union), Abdur Rob Mahabub (Jaychandi union), Zafar Ahmed Gilman (Kadipur union), Muhibul Islam Azad (Karmadha Union), Jimiur Rahman Chowdhury (Prithimpasha union), and Khalilur Rahman (Sharifpur union), among others.

Contacted, Wadud, Abdul, Mosaddiq and Khalilur cited fear of potential attacks for their absence.

Expressing frustration, locals who sought documents including certificates for citizenship, inheritance or birth, said the incumbent chairmen should resign or delegate their duties to panel chairmen.

Azizur Rahman Monir, chairman of Bhukshimail union and also vice-president of upazila unit BNP, is among a few who have reportedly continued attending to their duties.

Azizur said, "I have informed the UNO about the safety concerns of the chairmen. I have also told my party leaders and activists that they should cooperate with the UP chairmen to serve the needs of the locals."

Mohi Uddin, UNO of Kulaura upazila, said cooperation among all parties is needed to restore normalcy and meet the people's needs.

People in front of UP office in Kulaura. PHOTO: STAR

3 more VCs resign

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over the last two days, three vice-chancellors have resigned from their positions.

They are Chittagong University VC Prof Md Abu Taher, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology VC Prof Mihir Ranjan Halder and Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology Prof Md Habibur Rahman.

Prof Taher resigned on Sunday. He submitted his resignation letter to the president and also emailed a copy to the university's registrar last night.

Acting registrar KM Nur Ahmad confirmed his resignation yesterday.

Since August 9, students had been demanding

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

68 law officers step down in a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sixty-eight state law officers out of 207, including the attorney general appointed by the Sheikh Hasina-led government, have resigned from their offices in the last seven days.

Among them, Senior Advocate AM Amin Uddin resigned from the post of attorney general on August 7.

Advocate Sk Md Morshed stepped down from the post of additional attorney general on August 6, a day after Hasina resigned and fled the country.

Then two other additional attorney generals -- SM Munir and Mohammad Mehedi Hassan Chowdhury -- resigned.

All of them sent their resignation letters to the president through the attorney general's office, AG office sources said yesterday.

According to sources, many aspiring candidates from various political backgrounds have submitted their resumes to replace the public prosecutors.

Since the fall of the government on August 5, many officials who had been appointed to major positions have stepped down or been removed.

Defamation case against Tarique dismissed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

A Patuakhali court yesterday dismissed an eight-year-old defamation case against BNP acting Chairman Tarique Rahman.

Patuakhali's Kalapara Upazila Senior Judicial Magistrate Court Judge Ashish Roy dismissed the case.

The defendant's lawyer Advocate Khandaker Nasir and court bench assistant Md Qayyum confirmed the order to The Daily Star.

"On January 15, 2015, Habibullah Rana, former deputy commander of Kalapara Muktijoddha

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
টেকসই ও নবায়নযোগ্য জ্বালানি উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ (স্রেডা)
বিদ্যুৎ বিভাগ
আইইবি ভবন (১১ তলা), রমনা, ঢাকা
www.sreda.gov.bd

নং: ২৭.০২.০০০০.০২২.১৮.০০২.২২-১৫৯ তারিখ: ১২ আগষ্ট ২০২৪ খ্রিঃ

জ্বালানি ব্যবস্থাপক (৩য় স্কীম) নির্বাচনে প্রশিক্ষণ ও প্রশিক্ষণ পরবর্তী মূল্যায়নে অংশগ্রহণের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

টেকসই ও নবায়নযোগ্য জ্বালানি উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ আইন, ২০১২ এবং জ্বালানি নিরীক্ষা প্রবিধানমালা, ২০২৩ অনুযায়ী দেশের বিদ্যুৎ ও জ্বালানির বৃহৎ ব্যবহারকারী শিল্প-কলকারখানা ও বাণিজ্যিক স্থাপনায় জ্বালানির দক্ষ ও সাশ্রয়ী ব্যবহার নিশ্চিতকল্পে নিয়মিত তদারকি/জ্বালানি ব্যবস্থাপনার জন্য যথাযথ যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন জ্বালানি ব্যবস্থাপক (Energy Manager) তৈরি করা স্রেডার একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কার্যক্রম। এ প্রেক্ষিতে, স্রেডা ৩ (তিন) দিন ব্যাপী প্রশিক্ষণ এবং ১ (এক) দিন প্রশিক্ষণ পরবর্তী মূল্যায়ন কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা করতে যাচ্ছে। উক্ত প্রশিক্ষণে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য বাংলাদেশের নাগরিকদের কাছ থেকে আবেদন আহবান করা হচ্ছে।

২. আগ্রহী প্রার্থীগণকে আগামি **১৯ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ খ্রিঃ** তারিখের মধ্যে অনলাইনে আবেদন সম্পন্ন করতে হবে এবং প্রশিক্ষণ ফি প্রদান করতে হবে।

৩। প্রশিক্ষণার্থীদের প্রশিক্ষণ সেশনে অংশগ্রহণ ও প্রশিক্ষণ পরবর্তী মূল্যায়ন পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হওয়া সাপেক্ষে জ্বালানি ব্যবস্থাপক সনদ প্রদান করা হবে। প্রশিক্ষণ ও প্রশিক্ষণ পরবর্তী মূল্যায়ন সংক্রান্ত যাবতীয় বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে। বিস্তারিত তথ্য সম্বলিত বিজ্ঞপ্তি, অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী জানতে ভিজিট করুন www.sreda.gov.bd ওয়েবপেজ।

অনলাইন আবেদন ফরমের লিংক: https://forms.gle/FRY1s7J5MSwnJSs2A

স্বা/=
(মোঃ আব্দুল্লাহ আল মামুন)
সহকারী পরিচালক (জ্বালানি নিরীক্ষা ও এক্রিডিটেশন)

GD-148

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Gopalganj
E-mail: ee_gop@eedmoe.gov.bd

Memo No. 37.07.0000.002.68/176 Date: 12.08.2024 Eng.

e-Tender Notice No. e-GP/04/EED/Gop/4931/SHED/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Web Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works. Details are given below:

SL No.	Tender Package No.	Tender ID No.	Description of works	Last selling (date & time)	Last submission (date & time)	Closing & opening (date & time)
1	4931/WD-27/SHED/2023-2024	1007689	Repair & Renovation works of Academic Building at Sheikh Hasina Govt. Girls High School & College under Sadar Upazila Gopalganj District.	28-Aug-2024 16:00	29-Aug-2024 12:30	29-Aug-2024 13:00
2	4931/WD-28/SHED/2023-2024	1007690	Construction of Toilet Block of Mosque at Govt. Bangabandhu College under Sadar Upazila Gopalganj District.	28-Aug-2024 16:00	29-Aug-2024 12:30	29-Aug-2024 13:00
3	4931/WD-29/SHED/2023-2024	1007691	Repair & Renovation works of Temple Building at Govt. Bangabandhu College under Sadar Upazila Gopalganj District.	28-Aug-2024 16:00	29-Aug-2024 12:30	29-Aug-2024 13:00

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Web Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Web Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank any branch up to abovementioned date & time. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Web Portal and from e-GP help desk and also from ee_gop@eedmoe.gov.bd.

12.08.2024
Protiva Sarkar
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Gopalganj
Phone: 026685108

GD- 147

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, অর্থ শাখা
রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৪/২০২৪-২০২৫খ্রিঃ

স্মারক নং-৪৪.০১.০০০০.০৯৪.১৮.০০১.২৪/২০০(রেশন), তারিখঃ ১২/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ

নিম্নলিখিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা'র রেশন স্টোরের ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টারের (অক্টোবর/২০২৪খ্রিঃ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪খ্রিঃ মাসের) জন্য নিম্নোক্ত পণ্য ও সেবা ক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত মিল মালিক/ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়।
২	সংস্থা	স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা।
৩	আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ	স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা।
৪	আইটেমের নাম	পণ্য ও সেবা।
৫	দরপত্র নম্বর ও তারিখ	নং-০৪/২০২৪-২০২৫, তারিখঃ ১১/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ।
৬	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
৭	অর্থের উৎস	জিওবি (রাজস্ব)।
৮	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	১৪/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ অথবা তার পূর্বে।
৯	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	দর প্রস্তাবের সময় নিম্নলিখিত কাগজপত্রের হালনাগাদ কপি ১ম শ্রেণীর সরকারি গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত করে দাখিল করতে হবে। (১) ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (২) আয়কর সার্টিফিকেট (৩) ভ্যাট রেজিস্টেশন সার্টিফিকেট (৪) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র (৫) ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সার্টিফিকেট/ব্যাংক স্টেটম্যান্ট (৬) লেটার অব অথরাইজেশন (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) (৭) দরদাতা কালো তালিকাভুক্ত নয় মর্মে নিজস্ব প্যাডে ঘোষণাপত্র ও (৮) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র।
১০	(১) ক্রয় করা হবে এমন মালামাল/সেবার বিবরণ, সিডিউলের মূল্য ও দরপত্র জামানতঃ	

আইটেম নং	মালামালের বিবরণ	সম্ভাব্য পরিমাণ (কম/বেশি) হতে পারে	সিডিউলের মূল্য	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার (ফেরতযোগ্য)
ক)	মশুরডাল (দেশী উন্নতমানের নমুনা মোতাবেক প্রতি কেজি)	১,১০,০০০ কেজি	২০০০/- টাকা	৪,৫০,০০০/- টাকা
খ)	সয়াবিন তেল (রুপচাঁদা/তীর অথবা সমমানের, ভিটামিন এ ফর্টিফাইড সমৃদ্ধ (প্রতি লিটার)	১,১০,০০০ লিটার	২০০০/- টাকা	৬,০০,০০০/- টাকা
গ)	উন্নতমানের চিনি (প্রতি কেজি)	৬০,০০০ কেজি	২০০০/- টাকা	২,৫০,০০০/-টাকা
ঘ)	পোলাও'র চাল (প্রতি কেজি)	৫,৫০০ কেজি	১০০০/- টাকা	৩০,০০০/- টাকা
ঙ)	জ্বালানী কাঠ (প্রতি কেজি)	১২,০০০ কেজি	১০০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/- টাকা
চ)	গম-পেষাই (প্যাকেটজাত প্রতি কেজি)	৪,৪০,০০০ কেজি	১০০০/- টাকা	১,০০,০০০/- টাকা
ছ)	সাধারণ পরিবহন (প্রতিশত কেজি প্রতি কিঃ মিঃ)	৪,৯৫,০০০ কেজি	১০০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/- টাকা
জ)	কুলির কাজ/সেবা (প্রতিশত কেজি)	১২,৫০,০০০ কেজি	১০০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/- টাকা

(২) বিক্রয় করা হবে এমন মালামালের বিবরণ, সিডিউলের মূল্য ও দরপত্র জামানতঃ

ক)	পুরাতন খালি চটের বস্তা ৫০ ও ৩০ কেজির এবং চিনির খালি প্লাস্টিকের বস্তা।	পরিমাণ সিডিউল মোতাবেক	দরপত্র মূল্য ১০০০/-	দরপত্র জামানত ৩০,০০০/-	কৃতকার্য দরদাতাকে ০৭ (সাত) দিনের মধ্যে মালামালের সম্পূর্ণ টাকা নগদ পরিশোধ করতে হবে।

১১	দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৩/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ ১৭.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১২	দরপত্র দাখিলের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ ১৪.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৩	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ ১৪.৩০ ঘটিকার সময় এসবি কম্পাউন্ড এর নিচ তলার মিনি কনফারেন্স রুমে উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
১৪	দরপত্র সংগ্রহের ঠিকানা	এএসআই শহীদ সিদ্দিকুর রহমান ভবন, ৪র্থ তলা, স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা।
১৫	দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার ঠিকানা	এএসআই শহীদ সিদ্দিকুর রহমান ভবনের নিচতলা, রেশন স্টোর সরবরাহ শাখার সম্মুখে, এসবি, ঢাকা।
১৬	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর নাম ও পদবী	এস, এন মোঃ নজরুল ইসলাম, পিপিএম-সেবা, বিশেষ পুলিশ সুপার (অর্থ), এসবি, ঢাকা।
১৭	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর ঠিকানা	স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা।

বিশেষ দ্রষ্টব্যঃ
(ক) দরপত্র দলিল খোলার দিন কোন কারণবশতঃ অফিস বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী প্রথম কার্যদিবসে একই সময় দরদাতাগণের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) খোলা হবে।
(খ) প্রতি আইটেমের জন্য পৃথক পৃথক দরপত্র জমা দিতে হবে এবং খামের উপর আইটেম নাম্বার ও আইটেমের নাম উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
(গ) দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী দরপত্র সিডিউলে বর্ণিত হয়েছে।
(ঘ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা প্রত্যাখ্যান করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
(ঙ) এই দরপত্রের সকল কার্যক্রম "The Public Procurement Act.2006 ও The Public Procurement Rules.2008" মোতাবেক পরিচালিত হবে।

১২/৮/২৪
এস, এন মোঃ নজরুল ইসলাম, পিপিএম-সেবা
বিশেষ পুলিশ সুপার (অর্থ)
পক্ষে/অ্যাডিশনাল আইজি, স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা
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GD-158

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

I am not afraid to voice out: SADIA AYMAN

In the vibrant landscape of Bangladesh's entertainment industry, a new voice of courage and conviction has emerged. Sadia Ayman, a talented young actress, has not only captivated audiences with her performances but has also become an inspiration for many with her outspoken nature and commitment to truth.

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Sadia Ayman first gained recognition through her roles in various television dramas. Her performance in the film ***Kajol Rekha*** earned her critical acclaim. However, it's not just her acting prowess that has caught the public's attention. Recently, the rising star has come into the spotlight for her bold stance on social issues, particularly during the recent anti-discrimination student movement in the country.

"From childhood, I cannot tolerate injustice," Sadia states, explaining her propensity to speak out. "I've always been straightforward. Everyone close to me knows this. I am not afraid to speak the truth."

This courage was evident when Sadia posted about the death of Abu Sayed, despite warnings from those close to her. "Many people close to me said not to post such things, that it could cause problems later. But there's nothing to fear in telling the truth. So, I posted courageously, expressing my feelings," she explains.

> **Many people close to me said not to post such things, that it could cause problems later. But there's nothing to fear in telling the truth. So, I posted courageously, expressing my feelings.**

Sadia's outspokenness extended to the student movement, where she actively supported the protesters through social media. When asked about her expectations from the new interim government, she doesn't mince words: "I have many expectations. Let the country be free from corruption. Let society be free from corruption. Those who have been punished in false cases, those who have disappeared– let there be justice for them."

Her advocacy hasn't been without risks. During the height of the protests, Sadia's parents were concerned for her safety. "My parents were afraid. They told me to delete the statuses I had posted. I explained to them that I hadn't written anything wrong. I wrote the truth," she recounts.

When some senior artistes from the industry visited the state television station BTV after it was vandalised, Sadia didn't hesitate to criticise their actions (crying for inanimate objects) on social media. "I always respect and honour them as seniors," she clarifies, "but I felt compelled to speak out."

The actress is also committed to her profession as she attended her last shooting on July 18, amidst the protests. "We were all scared and anxious throughout the shooting day," she remembers. "When returning home late at night, people appeared in front of my car and checked it. However, they were not students."

Currently, Sadia is spending time at home, reading books and watching television with her family. "I'm reading Humayun Ahmed's books. I have a collection of his works at home. I have also collected Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's books yesterday. I'll read those too," she shares.

Liaquat Ali Lucky resigns from Shilpakala Academy

Following the recent downfall of the former government following the anti-discrimination student movement, many heads of different public organisations, including universities, Bangladesh Bank, and the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, have resigned from their longstanding posts.

In lieu of that, Liaquat Ali Lucky, who served as the director general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) for over a decade, stepped down from his position yesterday (August 12).

On Monday, Lucky submitted his resignation to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, as confirmed by Salahuddin Ahmed, secretary, BSA. The resignation was submitted via WhatsApp, the secretary informed The Daily Star.

Liaquat Ali Lucky was first appointed as director general of BSA on April 7, 2011.

His tenure was extended for the seventh time on March 29, 2023. No one else has held this position for such an extended period in the institution's history.

I pray for the safety of Hindus in Bangladesh: Hina Khan

Indian actress Hina Khan has spoken out about the violence against Bangladeshi Hindus following the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime.

Amid the unrest, Hina Khan tweeted about the violence targeting "Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh."

The actor, currently receiving treatment for breast cancer, expressed, "Every innocent death is the death of humanity, and it is beyond any caste or religion. No community should go through such horrific acts, what's wrong is wrong. Preserving the minorities of any country is the symbol of their collective community nature."

"My heart goes out to every individual who's suffering all around the world. Because, for me, humanity comes first. I pray that the Hindus and other minorities of Bangladesh remain safe in their own country," she added.

NEWS

'Let's begin anew from the ruins'

FROM PAGE 1

deprivation instead of rights, persecution instead of justice, and torture instead of protection have become normal affairs. But we did not want such a society and state. Standing on the ruins, we have to start a new journey," he said.

"We need to reestablish the destroyed, distorted and polluted values. This challenge is very big. From today, everyone will find the judiciary on your side in every good, auspicious and benevolent work," the chief justice added.

A minute's silence in memory of those killed in recent violence was observed at the beginning of the reception, organised by Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman and Supreme Court Bar Association President AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon at the Appellate Division's Courtroom-1.

Appellate Division's Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, judges of the High Court Division and SC lawyers were present on the occasion in the packed courtroom.

At the beginning of his speech, the chief justice expressed his gratitude and deep respect to those who sacrificed their lives in the mass upsurge, including students Abu Sayed, Mir Mahfuzur Rahman Mugdho and Md Wasim Akram.

He also prayed for the salvation of their souls and wished the injured students and others a speedy recovery.

The chief justice congratulated people from all walks of life, who gave their full support to the student movement.

Speaking about the judicial system, he said preserving integrity and preventing injustice are the eternal responsibility of the judiciary, one of the three organs of the state.

He assured his colleagues of all-out support. "Whoever does good will be rewarded. But no deviation will be tolerated," he remarked.

"I am aware that I've been given the responsibility of the chief justice. Apart from the Supreme Court, the district judiciary is the largest and most extensive field of the judicial system. My greatest strength is my fellow judges working in the subordinate judiciary. The general public usually perceive the district courts as the judiciary.

"I'm telling my colleagues, 'I am with you'. You should not be wary of any unfair pressure and intimidation. Discharge your duties sincerely without any fear.

"We are all aware that the judiciary is not free from the state of crisis in the country. But this historic moment of students' victory has brought us a golden opportunity to stand by the oppressed and tortured people. We must always see to it that we take full advantage of this opportunity," he added.

Earlier, Attorney General Asaduzzaman said the souls of all the victims of murder, disappearance, torture and oppression are looking at the new chief justice and waiting for justice. "Like the entire country, I also hope you [chief justice] will not frustrate them," he said.

"The brave students, their parents, and their well-wishers raised their demands from the streets to make you the chief justice. This love is rare, this love is priceless. I can be proud of this love, isn't it right?" the attorney general said.

SCBA President Khokon in his speech urged the chief justice to ensure an independent judiciary.

BB loses Tk 55cr in forex deals

FROM PAGE 12

bank inspection report.

When Bangladesh Bank announced the crawling peg exchange rate system, the exchange rate of the dollar jump to Tk 117 from Tk 110.

The loss occurred because the central bank sold dollars at Tk 110 to Islami Bank but bought them from the bank for Tk 117 per dollar, the report said.

The forex deals were done by two BB officials to help Islami Bank, The Daily Star has learnt from officials informed with the proceedings.

The two officials sold and bought dollars after the crawling peg system kicked in, the officials said on the condition of anonymity as they were not authorised to talk to the media.

The reserve management and investment unit of the central bank could not provide any proper explanation for the forex deals, the inspection report said.

The inspection also unearthed that the signatures of the additional director and director of the Forex Reserve & Treasury Management Department were missing on documents of the deals.

This is a violation of the "reserve management operation manual" of the central bank, the report said.

As per the manual, a copy of the note of the forex deals has to be sent to the mid-office and back-office branches, which was not done.

Contacted, BB spokesman Md Mezbaul Haque said, "The officials of the Forex Reserve & Treasury Management Department of BB are not interested in talking about the issue right now."

Islami Bank Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Mohammed Monirul Moula did not respond to phone calls.

Controversial provisions

FROM PAGE 12

freedom of expression in the country.

The act replaced the much-criticised Digital Security Act of 2018, but many of the controversial provisions were retained or rephrased, raising questions about its implications for journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens.

In addition, Nahid said the youth must be actively involved in the ICT ministry.

"We are thinking about putting together a specialised team with IT experts from home and abroad who are willing to work on novel ideas."

He said that it would be beneficial to reach out to Bangladeshi youths studying abroad and developing specific skill sets in order for them to return home and participate in the nation-building process.

"We are talking about overall structural reforms, which I hope will be implemented in all ministries."

The ICT adviser further said the ministry would start working again with startups whose funding was halted due to their support of the student movement.

He also said legal action would be taken against those involved in the countrywide shutdown of the internet during the student movement.

"Access to the free flow of information is a basic human right. Those involved in the internet shutdown committed human rights violations."

Scrap cases under CSA, DSA

FROM PAGE 12

incidents. At the same time, the Editors' Council believes that unethical and sycophantic journalism should be avoided in favour of professionalism," it said.

The statement also highlighted that the previous government had taken various steps to stifle and regulate freedom of speech, creativity, and the independent press industry, enacting several restrictive laws.

"These laws include the Data Protection Act (Draft) 2022, Digital, Social Media and OTT Regulation 2021 (Draft), Media Workers (Conditions of Service) Act 2022 (Draft), National Online Media Policy 2017, and The Press Council (Amendment) Act, 2022 (Draft), all of which should be repealed immediately," the statement read.

As in the past, efforts to impose restrictions on public and private advertisements in newspapers should be stopped, the statement said, adding that all activities of the Department of Films and Publications (DFP), a government agency, must be transparent and made public.

It further called for the Press Council to be reconstituted and made an effective body and for the removal of all obstacles to independent journalism.

These calls were made during a meeting of the Editors' Council on August 10, presided over by its President, Mahfuz Anam, also the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

The meeting was attended by Matiur Rahman, editor and publisher of Prothom Alo; Tasmima Hossain, editor of Ittefaq; Nurul Kabir, editor of New Age and senior vice-president of the Editors' Council; Shamsul Huq Zahid, editor of The Financial Express; Altamash Kabir, editor of Sangbad; Dewan Hanif Mahmud, editor and publisher of Bonik Barta; Zafar Sobhan, editor of Dhaka Tribune and also a joint secretary of the Editors' Council; Alamgir Mohiuddin, editor of Naya Diganta; Alamgir Hossain, editor of Samakal; Mostafa Mamun, editor of Desh Rupantor; Mostafiz Shafi, editor of Pratidiner Bangladesh; and Shahriar Karim, executive editor of Sangbad.

Daily Purbokone Editor Dr M Ramiz Uddin Chowdhury and Suprobhat Bangladesh Editor Rusho Mahmud also attended the meeting virtually.

Interim govt to protect fundamental rights

FROM PAGE 12

"There is no reason that our relationship with India will be affected for anyone's stay in India."

Touhid said the government will make sincere efforts to promote national reconciliation through inclusive dialogue and accountability.

The former foreign secretary said in a drastically changed scenario, all political parties are now free to express their views and opinions.

He said the government will ensure justice and accountability for all deaths and violence committed during the recent mass uprising through independent investigations and judicial process.

"In the process, the government will remain engaged with the international partners, including the UN, to avail itself of appropriate support for facilitating such processes in a sound and seamless manner."

The adviser said the interim government will work on essential policies and institutional reforms towards ensuring a democratic and prosperous future for the country.

He said the previous Awami League government in its efforts to suppress the popular movement committed gross human rights violations by abusing and misusing state power.

However, the sheer force of "people's power" added momentum to the movement, leading to the fall of the authoritarian regime, led by Sheikh Hasina, he added.

Touhid said the most pressing task before the interim government is to bring normalcy in the overall law and order situation, and the government is working towards that end.

Some diplomats expressed concern over the safety of their citizens and diplomatic premises.

He said ensuring safety and security of the diplomatic and consular premises and personnel is a core priority for the government.

The government is pledge-bound to ensure safety and security of all religious and ethnic groups, and it will not tolerate any violence or intimidation against them, he added.

"We said they [diplomats] should not be frustrated about the current situation. Competent people are in charge of the economic sector. We assured them of protecting their investments and profits."

A diplomat told the adviser that young people brought a change in the country and they should have more representatives in the next parliament.

"I said there would be more young and women representatives in parliament in future."

About fake news in the media on religious minorities, Touhid said propaganda should be countered with facts.

"But we will not allow any violence or damages to occur. All those committing such crimes will be investigated."

Meanwhile, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong yesterday wrote on X that her country looks forward to working with Prof Yunus' interim government. She welcomed Yunus' calls for peace, order and justice.

"Australia will continue to support a democratic and inclusive future for all Bangladeshis," she said.

LAND CASE

Pakistan army arrests former spy chief

AFP, *Islamabad*

Pakistan's ex-spy chief who served during jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's term has been taken into military custody, the army announced yesterday.

Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed, who stepped down in December 2022, was accused of abusing his power and raiding the businesses of a private housing developer, according to Supreme Court papers published last year.

The court at the time ordered the developer to take his complaints to the ministry of defence.

"Complying with the orders of Supreme Court of Pakistan, a detailed court of inquiry was undertaken by Pakistan Army. Consequently, appropriate disciplinary action has been initiated against Lt Gen Faiz Hameed (Retd)," the military's media wing said in a statement.

Firefighters try to extinguish a wildfire burning in Grammatiko, near Athens, Greece yesterday. The fast-moving wildfire fuelled by gale-force winds spread to the edge of Athens, torching trees, houses and cars and forcing evacuations of several hospitals and a dozen towns and villages, Greek authorities said.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

UKRAINE INCURSION

Russia widens evacuations in border regions

AFP, *Kyiv*

Two Russian regions bordering Ukraine ordered more evacuations yesterday as Moscow battled to contain an unprecedented push onto its territory.

Ukraine sent troops into Russia last week in its biggest cross-border operation since Moscow launched its invasion in February 2022 and the most significant by a foreign army since World War II.

Authorities in the Kursk region announced they were widening their evacuation area to include Belovsky district, home to some 14,000 people. The neighbouring Belgorod region said it was evacuating its border district of Krasnoyaruzhsky.

"For the health and security of our population, we're beginning to move people who live in Krasnoyaruzhsky to safer places," Belgorod region governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said on Telegram.

The assault on Kursk had killed at least 12 civilians and already led to 121,000 people being ordered out. President Vladimir Putin ordered his army to "dislodge" Ukrainian troops.

Meanwhile, each country blamed the other for a fire at the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in southern Ukraine later on Sunday. Both sides -- and the UN's nuclear watchdog -- said there was no sign of a nuclear leak.

AUKUS SUBS

Australia, US, UK sign nuke transfer deal

AFP, *Sydney*

Australia said yesterday it had signed a deal to allow the exchange of nuclear secrets and material with the United States and Britain, a key step toward equipping its navy with nuclear-powered submarines.

It binds the three countries to security arrangements for the transfer of sensitive US and UK nuclear material and knowhow as part of the tripartite 2021 AUKUS security accord.

AUKUS, which envisages building an Australian nuclear-powered submarine fleet and jointly developing advanced warfighting capabilities, is seen as a strategic answer to Chinese military ambitions in the Pacific region.

"This agreement is an important step towards Australia's acquisition of conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy," said Richard Marles, Australia's defence minister and deputy prime minister.

ISRAEL-IRAN TENSIONS

US orders carrier group to hasten ME arrival

AFP, *Washington*

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered an aircraft carrier group to hasten its arrival in the Middle East, the Pentagon said Sunday, as mounting tensions raise fears of a region-wide war.

It is a show of support for key US ally Israel after Iran and the Lebanese Hezbollah group vowed to avenge last month's killings of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh and Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukr.

Austin ordered the aircraft carrier strike group led by the USS Abraham Lincoln, and equipped with F-35 fighters, to "accelerate its transit" to the region, said Pentagon spokesman Major General Pat Ryder.

He said Austin, who spoke with his Israeli counterpart Yoav Gallant on Sunday, had also ordered the USS Georgia guided missile submarine to the area.

Ryder said the pair discussed "the importance of mitigating civilian harm, progress towards securing a ceasefire and the release of hostages held in Gaza," and efforts to deter aggression by Iran-aligned groups in the region.

The United States announced last week that it was deploying the strike group, as well as additional ballistic missile defense-capable cruisers and destroyers, and a fighter squadron.

Lebanon's Hezbollah movement said an Israeli air strike later on Sunday killed two fighters from the Iran-backed group, with the health ministry reporting another death from an attack days ago.

Hezbollah has traded near-daily fire with Israel in support of its ally Hamas since the Israel triggered offensive in Gaza.

A strike on Beirut's southern suburbs late last month killed Hezbollah's top military commander, Fuad Shukr, just hours before the assassination, blamed on Israel, of Hamas's political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

Air France and its subsidiary Transavia France have again extended the suspension of their flights to Beirut, through tomorrow, because of continued tensions in the region, the companies said yesterday.

The flights have been suspended since July 29 because of the "security situation in Lebanon" and their resumption "will be subject to a new assessment of the situation on the ground", Air France said in a statement.

The airline said "the safety of its clients and crews are its absolute priority".

DATA USE

Elon Musk's X faces privacy complaints in Europe

AFP, *Vienna*

A Vienna-based privacy campaign group lodged complaints in eight European countries against Elon Musk's X yesterday over "unlawfully" feeding the personal data of users into its AI technology without their consent.

The complaints filed by the European Center for Digital Rights -- also known as Noyb -- come after Ireland's Data Protection Commission earlier this month took court action against X over its data collection practices to train its AI.

X had recently started "irreversibly feeding" the personal data of more than 60 million European users into its Grok AI technology, "without ever informing them or asking for their consent", according to Noyb.

Noyb slammed X for "never proactively informing" its users that their data is being used for AI training, saying many people appeared to have "found out about the new default setting through a viral post on 26 July".

Indian medics strike after murder of colleague

AFP, *New Delhi*

Indian doctors in government hospitals across several states halted elective services "indefinitely" yesterday to protest the rape and murder of a young medic.

The 31-year-old woman's brutalised body was found bearing multiple injuries on Friday in a state-run hospital in West Bengal's Kolkata, where she was a resident doctor.

A subsequent autopsy confirmed sexual assault and homicide.

JUSTICE FOR
WOMAN DOCTOR HUMAN

Police have detained a man who worked at the victim's hospital helping people navigate busy queues, according to local media reports.

Demonstrations by doctors demanding justice and better workplace security that initially began in Kolkata have now spread to other parts of the country.

Sexual violence against women is a widespread problem in India -- an average of nearly 90 rapes a day were reported in 2022 in the country of 1.4 billion people.

But doctors say they face additional threats of workplace violence from angry family members of patients, especially after delivering bad news.

"There should be stringent security measures in hospitals and CCTV cameras should be installed," said Sarvesh Pandey, from the Federation of Resident Doctors Association.

> **"The enemy will certainly receive a worthy response, and all the goals facing us will, without a doubt, be achieved."**
> Says President **Vladimir Putin** after Ukraine's incursion into Russian territory

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Rapid Action Battalion Forces Headquarters
Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229
www.rab.gov.bd

Invitation For e-Tender

For financial year 2024-2025, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of :

SL	Tender ID No & Reference No	Description of goods	Last selling Date & Time	Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1.	1007317, RABHQ/CPS/2024-2025/4113301/1889 Date:04-08-2024	Procurement of Subscription for Various Software and Services.	27-Aug-2024 10:00	27-Aug-2024 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the national e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(ASHIQUR RAHMAN)
Lieutenant Colonel
Director(Admin & Finance)
RAB Forces Headquarters, Dhaka.
Mobile: 01777-720110

GD-156

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Director
Kurmitola General Hospital
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.

Memo No – KGH/Re-Tender/2024-25/2500 Date: 12/08/24

e-GP Re-Tender Notice

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/ Hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, please register on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd), For more details, please contact support desk contact numbers. e-Tender are invited in e-GP system portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Brigadier General Md. Saydur Rahman, Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka for the Procurement of;

Tender Id	Name of Goods	Tender/Proposal Publication Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Closing/Opening Date & Time
1008044	Supply of Rice, Dal & Spice for the FY 2024-25 (Framework Agreement)	13-Aug-2024 10:00	04-Sep-2024 11:30	04-Sep-2024 12:30
1008052	Supply of Fish, Meat & Egg for the FY 2024-25 (Framework Agreement)	13-Aug-2024 10:00	04-Sep-2024 11:30	04-Sep-2024 12:30
1008053	Supply of Vegetable & Fruits Item for the FY 2024-25(Framework Agreement)	13-Aug-2024 10:00	04-Sep-2024 11:30	04-Sep-2024 12:45
1008054	Supply of Bread & Confectionary Item for the FY 2024-25 (Framework Agreement)	13-Aug-2024 10:00	04-Sep-2024 11:30	04-Sep-2024 12:45

e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for pursuer. e-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online immediate as stated in above list.

12-08-24.
Brigadier General Md Saydur Rahman
Director
Kurmitola General Hospital
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.
Phone: 55062201, Fax: 55062202

GD-146

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

What now after mass VC resignations?

Reforming the public university system is a must

Since the fall of the Awami League government in a mass uprising led by students, an unusually high number of vice-chancellors of public universities—at least 13 so far—have stepped down in the face of pressure from students and fellow teachers. Along with the VCs, many top officials including provosts and members of proctorial bodies have also resigned. For instance, all the members of the proctorial bodies of Dhaka University (DU), Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) and Jagannath University (JnU)—as well as several other key position holders in these universities—have submitted their resignation letters.

Understandably, the list will become longer in the coming days. In hindsight, the mass resignations were bound to happen since most top officials in public universities were appointed on political considerations by the previous government. There is now hope that these vacancies, including the all-too-important VC positions, will be filled by capable and honest individuals following due procedure. However, this cannot happen in a vacuum; it is vital that new appointments are made as part of a wider reform agenda that will ensure improved academic activities, academic freedom, and students' safety in the universities, and establish a culture where teachers and students are not bogged down by the bad influences of politics.

Over the past decades, we have seen how the student wings of major political parties, most notably Chhatra League, created an atmosphere of fear on our campuses. From taking control of the residential halls—thus effectively making the posts of provosts redundant by allotting the seats themselves—to engaging in seat trades, from forcing students to take part in political rallies to torturing them for not abiding by their diktats, the BCL's terrorising tactics have totally ruined the academic environment of universities. And despite frequent criticism of the obnoxious "Gono room" culture, university authorities did not take any action to stop it.

So, establishing a violence-free environment by ensuring the safety of students in residential halls and campuses should be a top priority for the incoming administrations. Students have also demanded a ban on partisan student politics; some public universities and medical colleges have already imposed such a ban. We expect a prudent decision on this as well as on teachers' politics from the authorities. We would also like to see a transparent teachers' recruitment process, freed of any political influence, so that only the competent and dedicated are hired to build our future leaders.

Modernising the curriculum and academic activities should also be a priority going forward. While creating new knowledge should be the aim of our universities, few put enough emphasis on this presently. This needs to change. The authorities need to increase the budgetary allocation for research activities in universities. Moreover, the need for academic freedom of both teachers and students cannot be overstated. These are but a few of the reforms we expect from the authorities in the future. Our students deserve nothing less.

Israel gets away with another war crime

How much longer will the international community stand for this?

We condemn Israel's horrific bombardment of the Al-Tabieen religious school and mosque in Gaza, which killed at least 93 people including 11 children. The death toll is one of the largest from a single strike during the 10 months of aggressive military campaign by Israel in Gaza. According to civil defence rescuers, three Israeli missiles hit the complex—used as a shelter for internally displaced people—while the latter were performing their dawn prayers or sleeping. As such, it clearly amounts to another war crime committed by Israel.

The Israeli military has confirmed that it used "three precise munitions" for the attack. Such meticulous arrangement for the purpose of killing innocent civilians once again shows what the Israeli campaign in Gaza is truly about. However, as always, Israel has claimed—without any evidence—that it had received intelligence suggesting at least 19 Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists were eliminated in the attack. According to international law, even if some of the individuals who took shelter at the school were militants, Israel cannot wipe out so many civilians in the process of attacking them. But as we have seen repeatedly, this rogue nation has absolutely no respect for international law.

Since October 7, Israel's military campaign has killed at least 39,790 people in Gaza. With nearly all of the Gaza Strip's 2.4 million people displaced at least once during this time, many have sought refuge in school buildings, having nowhere else to go. Since July 6, however, Israel has hit school buildings at least 14 times, leaving the inhabitants of Gaza with literally nowhere left to go. This nonstop killing and traumatising of an entire people must be brought to an end immediately.

For months, we have been hearing about a potential ceasefire. However, time and again, Israel has either refused to show any sincerity in negotiations or launched one horrific attack after another that have sabotaged the entire process. The latest strike also comes at a crucial time which indicates that Israel is trying to obstruct another mediation effort—which Qatar, one of the mediators, has openly said. As some Israeli analysts have also pointed out, Netanyahu is trying to prolong the fighting for political gains. As such, it is time for the international community, particularly the western countries backing Israel, to force it back to the negotiation table, and stop it from launching any further attacks on defenceless Palestinians.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Fidel Castro was born

On this day in 1926, Cuban political leader Fidel Castro, who transformed his country into the first communist state in the Western Hemisphere, was born.

Why a political consensus on reforms is necessary

Dr Selim Raihan
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SELIM RAIHAN

On August 5, 2024, Sheikh Hasina, who was serving as the prime minister, tendered her resignation and subsequently left the country. What initially appeared to be a relatively modest request for reform in the quota system rapidly evolved into a widespread and intense mass uprising within just a few days. This transformation underscores the deep-seated discontent simmering beneath the surface.

The mass uprising can be attributed to four major factors. First, the demand for reforming the quota system had garnered substantial support from students and the general populace. Second, persistently high inflation, shrinking job and business opportunities, and pervasive corruption created significant public dissatisfaction. Third, the lack of political freedoms, restrictions on freedom of expression, and general political oppression contributed to growing discontent among the populace. Finally, the Awami League's top leaders, in their attempt to suppress the movement, exhibited a severe lack of sensitivity and arrogance. Their use of excessive force to quell the protests resulted in an unprecedented number of fatalities among students and ordinary citizens within just a few days, further fuelling the anger and intensity of the uprising.

On August 8, 2024, the interim government, under the leadership of Dr Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel laureate, came to power. The interim administration is expected to manage the immediate aftermath of the unrest, address the pressing issues that had fuelled the uprising, and lay the groundwork for a stable and orderly transition to a more permanent government.

The political settlement under the Hasina regime

Under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, the political landscape was characterised by a dominant party regime. Although the 2009 election was competitive, subsequent elections in 2014, 2018, and 2024 faced significant criticisms for their serious flaws. Sheikh Hasina's dominant party regime exhibited five key characteristics. First, the regime was marked by a coalition of five primary actors: the ruling political elites, influential economic elites (predominantly cronies), the civil bureaucracy, the military bureaucracy, and law enforcement agencies, all centred around Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. This coalition worked collaboratively to maintain control and influence across various sectors. Second, this coalition fostered a "stable corruption equilibrium" among corrupt ruling political elites, corrupt civil and military bureaucrats, corrupt law enforcement agencies, and dominant private sector cronies. These actors had a broad consensus on major economic policies and political agendas, particularly in managing and profiting from critical economic sectors, including large infrastructure projects. Third, the regime faced a significant legitimacy deficit, largely due to the flawed elections of 2014, 2018, and 2024. This legitimacy gap was further exacerbated by the use of force, political repression, and widespread corruption to retain power. Fourth, by focusing on infrastructure and development, the government aimed to present itself as a promoter of progress and economic growth, thereby compensating for its shortcomings in democratic governance and political legitimacy. Fifth, this regime managed to secure "unconditional" support from key regional players of geopolitics, especially India, China, and Russia, despite the regime suffering from a critical deficit in political legitimacy.

However, the regime's claim to developmental legitimacy weakened as the economy plunged into crisis from prolonged high inflation and macroeconomic instability. Finally, with the departure of Sheikh Hasina, the old political settlement was broken.

Major challenges of the interim government

The interim government is confronted with several significant challenges. First, the government should address the breakdown in law and order, ensuring security and restoring public trust across the nation. There have been reported cases of attacks on minorities, which need to be prevented. Second, the interim administration must work to restore and optimise supply chains to support businesses, ensure the availability of essential goods, and promote economic recovery. Third, with high inflation eroding purchasing power, the government must implement measures to stabilise prices. Fourth, the government needs to tackle severe macroeconomic issues, including falling foreign reserves, and sluggish growth in exports and remittances. Fifth, to ensure a smooth and credible democratic transition, reforms that uphold democratic principles and restore public confidence in governance should be instituted by fostering political dialogues and setting up transparent electoral processes. No doubt, all these challenges may intensify in the context of the changed and uncertain dynamics of the interim government's relationship with regional and global power players.

Why is a new political settlement necessary?

The interim government will not be able to function properly and address challenges if there is a fragile political settlement. The country needs a new political settlement among the key actors, currently critically important in Bangladesh's politics. They are the student movement platform, political parties, the military, the bureaucracy, and the private sector. However, these actors have differing agendas and lack a unified consensus. Also, the regional and global power players may exert their influence on these agendas.

While political parties are pressing for elections to be held as soon as possible, the student movement advocates for comprehensive reforms across political, administrative, constitutional, economic, and institutional domains to ensure a meaningful democratic transition. There is strong support for these reforms from civil society. The roles and positions of the military, bureaucracy, and private sector in this context remain ambiguous.

Without a clear consensus on the necessity of these reforms, and with the possibility of elections being held prematurely, there is a substantial risk of reverting to entrenched, undemocratic practices. The outcome of the new political settlement will largely depend on the relative strength and bargaining power of these actors. Civil society organisations have a crucial role to play in facilitating dialogue to forge a political consensus on the reform agenda, thereby contributing to a more stable and democratic political settlement. If that doesn't happen, the country could face extended periods of political instability.

VISUAL: **REHNUMA PRASHOON**

We must strengthen our institutions to preserve democracy

ABM Uddin
is analyst for the senate democratic office at the Florida Legislature. He specialises in policies and politics around healthcare, ethics, and elections. The views expressed in this article are his own.

ABM UDDIN

Bangladesh has made history by overthrowing Sheikh Hasina's regime, which was marked by incredible brutality towards its own people for the last 15 long years. Many Bangladeshi Americans could not have imagined this saga would be written in such a breathtakingly ruthless fashion, resulting from four weeks of popular uprising. The power of the people that toppled her rule was beyond our wildest imaginations.

We, Bangladeshi Americans, spent sleepless nights over the past few weeks, getting updates from friends and families, and monitoring the situation through online news. The news of the notoriously defiant former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigning and fleeing the country felt almost surreal. However, we eventually came to terms with the new reality and the relief that the mass uprising had finally succeeded, and the carnage stopped.

The situation remains extremely fluid. Many Bangladeshi Americans have voiced concerns about whether the revolution will be preserved by a new generation of leadership that will serve as accountable leaders to the constitution and their voters, or whether we will revert to the old patterns of repression, vengeance, and totalitarianism.

To preserve democracy, we must strengthen our governmental bodies—the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches. In a true democracy, these establishments develop resilience against attacks from political parties. The endurance of these institutions in American politics remains the vital lifeline for continued freedom in the country. Even in the US, these governing bodies do come under relentless attacks by political forces. Yet, they are robust enough to withstand such assaults and remain fundamental to democracy. Politics can be corrupt, unhinged, selfish, and immoral, but democratic institutions refuse to bow to political pressures. Despite relentless attacks on these entities, they strive to play by the rule.

Public offices must have public trust, and to do so our institutions should be built bottom up so that every citizen is treated fairly and enjoys a fair share of rights and responsibilities. Bangladesh must undergo massive political and constitutional reforms. We must embrace electoral reforms and create and enhance independent bodies to investigate government conduct. We should promote civic engagement and education to strengthen anti-corruption measures, reform political parties, and improve human rights protections. We must not politicise our sacred institutions ever again.

In rebuilding the nation, we must preserve and respect the wishes of the young generation who made the ultimate sacrifices to achieve this "victory." Our policymaking must reflect their opinion, giving them the forefront in building the new generation of public servants.

We must also foster tolerance of diverse opinions, which is the lifeline of a vibrant democracy. However, it is disheartening to see people burned alive and businesses destroyed across the country post-revolution. We must not treat people critical of our policies as enemies and seek retribution for political disagreement. It is our obligation to safeguard the lives and liberties of those who support the fallen regime. Nearly 50 years into independence, we must not divide the country into pro-liberation and anti-liberation groups, because our freedom fighters did not sacrifice their lives for mean-spirited politics and material gains.

The time has come to rebuild the country on tolerance and democratic principles. The time has come to let people form their government through their voices and votes. Their right to freedom of expression must be protected at any cost. We must not use state apparatuses to deal with people's discontent.

The end of Sheikh Hasina's regime is an example of the cruel destiny of a repressive government. People have spoken, and the leadership must listen if we do not want history to repeat itself. All public officials, whether appointed or elected, must be held accountable when they violate their oaths.

To conclude, let us allow the rekindled spirit of the Liberation War to build a new Bangladesh by forming robust public institutions. We salute our heroes who made the ultimate sacrifices with their lives and faced imprisonment and forced disappearances to write this glorious new chapter.

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The banality of evil and the Messiah of a new dawn

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SEUTY SABUR *and*
SHEHZAD M ARIFEEN

Just hours after sending off our last op-ed for publication, we watched the unthinkable unfold: the resignation and departure of Sheikh Hasina, followed by the storming of Gono Bhaban. Indeed, no sooner had the army chief announced an upcoming address to the nation that the jubilation on the streets began, accompanied by a wave of looting and destruction. We witnessed a couple showing off expensive *jamdani* sarees, while others carried off an eclectic train of booty: from live *pangash* fish to bras and TVs. Men appearing in sarees and high heels, some putting up their legs and smoking cigarettes inside Shangshad Bhaban, portrayed a sudden "carnivalesque" inversion of hierarchies. A photo surfaced of one of our cousins and his friends—all highly educated and affluent—looting expensive paintings from Sheikh Rehana's house; he would later be praised for apologising. To some, these constituted radical political acts and a moment of catharsis. All we could think of, however, was the "banality of evil."

Within hours of Hasina's departure, robberies, arson, and destruction of public properties spread like wildfire. PHOTO: AFP

In her 1963 study of the trial of the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann, Hannah Arendt developed the concept of the "banality of evil" to account for a paradox central to all violent social orders/events: how otherwise "ordinary" people can commit acts of unspeakable evil in the process of performing their mundane duties, neither driven by malice nor incapable of imagining otherwise. One recalls, for example, the police sent to brutalise the student protesters just days ago, deployed as disposable bodies and then abandoned when the tide turned. Some may balk at this comparison, but the banality of evil extends well beyond the problem of "following orders." It is the ability to perform acts that would be unthinkable under "ordinary" circumstances, but can appear mundane, even commendable, under others.

> **With every shift in the political settlement, whoever was not on the right side of history became minorities or enemies, their lives and property up for grabs, legitimised through vested-property laws. And just like we would like to forget the plunder of Hindu property after Partition or the massacre of Biharis during and after 1971, so the majority today is loath to admit the foundational violence that is marking the birth of a new order.**

For three days we were a state without a government. The police had abandoned their posts out of fear for their lives, and although the army had supposedly taken charge, they were clearly unwilling to intervene. As the student coordinators became embroiled in closed door talks about the interim government, the students on the ground cleaned up the streets and government buildings, secured and returned some of the booty, took control of traffic, and began to erase the marks of violence with their murals. Within hours of Hasina's departure, news of robberies, arson, the destruction of monuments and sculptures, and attacks on minorities, the police, and anyone affiliated with the AL began to spread like wildfire. Many condemned these acts, while others justified them as legitimate acts of vengeance (or even an AL ploy to portray a nation in disarray). Many seemed to be more concerned about fearmongering Indian media narratives; perhaps they are not hearing the first-hand accounts that we are. And while we are rightly celebrating the way students and community members have pulled together to defend their neighbours, it is worth asking why so many of us should suddenly have to live in fear for their lives whenever the state begins to morph, or disappear from view.

Everything has a past. From 1947 to 1964 to 1971, such seemingly mindless vandalism and the appropriation of "enemy" lands/property (almost always orchestrated by vested interests and neighbours rather than strangers) has shaped the entitlements of certain citizens over others. With every shift in the political settlement, whoever was not on the right side of history became minorities or enemies, their lives and property up for grabs, legitimised through vested-property laws. And just like we would like to forget the plunder of Hindu property after Partition or the massacre of Biharis during and after 1971, so the majority today is loath to admit the foundational violence that is marking the birth of a new order. Then as in now, good Samaritans formed community-based groups to protect against such attacks. This is neither new, nor is it merely revenge; this is nation-making. Delineating the current violence as a kind of random, chaotic outburst—as a law-and-order or "*dakat*" problem—severs this historical link. It frees the rest of us from culpability. It overlooks the bottom-up violence of thugs and opportunists that the previous regime also relied on, and obscures the majoritarian, populist echoes that the quota-reform movement carried from the very beginning.

Mass uprisings are intoxicating, and they create a range of possibilities within the political field. This interim government—an economist and Nobel laureate leading an eclectic mix of human rights defenders, environmentalists, veteran NGO activists, students, lawyers, retired defence officers, a psychologist, an Islamic scholar, and even a representative from indigenous communities—shows us such possibilities. The pendulum swung from the erstwhile radical left to the right to the neoliberal "centre," as is usually the case in any populist uprising.

As social scientists, it would be naive to believe that this motley crew came together randomly. Let us not forget that just like these students, many of these cabinet members carry visceral memories of repression and harassment by the previous regime. Yunus was dragged through the mud and to the courts, Syeda Rizwana came under attack for standing against land grabbers, Adilur Rahman faced arrest for *Odhikar*'s report on the 2013 Shapla Chottor crackdown, and one can imagine the repercussions of Farida Akhter's defence of Hefazat-e-Islam's 13-point demands. They have all paid the price for dissent, and all the "Avengers" have now assembled. Time will tell what this "union of the repressed" will result in.

While hopes are running high, this is also the time to ask questions (what kind of development agenda we can expect from the doyen of microfinance, for example), and not give in to some fear of "maligning" the movement. This is also the hour to remember that what was not possible in 2006/7 and 2013 has suddenly become possible in 2024. We want to believe that our student leaders have done their homework and can continue to sense the pulse of the masses, that this impossible combination that has taken custody can provide the magical solution that we keep reaching for. We have summoned the forces of civil society to take charge and dispel the party-state; we hope that they will be able to return to their roles as mediators between the state and the people once their time is over. Their task is to free the organs of government and the state from the shadow of party-rule, not to rely on another kind of force on the ground to push agendas and hunt for new enemies. We must not repeat the mistakes of the post-71 list-makers, who had labelled the millions who did not fight or flee during the war—including many who had continued in their government jobs—as "collaborators," producing a new economy of accusations (Mohaiemen, 2015). By now our students should be able to put down the sticks and go back to their classes. They have led the way; the rest is up to you (and us) to deliver.

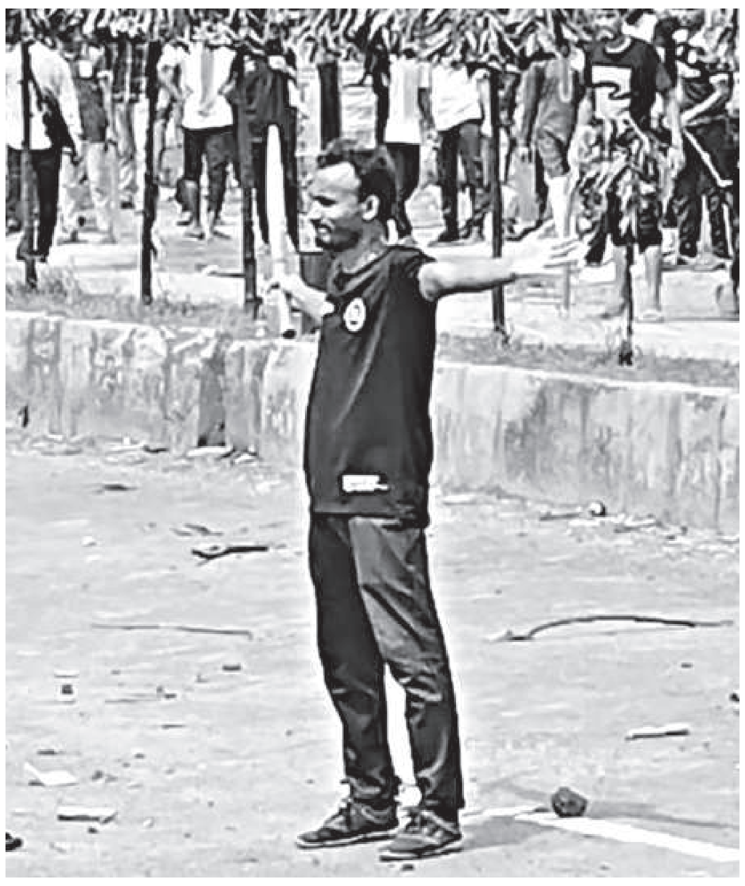
Images that changed history

Shamsher M Chowdhury, Bir Bikram,
is a former foreign secretary of Bangladesh.

SHAMSHER M CHOWDHURY

The heartbreaking image from 1970 of a helpless Mary Ann, a student at Kent State University in Ohio kneeling over the body of her fallen student friend Jeffrey Miller with her arms raised in anguish and begging for help, is one of the most important photos of the 20th century. Miller was shot by the Ohio Army National Guard while protesting America's unjust war in Vietnam. Taken by student photographer John Filo, the image was one seminal event of the anti-Vietnam war movement in the United States.

The blood-curling image of a nine-year-old Vietnamese girl, Phan Thị Kim Phuc, running down a country road in South Vietnam's Trang Bang area with fear and pain written large on her face and her skin peeling off from the effect of a napalm bomb, forced the Nixon administration to start peace talks with the government of North Vietnam, recorded in history as the Paris Peace Talks. This finally led the US to gradually withdraw its military from Vietnam, ending with the capture of Saigon by North Vietnamese forces and the inevitable unification of Vietnam. That scene captured on camera by Vietnamese-American photojournalist Nick Ut received not just global attention, it changed the course of history.

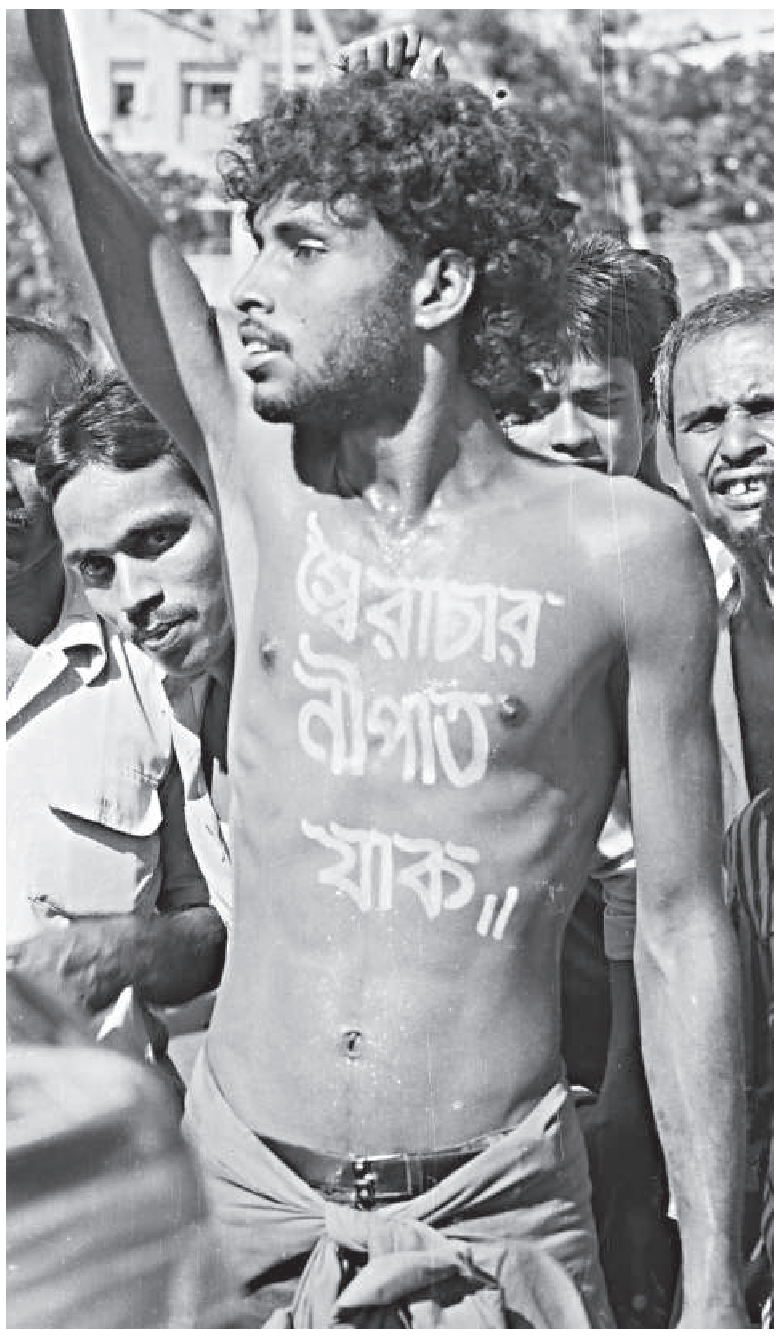

The moment before Abu Sayeed was shot during the clash between police and protesters in front of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur on Tuesday, 16 July 2024. PHOTO: SCREENGRAB/FILE

The two images, captured within a space of just two years, largely contributed to President Richard Nixon's fall from grace and his eventual resignation in 1974, the Watergate scandal just being the tipping point.

In Bangladesh the image of Nur Hussain, a protester at the anti-Ershad movement in Dhaka, with the message "end to autocracy, freedom for democracy" painted on his bare body minutes before being shot down by the police on November 10, 1987, further energised a mass uprising that forced the erstwhile president to resign.

Fast forward to Rangpur, Bangladesh in July 2024. This time it was Abu Syed, a student of Rangpur Begum Rokeya University, standing with his arms stretched open, protesting against injustice as part of a greater movement led by the youth of Bangladesh against the undemocratic government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. As he looked at the armed police with courage and conviction written all over his smiling face, not one, but multiple pellets struck his body. Within minutes, Abu Syed lay dead, a martyr for democracy and a victim of autocracy, one of the many killed during the movement. The image of Abu Syed, standing tall and looking down the barrel of guns before being cruelly killed, turned a growing protest against the government of Sheikh Hasina into an all-engulfing popular movement, forcing the prime minister to leave not just her office but also the country.

The common thread in all of the above instances is that the victims were all young people, mostly students—who came from a school in Trang Ban village in Vietnam to a university in Rangpur in Bangladesh. Kim Phuc survived and now lives in Canada. But Jeffrey Miller in Ohio, Nur Hussain in Dhaka, and Abu Syed in Rangpur did not live to see the fruits of their courage and sacrifice. Their deaths in the hands of cold-blooded law enforcement personnel might not have been in vain. After all, they greatly impacted history and paved the way for the end of the rule of unpopular and autocratic governments. In the process, though, their budding lives were cruelly cut short and the pain of loss for their families will never cease. Anyone with even the slightest semblance of conscience must hope that the future does not ask for such sacrifices to ensure accountability, good governance, democracy, and the right to free speech anywhere in the world.



Nur Hussain, photographed by Dinu Alam, moments before he was shot dead by police while he was protesting for democracy on November 10, 1987. PHOTO COURTESY: WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

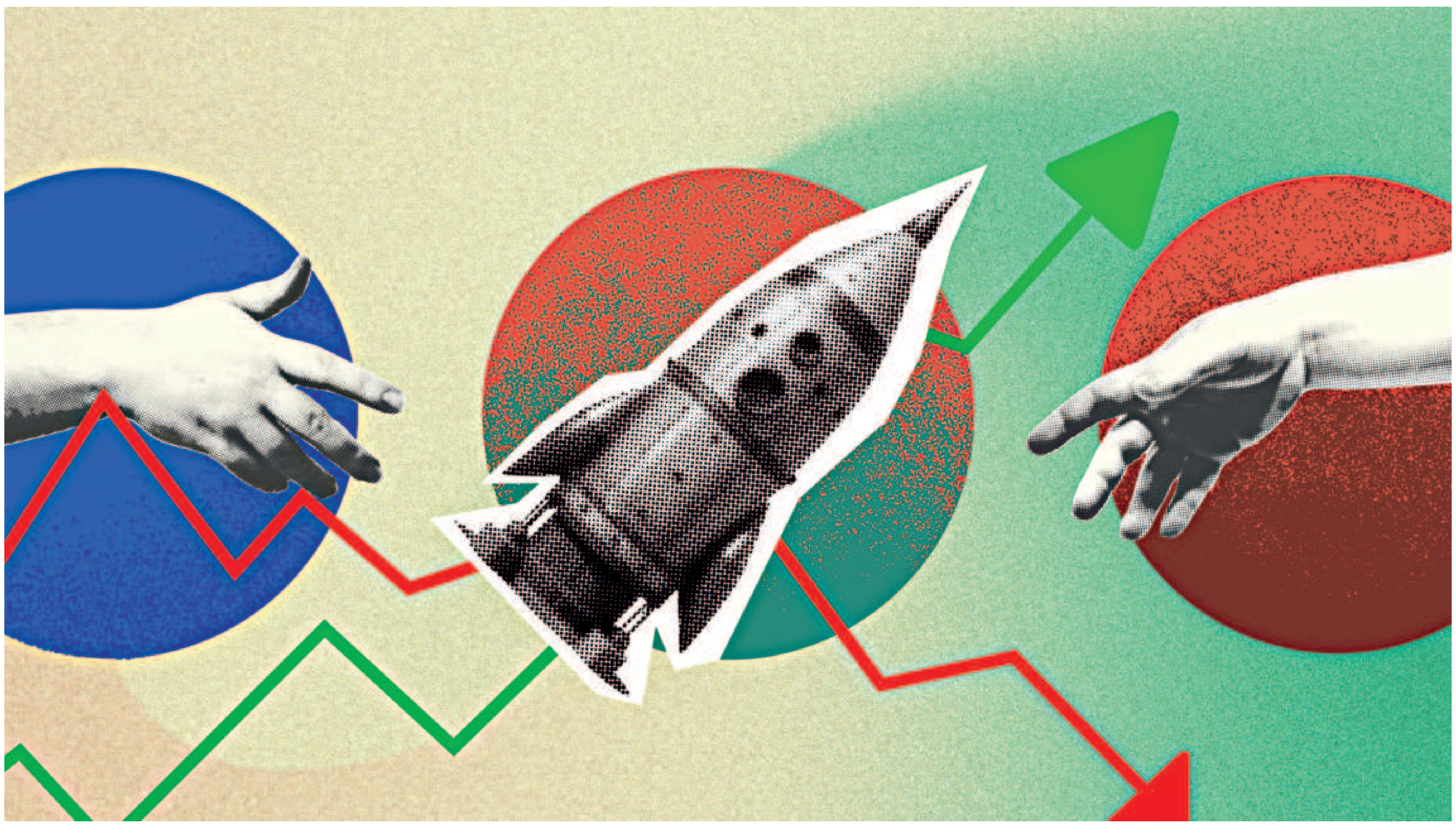


ILLUSTRATION: **ZARIF FAIAZ**

Startups seek reforms and stability from new government

"We have been waiting for this change", said Anayet Rashid, Founder and CEO of Truck Lagbe. Mentioning the 10 Minute School incident amidst the ongoing movement, Anayet said, "What happened with 10 Minute School was a wake up call for us. It was a clear message that either you work with power or you face the consequences".

MD. ZAHIDUR RABBI

With the interim government headed by Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus taking oath on August 8 after the ousting of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5, the startup community in the country is expressing cautious optimism and demands for the new interim government. As the interim government settles in, entrepreneurs are calling for policy reforms, improved access to funding, and a corruption-free environment to foster innovation and growth.

"We have been waiting for this change", said Anayet Rashid, Founder and CEO of Truck Lagbe. Mentioning the 10 Minute School incident amidst the ongoing movement, Anayet said, "What happened with 10 Minute School was a wake up call for us. It was a clear message that either you work with power or you face the consequences." Earlier on July 16, Startup Bangladesh Limited announced that it had cancelled an investment proposal of BDT 5 crore for 10 Minute School, Bangladesh's largest edtech platform, after Ayman Sadiq, 10 Minute School's Founder and CEO, had sided with the students during the ongoing students' movement.

Anayet also added that the startup community in Bangladesh hopes for positive changes by the interim government. He said, "We welcome the young leadership in the interim government. There is much work that needs to be done. Some of the existing policies and laws need to align with the current reality of Bangladesh."

"Many of us had to register our company in other countries in order to attract foreign investments. Moreover, the share market in Bangladesh was also very unstable. All of these matters need to be addressed. We must have open dialogues with the leaders against corruption and extortion," he added.

Nourin Haque Ridi, Founder of Dark Kak said, "As a new startup, we seek more equitable access to funding support from the government. Currently, only a few high-profile startups receive substantial financial backing and marketing assistance from government agencies, while many others struggle with funding, navigating complex registration, and dealing with the tax system. We call for a more transparent and fair distribution of grants and a corruption-free, politically unbiased environment that fosters collaboration rather than competition among startups."

Mentioning the need of support for women entrepreneurs she added, "There is a critical need for targeted support for women entrepreneurs, particularly indigenous women and those from rural areas, to ensure they receive the guidance and funding necessary to succeed. We urge the government to incentivise industries to engage domestic and politically unbiased startups in various sectors to drive technological, environmental, and cultural advancements, rather than relying on international support."

Gaining the confidence of investors is a crucial step when it comes to the startup ecosystem. Foreign investment is also necessary for the improvement of startups in Bangladesh. Regarding this matter, Fahad Ifaz, Co-founder and CEO of iFarmer says, "The interim government must try to regain investor confidence in Bangladesh. I hope [Dr] Muhammad Yunus will be able to help Bangladesh regarding this matter through his good image and networks. The proper implementation of policies and laws is a must which the previous government failed."

Fahad also talked about how the recent political crisis has impacted businesses. He added, "The recent election and the current political scenario has negatively impacted all the businesses. If the banks make funding easier for the local startups that would be a huge help. It would also be helpful for the startups if the government exempts taxes for one year."

JOBS OF THE WEEK

Standard Chartered Bank

Business Development Officer

Deadline: N/A

Eligibility:

- Minimum Bachelor's degree with some prior experience.

Minimum experience: 1-2 years

Radiant Pharmaceuticals Limited

Executive, Medical Marketing

Deadline: August 17

Eligibility:

- MBBS from a public medical college or a reputable private medical college with valid BMDC registration.

Minimum experience: 2 years

British Council

Financial Planning Analyst

Deadline: August 20

Eligibility:

- Prior experience in operational financial management and/or management accounting.

Minimum experience: 4 years

Care Bangladesh

Senior Technical Lead, Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Deadline: August 20

Eligibility:

- Master's degree in gender, women's studies, law, sociology, international development, social work, or related field.

Minimum experience: 6-8 years

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.

> **"Every new beginning comes from other beginning's end."**
>
> **SENECA**

A 30-something's guide to modern job hunting

Interviews in your 30s may focus more on your leadership abilities, strategic thinking, and how you handle complex situations. Prepare examples that demonstrate your problem-solving skills, leadership experience, and adaptability. Practise articulating how your experience aligns with the company's goals.

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

Whether you were suddenly let go of your previous job or looking to start anew, job hunting in your 30s can be an especially difficult experience. Not only do you have to update your resume to include currently relevant skills, chances are, skills that you honed when you were younger might not be considered important by modern employers. But, being thrust into the vicious world of job hunting, there isn't the time to upskill yourself. So, what do you do? Here is a quick breakdown of some challenges and strategies you should be aware of when looking for a new job in your 30s.

The struggles you might face

Applying to an entry-level job at a late age is an automatic handicap; as your CV is competing with a slew of resumes from hungry, enthusiastic freshers. "When applying for jobs in my 30s, the biggest challenge I faced was that my resume got buried under that of many others, and I never got a call from most places I applied to," says Hasin Rahman, Lecturer at Daffodil International University's Nutrition and Food Engineering Department.

Older applicants often struggle with a key thing employers look for: adaptability. Even though most modern companies will have the resources to train even an older applicant, they will need to know if you are worth the investment. As such, being open to learning and maintaining the ability to adjust to people of different backgrounds are crucial skills to hone. "The easier it will be to train you, the easier it will be for your hiring team to envision you as a mentor someday," says Susmita Shahreen Newaz, Senior HR Generalist at SELISE Digital Platforms.

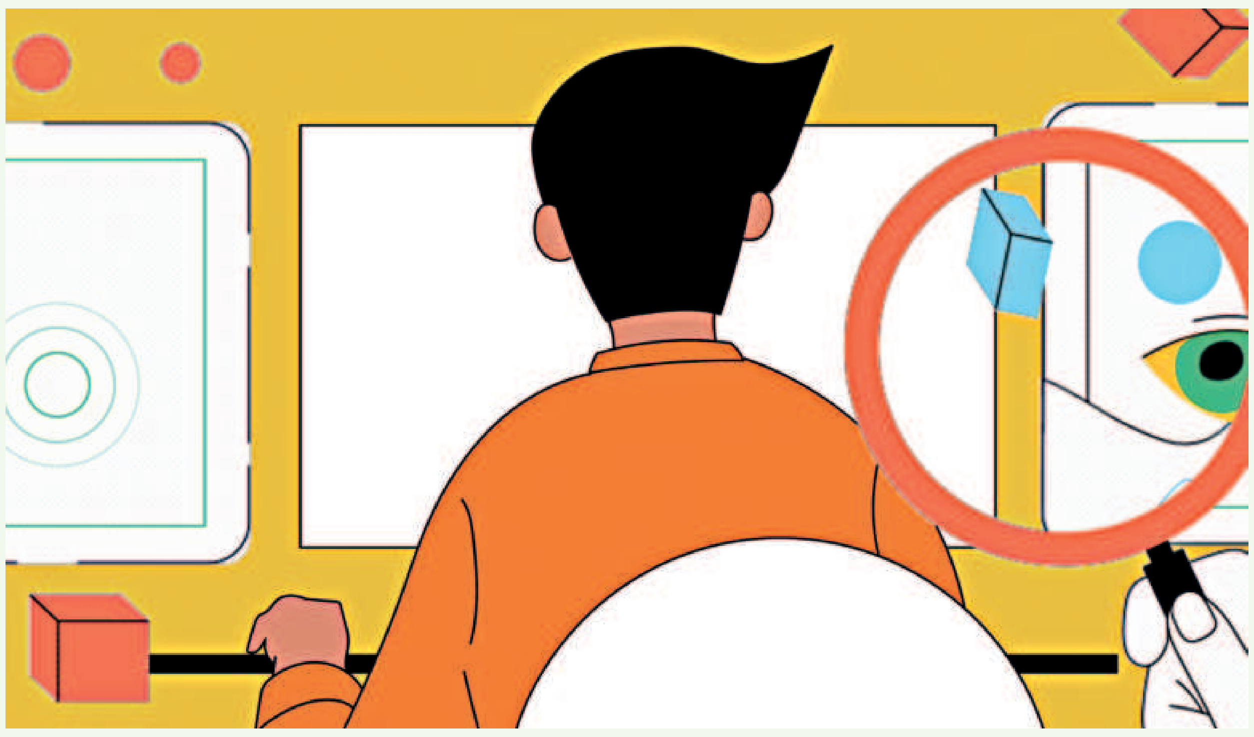


ILLUSTRATION: **ZARIF FAIAZ**

Another big roadblock is the age bias that comes with many entry-level positions, especially in Bangladesh where most government jobs have a strict age limit of 30. As per a 2022 article on workplace age bias in Harvard Business Review, studies show nearly 65% of US workers reporting have experienced age-based discrimination. However, such incidents occur to much older workers, typically those aged 50 and above, and are not as commonly seen in new applicants aged in their 30s.

So, how to overcome these challenges?

When your old field isn't cutting it, maybe it's time to consider branching out. Hasin, who got a call from his current workplace after applying to several places for many months, says, "If an applicant can demonstrate their problem-solving, communication, and leadership skills to a potential employer, their major will start to matter less. This is especially true for the corporate sector when branching out."

Since some selection panels want to be assured that although you are starting late, you weren't sitting around before, it is important to clarify career and education gaps in both your resume and cover letter. List skills you have picked up at previous jobs, and explain how those skills will make you a valuable employee at the new place.

To those applying late to new jobs, Susmita advises them to keep a clear and concise CV. "Mention the reasons it took so long for you to start in your cover letter. Or, if you are switching lanes and are having to start from the bottom in your new sector, mention your previous experiences in your CV, regardless of relevance."

Even if you don't feel confident applying to a new job in your 30s, keep hope in your solid foundation of experience and resources that you have cultivated so far. Research new industries that interest you and consider how your existing skills can be transferred. Networking with professionals in your desired field can also provide valuable insights.

If nothing else works, maybe it's time to step back and actually attempt upskilling. Set aside time to assess your skills and identify areas for growth. Continuous learning is key to staying competitive, after all. Invest in your professional development by taking courses, earning certifications, or pursuing an advanced degree. By addressing the challenges and capitalising on the opportunities unique to this stage of life, you can find a fulfilling job - even in your 30s!

Star
SPORT
DHAKA TUESDAY AUGUST 13, 2024, SRABAN 29, 1431 BS

All those who did not believe in the Games were wrong. Often, when you switch the TV on or read a newspaper, there is talk of decline. The French have rediscovered they can do great things together.

France president **Emmanuel Macron** regarding the impact of Paris Olympics

HP lose to Tasmania in Top End T20

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) High Performance Unit suffered their first defeat in the ongoing Top End Series 2024, losing to Tasmania Tigers by five wickets in a contest that went down to the final over at the TIO Stadium in Darwin on Monday.

Sent to bat, HP Unit posted 166-5 in their 20 overs with Parvez Hossain Emon making an unbeaten 39 off 29 balls while openers Jishan Alam and Tanzid Tamim made 38 and 28 runs respectively.

In reply, Jake Doran's blistering 71 not out off 37 balls powered Tasmania to 167-4 in 19.3 overs.

Rafael Macmilan (17 not out off nine) also played a crucial role in Tasmania's win, hitting a couple of fours off Abu Hider Rony in the penultimate over to reduce the pressure before Doran hit a six off Rakibul Hasan to seal the win with three balls to go.

The HP Unit had won their opening match against Melbourne Renegades by 77 runs on Sunday. They will next face Adelaide Strikers on Wednesday.

Head coach Chandika Hathurusingha checks his papers as Nahid Rana, Shadman Islam and Taskin Ahmed pose for a photograph before flying out for Pakistan yesterday. Bangladesh will play two Test matches against Pakistan, the first of which will be held in Rawanlpindi from August 21 and the second one in Karachi from August 30. (Bottom) Chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu addresses the media regarding the selection of the 16-member team.

PHOTO: **BCB/FIROZ AHMED**

Shakib's selection sign of clarity from selectors

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan's selection for the Test series against Pakistan was of particular interest for fans and media alike who were curious to know whether the current political developments had any bearing on the selectors decision to include him in the 16-member squad.

After Sheikh Hasina resigned as prime minister on August 5, the president dissolved the parliament on the 6th, of which Shakib was a member from the then ruling Awami League party.

Many members of parliament of the Awami League government have fled the country since while some have gone into hiding. Shakib, meanwhile, was far removed from all of it, busy taking part in the Global T20 League in Canada.

Shakib's involvement with the fallen government cast doubts over his availability for the Pakistan series.

However, the selection panel led by Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu named the 37-year-old for the two-Test series, beginning on August 21, on Sunday and the all-rounder is set to join his teammates in Lahore on the 14th and begin his preparations.

On Monday, Lipu clarified the reasoning behind selecting Shakib, saying they had prioritised his fitness and wanted reassurance from him that he would be available for the red-ball series against India, South Africa and the West Indies later this year before including him.

"I spoke with Shakib probably at the end of July and there were discussions regarding his fitness along with other things," Lipu said at the press conference in Mirpur yesterday.

"During the Zimbabwe series [in May] we wanted to know his short-term plan since we have many Tests lined up till December, eight in total. He had assured us his availability [for those Tests] during the Zimbabwe series. Due to the recent scenario, I had to ask him again.

"Not just by phone, we have exchanged official emails regarding his availability. It was important to know whether he will be available for the practice sessions before every series, that was also a criterion for selection," Lipu told reporters yesterday.

Another contentious point was providing Shakib security during this turmoil. Bangladesh's foreign coaches too had expressed their unwillingness to attend practice sessions in Mirpur even though they were present in the capital.

Disruption in training owing to security concerns was one of the reasons why the Bangladesh team left for Pakistan yesterday afternoon, five days earlier than scheduled. The team will train at Lahore for three to four days before moving to Islamabad. From Islamabad they will move to Rawalpindi to prepare for the first Test.

"There are security concerns regarding every player and foreign official during practice sessions. In the current circumstances, it definitely has to be ensured. In terms of selection, we had to consider many things because he [Shakib] is involved in politics. But he was selected on the basis of his merit," Lipu said.

The recent turmoil has shown that political situation can have a bearing on cricket too, especially if a player enters politics while still being a cricketer, like Shakib did. Lipu felt that only players were not to be blamed as political parties need to reconsider taking cricketers aboard for political gains.

Bijoy expects 'highly competitive' Pakistan tie

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A skipper Anamul Haque Bijoy on Monday expressed his optimism about having a competitive four-day opening match against their Pakistani counterparts as he felt that both sides have some highly experienced cricketers.

"We are very excited about facing the Pakistan Shaheens side in their backyard. The Shaheens squad looks strong, especially the fast bowling department. With the highly experienced players on either side, the first four-dayer will be highly competitive," Anamul was quoted as saying in a PCB press release ahead of the first of two four-day games, scheduled to start on Tuesday at the Islamabad Club.

Both teams have packed their sides with players who will feature in the ICC World Test Championship fixtures, to be played in Rawalpindi and Karachi on 21-25 August and 30 August-3 September, respectively.

The second match will be played at the same venue from 20-23 August but the abovementioned mentioned cricketers won't be available due to their national team engagement.

Anamul believes the series is a very crucial one for the Bangladeshi players for their Test series preparation while he feels that youngsters can rise to the occasion.

Salahuddin 'not resigning', will seek fifth term

SPORTS REPORTER

Incumbent president of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), Kazi Salahuddin, vowed yesterday not to resign despite pressure from a football fan group and confirmed he will contest the upcoming BFF elections for the fifth time.

The Bangladesh Football Ultras, a fan group, recently launched a campaign demanding the resignation of Salahuddin, executive member Mahfuza Akter Kiran, and senior vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy, who has already stepped down. This follows the resignation of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina due to massive student-led protests.

On Sunday, some members of the Ultras had gathered at the BFF House, chanting slogans calling for Salahuddin and Kiran's resignation, criticising their organisational performance.

In response to the protest, Salahuddin told The Daily Star: "First of all, what stake do they (BFU) have in football? I have announced the BFF elections will be held on October 26. Who are they to tell me I should not contest? Who gave them the right to threaten and vandalise if I run again?"

"I am not resigning; instead, I will contest the election again because I will not leave football in the face of any threats," Salahuddin continued to defend his stance.

"I am not an ordinary person. I have a long football background, having represented and captained the national team. I am also a freedom fighter and have received national sports awards, the independence award, the liberation award, and the Sheikh Kamal Lifetime Achievement Award during the regimes of Ziaur Rahman, HM Ershad, Khaleda Zia, and the Awami League. I will leave football on my terms, not due to threats."

Salahuddin also alleged that the Ultras are employees of the now-defunct Saif Sporting Club's Tarafder Ruhul Amin, suggesting their demands are motivated by vested interest.

"If they are so popular, they should run in the elections themselves. Why are they so concerned about me? If I were a failure, the councillors would not vote for me. I was first elected BFF president against Awami League organisers," he claimed.

Tarafder, meanwhile, has denied involvement in the protests involving the BFF boss.

"I think he [Salahuddin] has made a baseless claim without analysing anything. I have a clean record to account for and have never hatched any conspiracy against anyone. We were successful organisers but left the sports scene where there was no success.

"I have no idea about this movement. I have no relation with the Ultras; even I don't know about them.

"It is entirely Salahuddin bhai's decision whether to resign or run for election; it is his democratic right," said Tarafder, who withdrew his Saif SC from Bangladesh Premier League two seasons ago.

France bids adieu to 'seine-sational' Games

AFP, *Paris*

France bid a reluctant farewell yesterday to an "enchanted" fortnight of Olympic sport as athletes headed home from Paris praising a dazzling edition of the Games that has breathed new life into the biggest show on earth.

Hollywood star Tom Cruise delivered stardust at the closing ceremony on Sunday evening -- and a link with the next Games in Los Angeles -- by abseiling into the national stadium.

The "Mission Impossible" star descended on a wire in front of 71,500 spectators, grabbed the Olympic flag and jumped onto a motorbike, to the delight of thousands of dancing athletes and awe-struck fans.

The final act of the Paris Olympics brought relief that an event foreshadowed by worries about terror attacks, strikes or protests had passed off with barely a hitch.

But there was also sadness that two weeks of high-spirited celebration had come to an end.

"Keep the flame alive," urged the front-page headline of France's biggest sports newspaper, L'Equipe, which urged French people to maintain the spirit "of this enchanted fortnight".

During the closing ceremony, which stressed the Olympics' core message of peace and cooperation, International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach had praised the Paris Games for being "sport at its best".

"These were sensational Olympic Games from start to finish," Bach said. "Or dare I say: Seine-sational Games," the IOC chief quipped in a pun about the river flowing through Paris which was a sometimes fickle star of the event.

Observers had seen Paris 2024 as essential for the Olympics brand as a whole, coming after a Covid-affected edition in Tokyo and a corruption-tainted version in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

Much of the media commentary has focused on the uplifting impact of the Games on the generally morose national mood.

"For 17 days the stereotype of the indifferent, grumpy Frenchman went missing," wrote sports writer Owen Slot in The Times newspaper, adding that Paris had "made the Olympic Games look more beautiful than ever before."

The closing spectacle, marking the beginning of the four-year countdown to the LA Games, followed 17 days of drama-filled sporting action lit up by American gymnast Simone Biles, sprinter Noah Lyles, Pakistan's javelin king Arshad Nadeem and casual Turkish shooter Yusuf Dikec, who has become an Internet sensation.

They also featured a damaging gender row about two female boxers, Imane Khelif of Algeria and Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting, who both went on to win gold.

The last day of sporting action saw the United States pip China for top spot in the battle for medals after the US women's basketball team squeezed past France 67-66 to clinch the last gold of the Games.

While France will take away fond sporting memories as the torch passes to Los Angeles, the world is reminded to keep the Olympic flame alive, burning brightly for the years to come.

(From R) Bangladesh national women's football team members Monika Chakma, Maria Manda, Ritu Porna Chakma and Sabina Khatun pose for a photograph at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday morning, prior to their departure for Bhutan where they will join the the Royal Thimphu College team to play in the inugural AFC Women's Champions League, set to begin on August 25.

PHOTO: **FACEBOOK**

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Four HC judges promoted to Appellate Division

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four High Court judges were elevated to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday.

With their appointments, the number of judges at the Appellate Division has gone up to six.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin appointed the judges as per the constitution, according to a gazette notification by the law ministry.

The four new Appellate Division judges are Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury, Justice Syed Md Ziaul Karim, Justice Md Rezaul Haque and Justice SM Emdadul Hoque, Law Secretary Md Golam Sarwar told The Daily Star last night.

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed will administer the oath of office to them at the Supreme Court Judges' Lounge at 10:30am today.

The four judges were appointed as judges of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court during the tenure of the BNP-led four party alliance government.

Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury was appointed as an additional judge of the HC on August 27, 2003, for two years and his service was confirmed on August 27, 2005.

Justice Syed Md Ziaul Karim, Justice Md Rezaul Haque and Justice SM Emdadul Hoque were appointed as additional HC judges on August 23, 2004, for two years. Their services were regularised on August 23, 2006, according to information from the SC website.

On August 10 this year, six judges of the Appellate Division, including then chief justice Obaidul Hassan, resigned amid protests by students.

The other five judges are Justice M Enayetur Rahim, Justice Md Abu Zafor Siddique, Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim, Justice Md Shahnur Islam and Justice Kashefa Hussain.

Students under the banner of Anti-discrimination Student Movement march on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding trial of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and an end to "politics of occupation" on the campus.

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

Scrap cases under CSA, DSA against journalists

Demands Editors' Council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Editors' Council yesterday demanded that the government withdraw and scrap all the cases, including those filed against journalists under the Cyber Security Act (CSA) and the previous Digital Security Act, as well as harassment cases related to the recent movement.

In a statement, signed by the council's President Mahfuz Anam and General Secretary Dewan Hanif Mahmud, it also called for the repeal of all restrictive laws, including the CSA.

The statement noted that newspaper and television channel offices were attacked and property was destroyed during the recent mass movement.

"The Editors' Council does not support such

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Interim govt's major task is to sue Hasina

Prof Ali Riaz tells webinar on alleged crimes against humanity during protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government's key task is to file a case against Sheikh Hasina for her alleged crimes against humanity during the quota reform protest, said political scientist and writer Prof Ali Riaz yesterday.

"... Since July 14, the Sheikh Hasina-led government committed crimes against humanity as defined in international law, specifically article 7 of the Rome Statute," he said.

If this interim government does not lodge the case, "she will continue to enjoy impunity", he said at an webinar.

Riaz, a distinguished professor of politics and government at the Illinois State University, made the remarks at the webinar titled "Bangladesh After Mass Upsurge: What Needs to be Done,"

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

'No further delay' to Gaza ceasefire

Say leaders of France, Germany, UK; 25 more Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes

AGENCIES

The leaders of France, Germany and Britain said yesterday that "there can be no further delay" in negotiating a ceasefire in Gaza, warning Iran and its allies against any "further escalation" of the conflict.

The joint statement came after one of the deadliest reported Israeli strikes on the besieged Gaza Strip in more than 10 months of offensive.

"The fighting must end now, and all hostages still detained by Hamas must be released," French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said in a joint statement.

"The people of Gaza need urgent and unfettered delivery and distribution of aid," the statement said. "There can be no further delay."

They also welcomed the "tireless" work of Egyptian, Qatari and US mediators towards an agreement on a ceasefire and the release of hostages.

Several rounds of negotiations for a ceasefire in Gaza have failed until now, except for a one-week truce that was observed at the end of November.

International mediators have invited Israel and Hamas to resume negotiations towards a long-sought truce and hostage-release deal, as the fighting in Gaza and the killings of Iran-aligned militant leaders have sent tensions soaring across the region, reports AFP.

Hamas later on Sunday called on US, Qatari and Egyptian mediators to implement a ceasefire plan for Gaza put forward by US President Joe Biden, instead of holding "more negotiations".

In their statement, the three European leaders also urged Iran and its allies "to refrain from attacks that would further escalate regional tensions and jeopardise the opportunity to agree a ceasefire and the release of hostages."

- Hamas urges mediators to implement Biden truce plan
- European leaders warn Iran against any "further escalation"
- Gaza death toll rises to 39,897

CYBER SECURITY ACT

Controversial provisions to be reviewed

Says ICT adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Clauses of the Cyber Security Act (CSA) that pose threats to freedom of expression will be re-examined, said Posts, Telecommunications, and Information Technology Adviser Nahid Islam yesterday.

He made this statement to reporters following a meeting with ICT Division officials in Agargaon, Dhaka.

"In our primary discussion, we have agreed that the clauses of the Cyber Security Act that are controversial will have to be reconsidered."

"We will sit with the law ministry in this regard. Even if the law remains, we will ensure that it does not hinder freedom of expression."

CSA, which came into effect in 2023, has generated significant concern regarding its potential impact on

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Interim govt to protect fundamental rights, freedom

Adviser Touhid Hossain tells foreign diplomats

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The interim government is committed to promoting and protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms, said Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain.

"As part of our renewed nation-building efforts, Bangladesh would need the unstinting support and cooperation of the international community," he told more than 60 foreign diplomats based in Dhaka during his first diplomatic briefing at the State Guesthouse Padma yesterday.

The adviser appreciated the positive and constructive remarks of the international partners after the formation of the interim government, led by Prof Muhammad Yunus, on August 8.

"We affirmed that the government will uphold and promote all its international legal obligations, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law," Touhid told journalists after the diplomatic briefing.

Responding to a question, he said former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's stay in India will not impact the Dhaka-Delhi relationship.

"Bilateral relationship is established based on the mutual interests. If interests are compromised, the relationship does not sustain.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

People clear the rubble from a building hit during Israeli bombardment in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: **AFP**

BB loses Tk 55cr in forex deals with Islami Bank

MD MEHEDI HASAN *and* **MA JAHID**

The Bangladesh Bank has incurred a loss of Tk 55 crore from its foreign exchange deal with Islami Bank centring the introduction of the crawling peg exchange rate system.

As per its commitment to the International Monetary Fund, the central bank on May 8 announced the crawling peg system (a band of rates within which the exchange rate of a currency is allowed to fluctuate).

On May 9, the reserve management and investment unit of the central bank made two dollar buy and sell deals, amounting to $82 million, with the Shariah-based bank, where S Alam Group holds controlling stakes.

But the date of the transactions was shown to be May 8, found a central

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

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NATIONAL EMERGENCY SERVICE
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999 emergency service now fully functional
P3

Passenger trains resume operations
P5

Why can't India accept that the people toppled Sheikh Hasina?
P9

Real seek record sixth Super Cup
P11

Salman, Anisul arrested in Sadarghat

They're accused in case over killing of student during protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Salman F Rahman, private industry affairs adviser to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and Anisul Huq, former law minister, were arrested in the capital's Sadarghat yesterday.

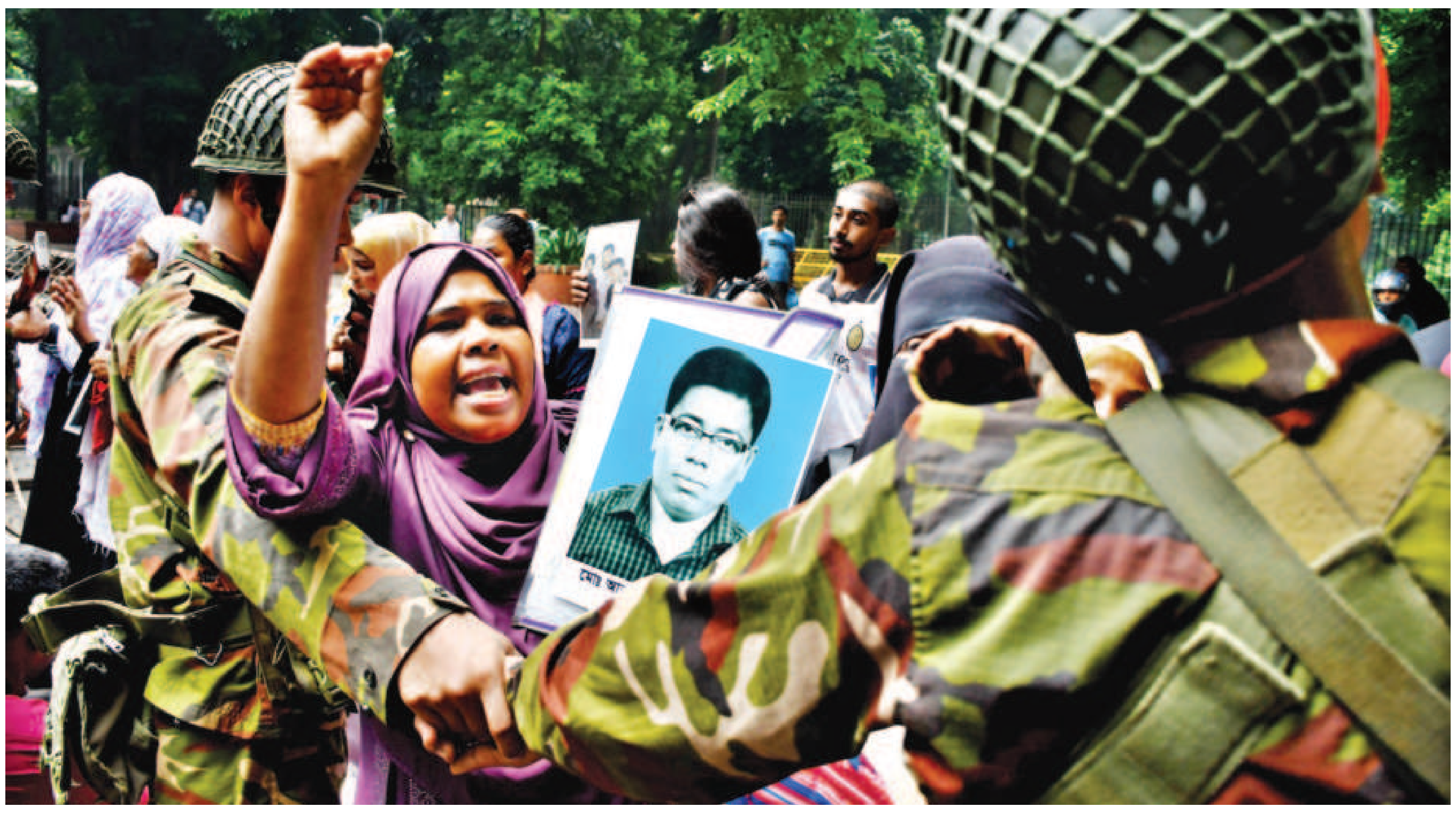
They were arrested in a case filed with New Market Police Station over the killing of a Dhaka College student, according to police sources.

The duo were trying to flee using the waterway, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mainul Hasan told The Daily Star.

Coast guards detained them in Narayanganj's Pagla area and handed them to police, said the media wing of Bangladesh Coast Guard last night.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

GAVE SHELTER TO AL LEADERS WHOSE LIVES IN DANGER: ARMY CHIEF -- PAGE 2



A woman holding the photograph of her elder brother Abu Bakar Sharif Titu, a member of Panchakaran Union Parishad of Bagerhat's Morrelganj upazila, who was picked up from in front of Sayedabad Police Outpost on September 19, 2016 and has been missing since then. Around 25 family members of victims of enforced disappearances, along with others, demonstrated in front of the State Guest House Jamuna, the official residence of Chief Adviser to the Interim Government Prof Mohammad Yunus, yesterday afternoon to demand the return of their loved ones. Related story on page 3. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

'We're one family, no room for division'

Chief adviser urges Hindus to stay united, have patience

STAR REPORT

Interim government Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said all are equal in the eyes of law and there is no scope to create divisions.

"Establishing people's democratic rights and human rights is the main goal of this government," he said while visiting Dhakeshwari National Temple in the capital in the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Major shakeup in the police

Monirul, Habibur, two other top cops sent into forced retirement

STAR REPORT

Four top police officials, including former Special Branch chief Md Monirul Islam and ex-Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Md Habibur Rahman, were sent into forced retirement yesterday.

The other two officials are Rangpur Metropolitan Police Commissioner Md Moniruzzaman and Rangpur Range Deputy Inspector General Abdul Baten. The two were in command on July 16 when police shot dead Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed in Rangpur.

A video showed Sayed, an organiser of the quota reform protest, being shot while holding a stick at the university gate.

Earlier yesterday, Monirul, an additional inspector general of police, was transferred to the Police Headquarters. Two days ago, Habibur was attached to the PHQ.

The police department yesterday underwent another major shakeup with 65 key officials transferred and given new postings.

Among them are the chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, key officials in the PHQ, the deputy commissioners of 15 out of the 16 crime divisions of DMP and the Detective Branch, and the officers-in-charge of 18 police stations in the capital.

Many of these officials had jurisdiction over the areas where the police recently opened indiscriminate fire on the quota reform protesters.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Hasina urges all to observe August 15

Posts Joy on his verified FB page

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, now in India after the fall of her government following a mass uprising, yesterday demanded an investigation into the killings, vandalism, and arson carried out in the name of agitation.

She also demanded that the culprits be identified and brought to justice.

Sajeeb Wazed Joy, Hasina's son, posted her statement on his verified Facebook page last night.

Hasina was compelled to step down on August 5 following the student protests, which saw over 400 people killed.

In the statement, she said, "Since July, lots of lives have been lost in violence, arson in the name of protests. I express my condolences and prayers

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

No national holiday on Aug 15

Decides meeting between advisers, parties; confusion remains over observance of Nat'l Mourning Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The advisory council of the interim government yesterday took the decision that there would be no national holiday on August 15.

"The decision to cancel the national holiday on August 15 was taken unanimously after a discussion with the council of advisers and political parties," said a press release sent from the Chief Adviser's Office.

The development comes after seven political parties in separate meetings with Prof Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser of the interim government, on Monday conveyed that August 15 should not be observed as a day of mourning and the public holiday is not needed.

The seven parties include BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Amar Bangladesh Party, two factions of Gono Adhikar Parishad, Bangladesh Jatiya Party (Partha) and the National Democratic Movement.

However, it is still not clear whether August 15 would be observed as the National Mourning Day, which was introduced by the government of then prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 8, 1996.

On August 15, 1975, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated along with most of his family members in a military coup led by a group of disgruntled army officers.

Following the Awami League government's decision, August 15 was used to be observed with due respect at

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

MALAYSIA-BOUND FLIGHTS

Biman syndicate hiked ticket prices

Says civil aviation probe; several travel agencies main beneficiaries

ZYMA ISLAM

The civil aviation ministry has found several Biman officials, including high-ups, fully responsible for the syndicate that artificially hiked the prices of flight tickets to Malaysia in May this year.

It also found that tickets were being blocked in the names of its former minister Lt Col Muhammad Faruk Khan and the airlines' former managing director Shafiul Azim.

The officials found to be running the syndicate also implicated Mohammad Salauddin, marketing director of Biman (currently on post-retirement leave) in their statements to the ministry-led committee.

The committee also found his involvement "beyond doubt".

It issued a report, which was signed by the ministry's Additional Secretary Fatema Rahim Veena, Joint Secretary Anup Kumar Talukdar and Deputy Secretary Ahmed Jamil on July 7.

"The last date for sending workers to Malaysia was May 31, 2024. Ticket prices for Biman flights shot up abnormally during that time," said the report.

"Between April 15, 2024, and May 31, 2024, the ticket price of an economy class seat on a Biman flight between Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur rose from Tk 20,475 to Tk 73,710 [excluding taxes]."

Biman had operated seven regular and eight special flights during that period.

The price hike led to planes flying with empty seats even as migrant workers, who were trying to get to Malaysia, despaired at the airport.

Several thousand failed to make

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

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Ahsan H Mansur new BB governor

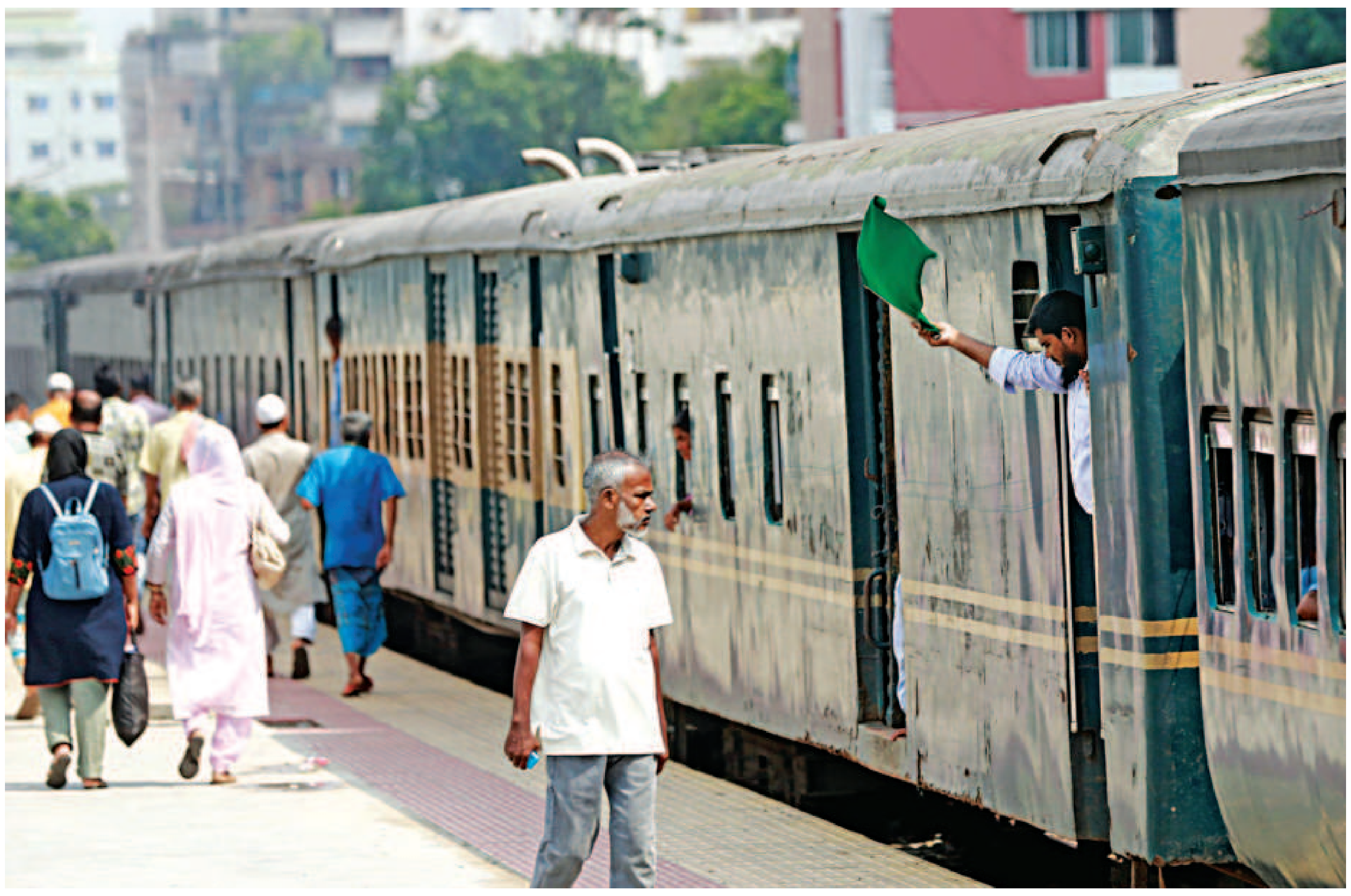
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent economist Ahsan H Mansur has been appointed as the governor of Bangladesh Bank, replacing Abdur Rouf Talukder, who stepped down following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government.

To pave the way for Mansur to become the 13th governor of BB, the council of advisers of the interim government yesterday approved a proposal to amend a proviso of the Bangladesh Bank Order, 1972 regarding the age limit for the central bank governor.

Mansur, who is 72, is over the permissible age for governor, set at 67 years in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



A man uses a flag to signal the departure of a train from the Gandaria Rail Station. It had reached there from Narayanganj and was about to head towards the Kamalapur Rail Station yesterday morning. After eight days of rail services being completely suspended, trains began operating again yesterday, offering relief to hundreds of commuters. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

JULY 19 POLICE FIRING

Hasina sued over death of shop owner

Quader, Asaduzzaman, ex-IGP, former DB chief among other 6 accused

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and six others have been sued over the death of grocery shop owner Abu Sayed in police firing in the capital's Mohammadpur area during quota reform protests on July 19.

The other accused are Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, former DB (Dhaka Metropolitan Police) chief Harun Or Rashid, former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, and former DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker.

SM Amir Hamza Shatil, a resident of Mohammadpur, yesterday filed the murder case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury.

This is the first case lodged against Hasina after she resigned and went to India amid an uprising on August 5.

After a hearing, the magistrate recorded the complainant's statement and directed the officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station to register the complaint as a first information report (FIR).

In the case, several unnamed top police officials and other government officials have also been accused, Mamun Mia, a lawyer for the complainant, told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

'Gave shelter to AL leaders whose lives in danger'

Says Army chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman yesterday said they gave shelter to some influential people from the ousted Awami League government as their lives were in danger.

He also said they gave shelter to people irrespective of their party affiliation, opinion and religion.

"If there is any allegation against them, any case is filed, they will be punished. But of course, we don't want any attack or extrajudicial action [against them]. We have given them shelter because of the threat to their lives," he said replying to a query.

Waker-Uz-Zaman was speaking at Rajshahi Cantonment where he met with officials of army, police, and the civil administration.

Asked about any possibility of a counter-revolution, the army chief said he had no knowledge of it.

Enquired about any pressure from foreign nations regarding the prevailing situation, he replied in the negative.

"... this is a unique situation. Everyone understands it. There has been some discussion over the minority issue. A total of 30 minority-related attacks have taken

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Border Guard Bangladesh has stepped up patrol near the Naf river in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila to prevent Rohingyas from crossing into Bangladesh. The photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BGB

117 govt officials elevated to rank of deputy secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the latest reshuffle in the public administration, the government has promoted 117 government officials to the rank of deputy secretary.

The Ministry of Public Administration issued a notification to this effect yesterday.

The promotions that these officers received are retroactive, meaning that they take effect from the date they became eligible. This also means these officers are entitled to retrospective financial benefits.

According to the notification, the promoted officers can submit their joining letters to the public administration ministry in person or by e-mail.

If an officer's place of employment has changed from the one specified in the promotion order, the officer in question must mention it in their joining letter.

The notification further states that the authority reserves the right to modify or revoke the order if any contrary or unfavourable information is found against any officer in future.

No national holiday on Aug 15

FROM PAGE 1

the state level with the national flag flying at half-mast all over the country and at Bangladesh missions abroad.

But on August 8, 2002, then BNP-led four-party alliance government issued an order cancelling the observance of National Mourning Day and a public holiday on August 15.

However, a High Court order in July 2008 revoked the order of the immediate past government and the day has been observed as National Mourning Day since.

At the meeting held at the State Guesthouse Jamuna yesterday, the advisory council also decided to abolish the provision of Bangladesh Bank Order 1972 that set the highest age limit for the appointment of the central bank governor at 67 years.

The age limit creates obstacles in appointing a person with expertise and experience for the post. In many Asian countries, including neighbouring India and Sri Lanka, there is no mention of the maximum age limit for the post of central bank governor, the press statement said.

The decision was made to pave the way for Ahsan H Mansur to become the next BB governor. Mansur, the executive director of the Policy Research Institute, is 72 years and eight months old.

The advisory council of the interim government adopted a condolence motion in honour of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives during the mass uprising of students and the public.

A committee will be formed under the initiative of the Health Services Division, comprising representatives from the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, the Finance Division and the relevant ministries and departments, to provide medical treatment to the injured and support to the families of the martyrs.

The committee will draft a policy for providing medical treatment to the injured and support to the families of the martyrs.

Additionally, it will prepare a comprehensive list identifying the martyrs and the injured individuals.

More than 400 people, including students and police personnel, were killed in the violence centring the students' quota reform protests that later took the form of a mass uprising. Several thousands of protestors were injured, too.

Hasina sued

FROM PAGE 1

The complainant was not the relative of the victim, he filed the case voluntarily, he added.

In his complaint, Shatil mentioned that Sayed was killed around 4:00pm on July 19 when police were firing indiscriminately on the protesters, following the accused's directives.

Former home minister Asaduzzaman ordered police to open fire on the demonstrators, read the complaint.

The victim's family members, who are very poor, live in Boda upazila of Panchagarh. They do not have the ability to file the case, he mentioned in the complaint.

Meanwhile, leaders and activists of AL and its associated bodies yesterday took out a procession in Gopalganj town to protest the filing of the murder case against AL President Hasina and other leaders.

Several thousand AL men joined the procession that started from the district AL office in Bankpara area. After parading different roads in the town, the programme ended in Chowrangi area.

Biman syndicate hiked ticket prices

FROM PAGE 1

it to the southeast Asian country in time before the gate closed, as their recruiting agencies could not manage their tickets.

"During that period, Biman's website showed that all tickets were sold out. However, at that time Biman's sales counters were not selling any tickets for any of the flights other than the special flight scheduled for May 31, 2024," said the report.

Travel agents book tickets from a platform called the global distribution system (GDS) – a system that links reservation inventory under one computer-based network.

When a flight is opened for booking on the system, all travel agents registered with it get a notification alerting them so they can start booking tickets.

The ministry report, however, found that even before the notification was sent out, Biman officials blocked seats -- often all of them on a single plane -- to favour 14 specific travel agencies. These agencies then sold those tickets at exorbitant prices, several times higher than Biman's official prices, and kept the difference for themselves.

The travel agencies are Gemini Travels Ltd; Safar Travels & Tourism; East West Travels & Tours Pvt Ltd; Kazi Aid International Pvt Ltd; Valencia Air Travels & Tours Ltd; Xpress Travel Holidays; Travel Zone; Seri Mechan Travel; Triplover Ltd; Sunshine Travel Air International; Flyover Tours & Travels; Sadia Travels; Globe Travel Service (Bangladesh), and Travelchamp Ltd.

A total of 480 travel agencies are registered with Biman.

All of the seats of BG9087 and BG382 flights, which flew from Dhaka to Kuala Lumpur on May 27, 29 and 30, were blocked out for these travel agencies.

"A total of 1,146 out of 2,150 seats from five of the seven flights conducted were blocked from Biman's central reservation department, and the PNRs [booking reference numbers] were distributed to certain travel agencies," said the report.

"As a result, the other travel agencies were deprived of equal access to those tickets. This also meant the selected travel agencies got the chance to artificially increase the ticket prices of those seats."

Only two tickets were sold from Biman's ticket counters until May 30, said the report.

During the investigation, the committee also came across a snapshot showing 91 tickets were booked with the reference of former minister Lt Col Muhammad Faruk Khan and Biman's former managing director Shafiul Azim. The MD's official phone number was used for the booking.

The committee included the snapshot in the report.

A group booking reference for 90 seats for flight BG9086, slated to fly on May 27, 2024, was generated in their names by Golam Mostafa, a manager of Biman's Revenue Management System Department, at 5:28am on May 26, 2024.

However, no tickets were generated, found the investigators. Instead, one more seat booking was added, and then the seats were distributed to two travel agencies called Gemini Travels Ltd and Flyover Tours & Travels Ltd, who got 51 and 40 seats respectively. Biman's Deputy Director (commercial) Tabibur Rahman distributed the seats.

Former Biman MD Shafiul Azim expressed shock that his and the former minister's names and his phone number were used to block tickets in bulk. "The minister had asked us to take steps to ensure that migrant workers trying to go to Malaysia could get tickets. I had instructed the marketing director in good faith to ensure that workers get tickets. I didn't realise the staffers would do this," said Azim, currently the Election Commission secretary.

Former civil aviation minister Lt Col Faruk Khan was contacted via phone and text message but was unreachable as of the filing of this report around 9:30pm.

The ministry-led committee also detailed how Biman officials logged in together at the dead of the night to manually block seats.

The flight information of BG382, which was scheduled to fly on May 30, was published at 12:04am on May 24.

By 12:15am, Mohammad Hasan Ahmed, an operation controller from Biman's Revenue Management System Department, had manually blocked 206 seats.

He was joined by Manager (commercial) Golam Mostafa and Assistant Manager (commercial) Farhana Akhter, and by 2:21am, 329 seats were blocked.

Between 7:04am and 7:08am, Md Tabibur Rahman blocked 63 more seats, the report stated.

Golam Mostafa claimed the rules and policies were followed to the dot and nothing abnormal happened.

The report added that if Biman had sold the tickets for the two May 30 flights from its own sales counters, instead of blocking them for the chosen travel agents, the airlines could have saved Tk 8.23 lakh just on this one flight.

The ministry also scrutinised two more such flights, including one where the booking reference was created using the MD's phone number, and found that the national flag carrier could have saved Tk 14.2 lakh on these flights if their officials did not block the seats.

The committee found that Biman officials also overbooked the entire flight up to one and a half times to favour the aforementioned travel agencies.

The overbooking of tickets is an internationally accepted practice. This is done to avoid empty seats in case of passenger no-shows and last-minute cancellations.

The number of tickets to be overbooked depends on the historical trends of the number of seats that go empty on that particular flight.

However, as many as 100 seats on the BG382 flight on May 29, 2024, were overbooked, according to the report. A total of 373 tickets were booked manually by Biman officials against 271 seats.

In spite of this level of manual overbooking, the plane flew with eight empty seats even in peak season, implying that they did not find customers willing to pay the inflated prices of the tickets.

The same thing happened on May 30, 2024, when 392 seats were manually blocked by Biman against 298 seats, and the plane flew with several empty seats.

The ministry found that complaints were filed about Farhana and Tabibur multiple times and they were proven guilty of ticket syndicating in the past by Biman, but the airlines took no action against them.

Instead, Tabibur was even recruited contractually after his retirement.

Contacted, he denied the allegations.

Farhana said that in her rank, she does not even have the system access needed to overbook such flights. She expressed shock at the ministry's findings. When relayed specific examples of how chunks of tickets were blocked by her ID, she said she has no idea how it happened because she does not have the necessary permissions to do so.

The ministry-led committee's report also found that the marketing and sales head Mohammed Salauddin did not intervene when his direct subordinates were blocking tickets and overbooking every single day.

"He supported the corruption of his team and it is mandatory to take disciplinary action against him," it said.

'We're one family, no room for division'

FROM PAGE 1

afternoon.

Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Asif Nazrul, Religious Affairs Adviser AFM Khalid Hossain and leaders of the Hindu community were present, reports BSS.

The chief adviser exchanged views with the leaders of Hindu community.

Calling upon all to keep patience and remain united, he said establishing justice is one of the main goals of this government.

Prof Yunus said, "We are going to build Bangladesh that would be like a family. This is the main thing. There will be no question of creating any difference or division in this family. We are Bangladeshis."

He assured the Hindu community that if justice is established, everyone will get its benefit.

"Is there any scope to see who belongs to which religion, caste, and community? ... There is one law. Who have the ability to create any division here?" he said.

Urging all to help the interim government, he said all Bangladeshis have equal rights and they deserve it as per the country's constitution.

"You should place this demand before all governments .... We are the same people, have the same rights. No difference could be made in this regard. Help us and keep patience. Judge later whether we have done anything for you or not," said Prof Yunus.

The leaders of Hindu community demanded that the interim government form a commission to hold trial for the repression and discrimination against the Hindu people over the last 53 years.

In another development, leaders of different organisations of minority communities said the chief adviser assured them of safety.

They made the remarks after a meeting with Prof Yunus at the latter's official residence Jamuna yesterday.

They, however, said they will remain vigilant until the promises made by the interim government are implemented.

Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of Bangladesh-Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad, said violence against Hindus that began on August 5 continues in different districts.

"This government wants to create an environment that can restore confidence in the people of Bangladesh of communal harmony. Not everything is possible for this interim government, but it must take steps to address some issues. They [interim government] told us that they will start the work," he said.

Santosh Sharma, general secretary of Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad, said, "Dr Yunus said that he wants to build a state where temples won't be required to guard again. We are hopeful about his statement."

Charu Chandra Prabhu, general secretary of ISKCON Bangladesh, said they are optimistic about the chief adviser's assurance that the minorities in Bangladesh will live in peace and harmony.

Subrata Chowdhury, presidium member of Bangladesh-Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad, said they are hopeful that the interim government will try to restore peace and order.

The demands placed by the Oikya Parishad during the meeting include the enactment of a minority protection act, formation of a national minority commission and minority ministry, and ensuring proportional representation and participation in the government, parliament, and all representative bodies based on ratio of the population.

Salman, Anisul arrested in Sadarghat

FROM PAGE 1

Police did not say where Salman and Anisul were headed for.

The duo were arrested on the charges of instigating the killing of Dhaka College student Sabuj Ali, 26, on July 16, said sources.

Sabuj's elder brother Nurnabi filed the case on July 17, accusing unnamed people after he identified Sabuj's body at Dhaka Medical College morgue.

According to the first information report (FIR), Nurnabi learned around 3:00pm on July 17 that his brother Sabuj was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with serious injuries.

Nurnabi then went to the hospital and found Sabuj's body.

The FIR mentioned that Sabuj's classmates told Nurnabi that BNP-Jamaat activists had beaten up Sabuj near Dhaka College around 4:15pm on July 16.

The students demanding reforms to quotas in government jobs were joined by BNP-Jamaat men carrying sticks and iron rods near the Science Lab and were setting fire to different establishments, said the FIR.

The BNP-Jamaat men beat him up near the Globe Shopping Centre, leaving him seriously wounded.

Passersby took Sabuj to the DMCH where doctors pronounced him dead around 5:15pm, the FIR added.

Over 550 people, including students and police personnel, were killed in violence during the student protests that turned into a mass uprising which toppled the Sheikh Hasina-led government last week.

Salman was a lawmaker from Dohar and vice-chairman of the Beximco Group. He is also the chairman of IFIC Bank and holds key positions in many business associations.

He was considered as one of the influential figures among the policymakers in the Awami League government.

Anisul, a reputed lawyer, was the law minister for three consecutive terms after 2014.

Before that, he was the chief counsel and special prosecutor for the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the chief prosecutor for the Pilkhana carnage case.

His father Serajul Huq was a prominent organiser of the Liberation War in 1971. Anisul was the chief special prosecutor for both the Bangabandhu Murder Case and the Jail Killing case.

He was one of the few cabinet members of the immediate past government who tried to diffuse the student protests for quota reform.

Major shakeup in the police

FROM PAGE 1

Almost all the DCs and OCs had been serving in "lucrative" commanding positions in the capital for many years. Many of them were transferred to different districts far away from Dhaka, said police sources.

The home ministry and the PHQ issued separate circulars in this regard, transferring the 58 officials ranging from the ranks of additional inspector general of police to inspector.

The PHQ in a press release said a total of 634 out of the 639 police stations across the country resumed operations until yesterday.

Md Shah Alam, DIG of Railway Police, was made the chief of SB. Additional IGP Mohammad Ali Mia, chief of CID, was transferred to the PHQ and another Additional IGP Tawfiq Mahbub Chowdhury was made the chief of Police Bureau of Investigation.

Additional IGP Anwar Hossain, who was serving as DIG (operations) at the PHQ, was transferred to the specialised training centre of Armed Police Battalion in Khagrachhari.

Earlier, the interim government changed the IGP, director general of Rapid Action Battalion and Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner. The interim government, led by Prof Muhammad Yunus, took office on August 8 following the ouster of Sheikh Hasina's government.

Sources in the police said the officers transferred were known to be close to the previous Awami League government. The force was heavily politicised during the tenures of the three successive governments led by Hasina.

A section of opportunistic and ambitious police officials extensively used the force to implement AL's agendas.

These officials played roles in excessive use of force, reckless firing on the quota reform protesters, and persecution of opposition leaders over the years. That is why police came under widespread attacks from mobs after the fall of the Hasina government, the sources added.

More than 400 people, including 42 police personnel, were killed in clashes during the quota reform protest.

Amid such a situation, anger gripped different levels of the police, particularly the force members from the ranks of constable to sub-inspector. They claimed that police personnel used excessive force during the recent student movement following the orders of the senior officials. This triggered anger among the people, leading to the cops coming under mob attacks.

Police personnel even called strike demanding punishment for the senior officials responsible for issuing orders, and formation of a commission to run the force. They also called for changing police's uniform and logo due to the mistrust that has grown among people for the forcer's recent activities.

Yesterday, the PHQ formed a 10-member committee to change police's uniform and logo.

Hearing the news of DIG Baten being sent into forced retirement, people of his village home in Sunamganj's Madhyanagar upazila celebrated yesterday by distributing sweets among the villagers, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

Many villagers alleged that they had been oppressed by the family members of Baten for long.

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DAY AT A GLANCE

Farooq-e Azam sworn in as adviser

All 17 interim govt advisers have now taken oath of office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Freedom fighter Farooq-e Azam was sworn in as an adviser of the interim government yesterday.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin administered the oath of office at Bangabhaban at 11:00am.

Farooq-e Azam returned to Bangladesh late on Sunday on a flight from the United States.

Most of the advisors of the new interim government, led by Professor Muhammad Yunus, took their oaths of office on August 8 after Sheikh Hasina resigned as PM and fled the country on August 5.

Chief Adviser Yunus and 13 other advisers were sworn in on that day.

Supradeep Chakma, a former ambassador, and Bidhan Ranjan Roy, former director of the National Institute of Mental Health, were sworn in on August 13.

With the swearing in of Bir Pratik Farooq-e Azam, a freedom fighter who participated in Operation Jackpot, all 17 of the advisers of the interim government have now taken oath.

4 new SC judges sworn in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four new Supreme Court judges were sworn in yesterday morning.

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed administered the oath at the Supreme Court at 10:30am. The judges are Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury, Syed Md Ziaul Karim, Justice Md Rezaul Haque, and Justice SM Emdadul Hoque.

Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, senior judge of the Appellate Division, and judges of the High Court Division, Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman and Supreme Court Bar Association President AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon were present at the oath-taking ceremony.

President Mohammad Shahabuddin on Monday elevated them to the Appellate Division of the SC from the High Court Division. The number of apex court judges now stands at six.

BCS health cadres demand removal of DGHS DG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health cadre officials yesterday demanded the immediate removal of all corrupt officials at Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), including its director general.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

3 new addl attorney generals appointed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday appointed three Supreme Court lawyers as additional attorney generals and nine others as deputy attorney generals to represent the state in legal matters.

The new additional attorney generals are Abdul Zabbar Bhuiyan, Arshadur Rauf and Aneek Rushd Haque. Among the new additional attorney generals, Md

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

'Killer Abbas' freed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Once a top terror of Dhaka's underworld Abbas Ali, also known as "Killer Abbas", was released from Kashimpur Central Jail-2 on Monday night.

Senior Jail Superintendent (Acting) Amirul Islam confirmed it to The Daily Star.

He said Abbas' relatives met him at the main gate around 10:30pm.

He was in the high security cell of Kashimpur Jail in Gazipur since 2003.

Abbas was arrested on February 14, 2003 in a case filed for shooting two businessmen in front of the Dhaka District and Sessions Judge's Court building in broad daylight.

Primary schools reopen today

STAR REPORT

All primary schools reopened today after remaining shut for around one month.

Mahbubur Rahman, public relations officer of Primary and Mass Education confirmed it to The Daily Star.

On July 17, the government closed all the primary schools until further notice amid the quota reform protests across the country.

Politics banned at JnU, PUST

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Jagannath University yesterday banned all types of political activities involving students, faculty members, and administrative staff on the university campus.

It was also decided that in-person classes would begin on August 18.

The decisions were made by Prof Md

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

999 now fully operational

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national emergency helpline number 999, which was disrupted due to the absence of police personnel since August 6, is now functioning at full capacity.

Mohammad Tabarak Ullah, additional deputy inspector general of police and chief of the 999 service, confirmed this to The Daily Star.

The 999 service did not stop on August 6, but it was running on a limited scale, he said.

"We could not provide service as there was no police personnel in stations across the country. Since police have resumed work at almost all the stations on Monday, we are now providing the 999 service in full swing," he said.

Police members remained absent from their stations since August 6, a day after Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country amid a mass protest.

They feared violent reprisals as several hundred protesters were killed due to indiscriminate firing by many of their colleagues along with BGB members.

Besides, at least 42 police personnel were also killed during the clashes that took place between July 16 and August 6 across the country.

Students and artists paint walls across various streets in Barishal city, honouring the memories and sacrifices of those who lost their lives during the quota reform movement and the mass uprising that followed. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: **TITU DAS**

Shafiqul Alam press secretary of chief adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shafiqul Alam, the Bangladesh bureau chief of AFP, was yesterday appointed as the press secretary to Chief Adviser of the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Alam would have the rank of secretary and draw a salary of Tk 78,000 along with benefits, according to a notification of public administration ministry.

"It was too good an opportunity to pass up on. I hope to carry out my role as the press secretary with sincerity, grace and while upholding the freedom of the press...," Alam said.

A graduate of Dhaka University, Alam started his journalism career at the now-defunct The Bangladesh Observer. He joined AFP in 2005. In 2012, he was made its Bangladesh bureau chief.

VICTIMS OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Yunus opens his door for the families

Listens to their despair; says govt must act on it

BAHARAM KHAN

Chief Adviser to the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday expressed deep concern after hearing the distressing accounts of families whose loved ones have gone missing at different times.

In a state of disbelief, he remarked, "Can people harm others like this?"

The chief adviser said this at a meeting with members of Mayer Daak, a platform for the families of victims of enforced disappearances, at the State Guesthouse Jamuna, his official residence, around 8:30pm.

The platform said more than 400 such families are associated with Mayer Daak.

Acknowledging the critical role these families played in bringing the government to power, Dr Yunus said, "This government exists because of you. If it doesn't address your issues, what is its purpose? This government has a responsibility to you, and it must act on these matters."

PHOTO: **PID**

He further added, "You have done a brave thing by standing up. If you hadn't taken to the streets, people wouldn't have known."

During the conversation, Yunus asked the families how long they had been advocating for justice. The victims responded that they had been fighting for 11 years.

Sanjida Islam Tuli, the coordinator of Mayer Daak, said, "Our family members haven't just disappeared; many of us have been harassed by various organisations.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

bti The Daily Star
STELLAR WOMEN
SEASON 2

CALL FOR
REGISTRATIONS / NOMINATIONS

The Stellar Women initiative aims to recognise twelve (12) extraordinary women throughout the year (From July '24 to June '25) for playing a vital role in their distinguished fields. Their work must have made positive contributions towards the development of society & the nation.

Inviting nominations/ registrations in the following categories:
Sports (31st August '24)
Bank & Financial Institute (30th September '24)
Architect (Residential & Commercial) (31st October '24)

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A JOINT INITIATIVE BY
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The students of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement bring out a road march in Chattogram city's Sholosahar area yesterday as part of their "Resistance Week" programme to press home their four-point demand. They include formation of a special tribunal to ensure speedy trial of the killings carried out by Sheikh Hasina, her party, and the government during the mass uprising in July and August. PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

JCD men attack principal

FROM PAGE 5

attempted to leave the college for lunch, JCD members allegedly assaulted them.

Later, at 1:00pm, Rajshahi city BNP senior joint convener Nazmul Huda, along with Limon and other party leaders, entered the principal's office and pressured her to resign.

This correspondent was present in the principal's room from 12:45pm to 1:45pm.

Despite initially resisting, Prof Amina ultimately signed the resignation paper at 1:30pm after JCD men allegedly ousted her husband from the office and attempted to pick up her son.

Prof Amina said she became the principal based on her own merit and felt she had no choice but to resign to protect her family.

"I did not have any other way but to resign as the BNP and Chhatra Dal men attempted to beat my husband and son," she said.

When contacted, BNP leader Nazmul Huda claimed he went to the campus as a "non-political person" to resolve the issue and ensure Prof Amina's safety.

JCD leader Emdadul Haque did not respond to repeated phone calls from this correspondent.

Law enforcers

FROM PAGE 5

also instructed the unit officials to remain on alert so that no unwanted incidents can take place.

Rezaul Karim, deputy inspector general (operations) of the PHQ, said, "There is no specific threat or risk centring August 15, but police will remain on high alert to avert any kind of unwanted incidents."

On August 10, three officers, a junior commissioned officer, and five other army personnel were injured when protesters attacked army patrol teams with sharp weapons at Gopinathpur of Gopalganj Sadar.

According to a press release sent by the Inter-Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR), two patrol teams of the army went to the spot after protesters blocked the Gopalganj-Dhaka highway.

The teams were attacked with locally made weapons, it said. The protesters also hurled brick chunks at the teams. An army vehicle was set alight and another two were vandalised.

According to the ISPR, the army patrol team fired four shots to disperse the protesters and bring the situation under control.

Additional troops have been deployed in the area, it said, adding that the injured army personnel were out of danger and undergoing treatment.

KCC services

FROM PAGE 5

Mayor Khaleque's six-storey residence in ward 22 was seen completely destroyed.

Shaukat Ali, a KCC employee, said, "The mayor has not returned yet. All the belongings have been looted. Only debris remains."

Lashkar Tajul Islam, chief executive officer of KCC, acknowledged that city dwellers have been facing significant challenges due to the suspension of KCC services in the absence of the mayor and councillors.

"We are exploring different ways to keep the councillors' offices operational," he added.

Yunus opens

FROM PAGE 3

"Some were forced to sign blank papers claiming that no one was missing, only that they had gone on a trip."

The families also shared their stories of uncertainty and despair, how children born after their fathers were taken have never known if their fathers are alive.

"Many women don't know whether they are widows or if their husbands are still alive," Tuli said.

Another woman spoke of the fleeting hope they felt when reports emerged about the return of some missing persons after the government's fall on August 5.

She said, "Relatives were anxiously calling for information. I can't even describe what we're going through."

The family members demanded interrogation of the recently dismissed Lt Gen Ziaul Ahsan.

The families demanded a probe into the recently dismissed Ziaul Ahsan, who was arrested on August 7. Ziaul, who has been linked to many controversies, was director general of National Telecommunication Monitoring Center since 2022 and held significant positions in Rab starting in 2009.

Prof Yunus asked the families if they felt safer under the new government. One family member responded that they remain in mental trauma.

The meeting, which lasted about 25 minutes, was attended by seven to eight family members.

Adilur Rahman Khan, adviser to the Ministry of Industry; LGRD Adviser Hasan Arif; and Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhtar, among others, were present.

In the afternoon, around 25 family members of victims of enforced disappearances, along with others, demonstrated in front of the Jamuna, to demand the return of their loved ones. They alleged that their family members were being held at "Aynaghar" (House of Mirrors), a detention facility where victims of enforced disappearances were kept during Hasina's regime.

On August 6, a day after Hasina's fall, members of Mayer Daak gathered in front of the DGFI office to know whereabouts of their missing relatives. At least three victims were released.

The next day, DGFI said there were no detainees in their Dhaka facility.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 14

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-41	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-44	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Journos a part of mass uprising: CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed yesterday said journalists are also a part of the mass uprising through which a new Bangladesh has been born.

The contribution of journalist community cannot be denied, he said when a section of reporters extended greetings to him at his Supreme Court office.

Mentioning that journalists are the fourth pillar of the state, the chief justice said, "We get informed through news by journalists. So, we expect them to deliver the highest quality of journalism while also maintaining professionalism."

"The expectation is even higher from journalists covering the Supreme Court issues," he added.

The chief justice assured the journalists of cooperation in pursuing their profession.

3 new addl attorney

FROM PAGE 3

Abdul Jabbar Bhuiyan is the president of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum's Supreme Court unit and former vice president of the Supreme Court Bar Association; Mohammad Arshadur Rouf is the son of Justice Mohamad Abdur Rouf, a former judge of the Appellate Division and former chief election commissioner; and Aneek R Haque is the son of former inspector general of M Enamul Haque and nephew of former BNP minister Barrister Aminul Haque.

Meanwhile, the new deputy attorney generals are -- Ainunnahar Siddiqua, Sultana Akter Rubi, Foyej Ahmed, Md Zahirul Islam Sumon, Redwan Ahmed Runjib, Md Monjur Alam, Samima Sultana Dipti, Mohsina Khatun and Md Rafiqul Islam Montu.

BCS health cadres

FROM PAGE 3

BCS Health Cadre Association placed their two-point demand at a sit-in in front of the DGHS office in Mohakhali.

They demanded resignation of the DG as he took steps to postpone the order to cancel the postings of officials who were appointed on an ad hoc basis.

They also demanded a stop to all illegal recruitments, promotions and postings at DGHS.

If these demands are not met at the earliest time, they will go for tougher programmes, said Umme Tania Nasrin, member secretary of BCS Health Cadre Association.

Politics banned

FROM PAGE 3

Humayun Kabir Chowdhury, treasurer of the university, after a meeting with teachers and protesting students.

The treasurer also declared that in-person classes at the university would start on August 18.

Additionally, the students set a 48-hour ultimatum regarding the formation of the Jagannath University Students Union. In response, the treasurer announced that a committee would be formed to organise the elections by September 20.

Meanwhile, Pabna University of Science and Technology (PUST) banned all types of political activities on the campus.

Engineering Division
Khulna University, Khulna.
www.ku.ac.bd

Tender No: KU/ENGG/460/2017 Date: 13/08/2024

e-Tender Notice Tender No. 08/2024-25

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (http:/www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of

Tender ID No.	Name of the works	Tender Closing and Opening date & time
1008137	Construction of Jatir Janak Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall Land Development/Improvement works at Khulna University, Khulna	27-Aug-2024; 3:30 PM
1007549	Repair, Renovation & Painting etc. Works at Kabi Jibonanonda Das Academic Bhaban (AB-3) And Other Non-Residential Buildings (as required) of Khulna University, Khulna.	27-Aug-2024; 4:00 PM

This is an online Tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal (http:/www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to Banking hours on e-GP system.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Engr. S. M. Moniruzzaman)
Chief Engineer
Khulna University, Khulna
E-mail: chief@engr.ku.ac.bd
Tel: 02-477734157

GD- 171

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested **firm/organization for Graduate Tracer Management System (GTMS)**. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ***United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM)*** at
https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/243339
The deadline for submission of proposal is **Tuesday, September 10, 2024, by 04:30 PM (BST time)**.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE JAIL SUPER
NOAKHALI DISTRICT JAIL
www.prison.noakhali.gov.bd.

Memo No. 58.04.7500.123.04.001.2024- 4019(4) **Date: 12-08-2024**

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal.

SL. No.	Re-Tender ID No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Goods	Package	Publishing date & time	Closing Date & Time
01	992835	1006886	Supply of Dietary Artical for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	Package-13	11/08/2024 & 12:00	27/08/2024 & 13:00

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to **12:30 on 27 August, 2024.**

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

02/08/24
(Md.Golam Dastagir)
Jail Super
Noakhali district Jail
Jailsupernoakhali@gmail.com

GD- 163

বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা অত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির মাধ্যমে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সোশ্যাল মার্কেটিং কোম্পানি (এসএমসি) এর ব্যবহৃত ১ টি সেডান কার, ১ টি মাইক্রোবাস এবং ১ টি ডাবল কেবিন পিকআপ 'যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে' ভিত্তিতে বিক্রয় করা হবে। আগ্রহী দরপত্র দাতাগণের (ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান) নিকট থেকে সিডিউলে বর্ণিত শর্তাবলী সাপেক্ষে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

দরপত্র সংগ্রহ ও প্রদর্শনের স্থান ও সময়:
দরপত্র সিডিউল আগামী ১৪-০৮-২০২৪ ইং থেকে ০৪-০৯-২০২৪ ইং পর্যন্ত নিম্নলিখিত ওয়েবলিংক থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। গাড়ি তিনটি সিডিউলে বর্ণিত এসএমসির নির্ধারিত অফিসের ঠিকানায় (সকাল ৯:৩০ টা থেকে দুপুর ১:০০ টা পর্যন্ত) প্রদর্শন করা হবে।

দরপত্র জমা দেওয়ার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়:
০৫-০৯-২০২৪ ইং তারিখ দুপুর ২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।

দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত বিবরণ নিম্নোক্ত ওয়েবলিংকে পাওয়া যাবে: https://www.smc-bd.org/tenders

এসএমসি কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে উক্ত দরপত্র আংশিক অথবা সম্পূর্ণ বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

সিনিয়র ম্যানেজার, প্রকিউরমেন্ট
সোশ্যাল মার্কেটিং কোম্পানি

দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি)
ডিআর টাওয়ার (১৩ তলা)
৬৫/২/২, বীর প্রতীক গাজী গোলাম দস্তগীর সড়ক
(বক্স কালভার্ট রোড), পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০
টেলিফোন: ৫৫১১২৮৫৭-৬০

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইনস্টিটিউটের ব্যাংকিং প্রফেশনাল পরীক্ষার জন্য ৫০,০০০ (পঞ্চাশ হাজার) উত্তরপত্র (লিথোকোড সম্বলিত OMR শীটসহ) এবং ২.০০ (দুই লক্ষ) লুজশীট মুদ্রণ ও সরবরাহের জন্য আগ্রহী মুদ্রণ প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের নিকট হতে তাদের প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক লেটারহেড প্যাড-এ একক দর ও মোট মূল্য উল্লেখসহ সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। আগ্রহী প্রতিষ্ঠানের শিক্ষা বোর্ড/পাবলিক সার্ভিস কমিশন/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে OMR শীট/OMR শীটসহ উত্তরপত্র সরবরাহ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। দরপত্রের সাথে কাগজের নমুনা ও মোট উদ্ধৃত দরের (ফেরতযোগ্য) ৫% আর্নেস্টমানি ডিডি/পে-অর্ডার-এর মাধ্যমে অত্র ইনস্টিটিউটের অনুকূলে জমা দিতে হবে। তাছাড়া কার্যাদেশপ্রাপ্ত প্রতিষ্ঠানকে উল্লিখিত কাজের মোট মূল্যের ১০% হারে জামানত ১ (এক) বছরের জন্য (ফেরতযোগ্য) আইবিবি'র বরাবরে জমা রাখতে হবে। বিজ্ঞাপন প্রকাশের দিন হতে ২৮-০৮-২০২৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময় (সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে বিকাল ৪:০০ ঘটিকা)-এর মধ্যে উত্তরপত্র ও লুজশীটের নমুনা দেখা যাবে এবং টাঃ ৫০০/- মূল্যে টেন্ডার সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে। দরপত্র আগামী ২৯ আগস্ট ২০২৪ তারিখ দুপুর ২:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ইনস্টিটিউট কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে দাখিল করতে হবে। একই দিন দুপুর ২:৩০ মিনিটে দরপত্রদাতাদের (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) সম্মুখে দরপত্রসমূহ খোলা হবে। ইনস্টিটিউট কর্তৃপক্ষ কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোনো দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

শেখ জাহাঙ্গীর হোসেন
সচিব, আইবিবি

GD- 167

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Public Health Engineering
Office of the Superintending Engineer
Sylhet Circle,Topkhana,Sylhet.

Invitation for Enlistment & Renewal of Enlistment (2024-2025)

Memo no: 46.03.9100.013.07.41.15-230 **Date: 11/08/2024**

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH			
1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Local Govt. Rural Development & Co-operatives, Local Govt. Division	
2.	Agency	Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE)	
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Superintending Engineer, Sylhet Circle.	
4.	Procuring Entity District	Sylhet	
5.	Invitation for	Enlistment & Renewal of Enlistment	
6.	Invitation Ref No	**CE, DPHE Office memo no. 46.03.0000.001.35.001.13-452**	
7.	Date	**25/07/2024**	
KEY INFORMATION			
8.	Procurement Method	Limited Tendering Method	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
		Date	**Time**
9.	Application Closing Date and Time	**05/09/2024**	**5:00 pm**
10.	Name & Address of the Office(s)		
	- Application Form Availability	Office of the Executive Engineers, DPHE, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar.	
	- Receiving Application Form	Office of the Superintending Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Circle, Topkhana, Sylhet.	
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT			
11.	Eligibility of Applicant	a. Must have valid Trade License b. Must have TIN, Must have Vat Registration Certificate. c. Must have Bank Solvency Certificate. d. Others document as Mentioned in Application Form.	
12.	Price of Application Form (Tk)	500.00 (Non-refundable)	
13	Enlistment / Renewal Fee (Tk)	New Enlistment Fee 5000.00+15% VAT and Renewal Fee 2000.00 + 15% VAT. Must be submitted in the form of Pay Order/ Demand Draft in favour of Executive Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Division.Two separate POs/DDs to be submitted–one for Enlistment/Renewal Fee and another for 15% VAT of Tk. 750.00/300.00 respectively. If application is not accepted, the PO/DD will be refunded.	
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
14.	Name of Official Inviting Application	M. Shaikh Sadi Rahmatullah	
15.	Designation of Official Inviting Application	Superintending Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Circle,Sylhet	
16.	Address of Official Inviting Application	DPHE, Topkhana, Sylhet	
17.	Contact details of Official Inviting Application	02996635443	se.sylhet@dphe.gov.bd

18. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all Applications

11/8/24
(M. Shaikh Sadi Rahmatullah)
SE, DPHE, Sylhet Circle

GD- 160

KCC services in a shambles

Mayor, councillors on the run

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

Most of the councillors' offices in the 31 wards of Khulna City Corporation have remained locked following a spree of vandalism and looting after Sheikh Hasina's resignation on August 5.

KCC Mayor Talukdar Abdul Khaleque, along with most ward councillors, have gone into hiding.

The absence of the mayor and councillors has led to a near-complete standstill of city services. Residents are struggling to obtain necessary certificates and documents.

On Monday morning, the office of the ward 9 councillor in Mujgunni was found padlocked. Councillor Md Mahfuzur Rahman Liton has been unavailable since August 5.

Inside the office, a few individuals were seen cleaning up dirt and broken glass, with the office secretary supervising the efforts.

This scene is echoed across the city, with almost all councillors unavailable and most staffers not reporting to work.

"I came to correct my son's birth certificate but couldn't get it done because Councillor Sheikh Shamsuddin Ahmed Prince did not come to the office," said Abdur Rob, a resident of ward 6.

Imamul Haque Masuk, another resident, shared a similar plight.

He visited both the ward 9 councillor's office and the mayor's office to obtain an inheritance certificate but failed to do so.

"I need to settle this urgently before I leave for Italy next week," he said.

Meanwhile, a few councillors and KCC officials were seen doing their best to restore some sort of normalcy.

They said waste management operations, which have been halted for several days, will resume soon.

At the ward 27 councillor's office, Jamal Hossain, a staffer, was seen overseeing the immunisation programme for newborns, which was being conducted on the ground floor.

"The ward councillor, secretary, and other officials are not coming to the office. It needs to be open for the immunisation programme, so I am here," he said.

A similar situation was observed at the ward 23 councillor's office on Sir Iqbal Road.

An employee said Councillor Imam Hasan Chowdhury is still in the area and is patrolling nightly to ensure residents' safety.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

A deserted councillor's office in Mujgunni area (ward-9) of Khulna city. Most of the councillors' offices in the 31 wards of Khulna City Corporation have remained locked following a spree of vandalism and looting after Sheikh Hasina's resignation on August 5. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

RAJSHAHI GOVT CITY COLLEGE

JCD men attack principal, force her to resign

A CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

Activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), a pro-BNP student organisation, allegedly assaulted and forced Rajshahi Government City College Principal Prof Amina Abedin to resign from her post yesterday.

According to witnesses, a group of students met Prof Amina in the morning, requesting her to ban political activities on the college campus.

After she assured them of implementing such a ban, a group of activists, led by the college unit of JCD joint convener Emdadul Haque Limon, entered the campus and began demonstrating, demanding her immediate resignation.

When the principal refused, the group issued a one-hour ultimatum for her to step down.

At 12:30pm, as Prof Amina, accompanied by her husband and son,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Passenger trains resume operations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local, commuter, and mail trains across the country resumed operations yesterday after suspension of 25 days, said Bangladesh Railway.

Inter-city trains will resume from Thursday. The resumption comes after a turbulent period of agitation and violence across the country in the last few weeks. Freight trains started running from Monday.

Officials at Kamalapur Railway Station said the Balaka, Dewanganj Commuter, Narayanganj Commuter, Mahua Express, Turag, Karnaphuli, and Titas Commuter trains left from Dhaka in the morning. Similarly, scheduled trains are coming towards Dhaka from different parts of the country.

The decision was taken at a meeting at Rail Bhaban on Sunday, the first working day of the interim government.

On July 16, railway tracks were blocked during protests over quota reformation in government jobs.

Law enforcers on alert for Aug 15

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Law enforcers have increased countrywide surveillance ahead of August 15, as no anarchy or subversive activities will be tolerated in the name of holding programmes on that day, according to sources in the police.

Along with the police, members of the armed forces divisions will also remain on the field to ensure security.

"There will be a heavy presence of police so that no one can cause any violence," Home Affairs Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain said yesterday in reply to a query regarding a tense situation prevailing centring the observance of August 15.

Addressing reporters at the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) headquarters, he said, "We will ensure all protection. We have already spoken with the DG [director general] of BGB... There will also be Rapid Action Battalion, alongside the police."

According to sources, grassroots activists and supporters of Awami League plan to pay tribute to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on National Mourning Day this Thursday across the country.

Some of the former Chhatra League leaders and a section of the party grassroots have already taken the initiative to pay tribute to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi 32, which was attacked and set on fire after the fall of the AL government on August 5, sources added.

But no one has sought any permission from Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yet to hold any programme or rally on August 15, DMP Commissioner Mainul Hasan told The Daily Star yesterday.

Asked about surveillance, he said the police in the capital had started working but were not able to start operations in full fledge yet.

"For this reason, we will be on duty along with the officials of the armed forces to ensure security," added the DMP chief.

The Police Headquarters (PHQ)

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

৩য় সংশোধিত বিজ্ঞপ্তি

BANGLADESH ELECTION COMMISSION
Election Commission Secretariat
Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project (2nd Phase)
Nirbachan Bhaban (Floor-8), Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.

Memo No. 17.14.0000.240.07.171.2024.2478

Date: 13 August, 2024

Package Title	Purchase and Upgradation of Network Equipment for Data Centre and Personalization Centre
Invitation Number	17.14.0000.240.07.171.2024/1916
Issued on	13 June, 2024
Tender Package No.	GD-41.1

Addendum-02 of Invitation for Tenders (IFT)

SL No. of IFT	Existing Invitation for Tenders (IFT)	Amendments (Contents to be read as) Invitation for Tenders (IFT)
15. Tender Last Selling Date and Time	18 August, 2024 Time: 3:00 P.M.	21 August, 2024 Time: 3:00 P.M
16. Tender Closing Date and Time	19 August, 2024 Time: 11:00 A.M.	22 August, 2024 Time: 11:00 A.M.
17. Tender Opening Date and Time	19 August, 2024 Time: 11:30 A.M.	22 August, 2024 Time: 11:30 A.M.

Abul Hasnat Mohammad Sayem
Brigadier General
Project Director
IDEA Project (2nd Phase)
Election Commission Secretariat

GD-166

ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন
প্লট নং # ২৩-২৬, রোড # ৪৬, গুলশান-২, ঢাকা।
www.dncc.gov.bd

নং-৪৬.১০.০০০০.০০৫.১১.০১৮.২৩-৩১৮

তারিখ: ২৪ শ্রাবণ ১৪৩১
০৮ আগস্ট ২০২৪

লিখিত পরীক্ষা স্থগিতকরণ নোটিশ

ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশনের নিম্নবর্ণিত স্থায়ী পদে জনবল নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত ১৭/০৮/২০২৪ তারিখের নির্ধারিত লিখিত পরীক্ষা অনিবার্য কারণবশত: স্থগিত করা হলো:

ক্রম	পদের নাম	বেতন গ্রেড	লিখিত পরীক্ষার তারিখ
১.	উপ-কর কর্মকর্তা (Deputy Taxation Officer)	৯ম	১৭ আগষ্ট ২০২৪
২.	কীট নিয়ন্ত্রণ কর্মকর্তা (Insect Control Officer)	৯ম	
৩.	ভেটেরিনারী কর্মকর্তা (Veterinary Officer)	৯ম	

০২। পরীক্ষার পুন: নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময় পরবর্তীতে প্রার্থীর মোবাইলে SMS এর মাধ্যমে জানানো হবে এবং ডিএনসিসি'র ওয়েবসাইটে প্রকাশ করা হবে।

০৩। যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদনক্রমে এ নোটিশ জারি করা হলো।

০৮/০৮/২৪
মোহাম্মদ মাসুদ আলম ছিদ্দিক
সচিব (যুগ্মসচিব)
ফোন-৮৮৩৪৯৩০
secretary@dncc.gov.bd

GD-161

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB)
TCB Bhaban, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215
www.tcb.gov.bd

Commercial Section
Invitation for Tender (National) for Purchase of

(a) 1,10,00,000 Litre Refined Soyabean Oil, (b) 1,10,00,000 Litre Refined Rice Bran Oil
(c) 5,000 M. Ton White Refined Sugar, (d) 5,000 M. Ton Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Commerce.	
2	Agency	Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB)	
3	Procuring entity name	Additional Director (Commercial), TCB, Dhaka.	
4	Procuring entity code	Not applicable.	
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.	
6	Invitation for	a) Refined Soyabean Oil b) Refined Rice Bran Oil c) White Refined Sugar d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil	
7	Invitation Ref. No.	a) 26.05.0000.016.08.420.24.2389 b) 26.05.0000.016.08.420.24.2390, c) 26.05.0000.016.08.420.24.2391, d) 26.05.0000.016.08.420.24.2392	
8	Date	13-08-2024	
KEY INFORMATION			
9	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM) (National)	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
10	Budget and source of funds	TCB's own fund.	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
11	Tender Package No.	a) TCB/Imp-79/Soyabean Oil/2024-25, b) TCB/Imp-79/Rice bran oil/2024-25, c) TCB/Imp-79/Sugar/2024-25, d) TCB/Imp-79/Red Lentil/2024-25	
12	Tender package name	a) Refined Soyabean Oil, b) Refined Rice Bran Oil c) White Refined Sugar, d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil	
13	Tender publication date	14-08-2024	
		Date	**Time**
14	Tender documents last selling date and time	01-09-2024	17.00pm
15	Tender closing date and time	02-09-2024	12:00pm
16	Tender opening date and time	02-09-2024	12:15pm
17	Name & address of the office(s)	**Address**	
	- Selling tender document of each item can be purchased from the banks & offices as mentioned in right column.	(1) Sonali Bank Ltd. Kawran Bazar Branch, TCB Bhaban, Dhaka. (2) Trust Bank Ltd. Kawran Bazar Branch, and (3) Accounts & Finance Division, TCB's Principal Office at Dhaka.	
	-Receiving tender document	In front of TCB's reception (2nd Floor), TCB Bhaban, 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.	
	- Opening tender document	Board Room, TCB.	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
18	Brief eligibility of tenderer	Bonafide Suppliers. Details conditions have been mentioned in the Tender documents.	
19	Brief description of goods	a) 1,10,00,000 (One Crore Ten Lac) Litre Refined Soyabean Oil Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. b) 1,10,00,000 (One Crore Ten Lac) Litre Refined Rice Bran Oil Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. c) 5,000 (Five Thousand) M.Tons White Refined Sugar packed in 50 (Fifty) kg bag or 01 (One) kg packet packed in 20 kg bag. d) 5,000 (Five Thousand) M.Tons Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil packed in 50 kg bag.	
20	Price of tender document	Price of (a) Refined Soyabean Oil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand), (b) Refined Rice Bran Oil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand) (c) White Refined Sugar tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand) & (d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand).	

	Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security amount (BDT)	Supply schedule
21	1.	a) Refined Soyabean Oil b) Refined Rice Bran Oil c) White Refined Sugar d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.	Offers are to be made on TCB's Godowns of Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barishal, Moulovibazar, Mymensingh, Cumilla, Madaripur, Jhenaidhah, Bogura, Dinajpur, Gazipur/District's godown/ Upazila's godown.	Tender is to be submitted along with Tender Security amounting to: a) BDT 3,51,00,000 (BDT Three Crore Fifty-One Lac) Only. b) BDT 3,70,00,000 (BDT Three Crore Seventy Lac) Only. c) BDT 1,23,00,000 (BDT One Crore Twenty-Three Lac) Only. d) BDT 1,04,00,000 (BDT One Crore Four Lac) Only. in the form of Pay-Order/ Bank Draft/ Bank Guarantee must be issued from any scheduled Bank of Bangladesh. After issuing NOA, the awardee is to submit 5% (Five Percent) Performance Security in the similar form of Pay-Order/Bank Draft/Bank Guarantee.	Entire quantity of Goods is to be supplied within (a) **10-12-2024** (b) **10-12-2024** (c) **10-12-2024** (d) **10-12-2024**

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
22	Name of official inviting tender	Khandaker Nurul Hoq		
23	Designation of official inviting tender	Additional Director (Commercial), TCB Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.		
24	Address of official inviting tender	Principal Office, Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.		
25	Contact details of official inviting tender	Telephone No. **55014272**	Fax No. **88-02-55014269**	E-mail: **tcb@tcb.gov.bd,** **tcbimp@tcb.gov.bd**
26	**Special instruction** a) All terms and conditions related to the tender and product details are mentioned in the tender document. b) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender in whole/in part without assigning any reason.			

Khandaker Nurul Hoq
Deputy Secretary
Additional Director (Commercial)
Trading Corporation of Bangladesh

GD-169

Drik reopens its doors to 'Bangladesh Press Photo Contest 2024'

HONOURABLE MENTION

The exhibition is currently open for visitors from 3pm to 8pm until August 16 on the second floor of the capital's DrikPath Bhobon.

PHOTOS: ARSHADUL HOQUE ROCKY

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

In the wake of two triumphant editions, the third edition of the exhibition of the principal local event celebrating the practice of photojournalism in the country, the ***Bangladesh Press Photo Contest 2024***, lifted its curtains on July 5.

The exhibition ran until July 26 on the second floor of DrikPath Bhobon in the capital city.

Neatly curated by veteran ASM Rezaur Rahman, even without a single line of caption on the gallery walls, one could effortlessly relate to the silent yet atmospheric reverberation of the photographs. These images adorning the gallery's walls capture snippets of life in Bangladesh, from recaps of resilience to the messes we've created, depicting lives that go on but also leave questions.

"An important aspect of this event is the wide participation of photojournalism practitioners from all over the country, bursting the Dhaka-based bubble that most of us get to typically see. As a curator, it is a refreshing experience to witness more local stories through their eyes," said Rezaur Rahman to The Daily Star at the inaugural event.

Another important aspect that perfectly captures the spirit of this event is the Indigenous Community Grant, where the grant winner will receive funding and mentorship to develop a photographic work, and this year's winner is Denim Chakma from Rangamati. On that note, the exhibition is also showcasing last year's winner Paddmini Chakma's work, ***Do You Really See Me?*** and her photo story is arguably the highlight of this year's exhibition.

"This grant should be continued and is very important for those who come from difficult societal situations... If I hadn't received this grant, I wouldn't even have started this project! And I am immensely grateful to my mentor, Jannatul Mawa," said the shy yet brave-eyed Paddmini Chakma to The Daily Star.

The exhibition is currently open for visitors from 3pm to 8pm until August 16 on the second floor of the capital's DrikPath Bhobon.

Meanwhile, another exhibition titled ***Rebellion in Cartoons*** will kick off on August 16 at 5pm at Drik Gallery. The event aims to showcase a remarkable collection of artworks that emerged from recent anti-discrimination student movement.

The exhibition brings together a diverse array of cartoons and graffiti that played a crucial role in the recent anti-discrimination protests. These visual works, which spread like wildfire across both digital and physical spaces, reflect the courage and defiance of a generation that refused to be silenced.

"As fear was imposed, it was met with an equally fierce resistance. Cartoonists, both seasoned and novice, used their art to voice their opinions and ignite public discourse. Some of these artworks were shared widely on social media, while others adorned the pages of newspapers. In an unprecedented move, many artists chose to remain anonymous, allowing their work to speak for itself and resonate with a broader audience," wrote Mehedi Haque, cartoonist and Dhaka Comics' publisher, on his official Facebook handle while announcing the exhibition.

Organised by the Bangladesh Cartoonist Association in collaboration with Drik and Earki, the exhibition will run daily from 3pm to 8pm until August 23.

LOOKING BACK
2022
2023
JUDGES
WINNERS
HONOURABLE MENTION
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY GRANT

Gaan Bangla resumes operation

On August 4, Gaan Bangla, the country's sole music-focused channel, was vandalised and looted, leading to a halt in broadcasting. Its managing director Kaushik Hossain Taposh shared the news and photos of the damage on his Facebook page.

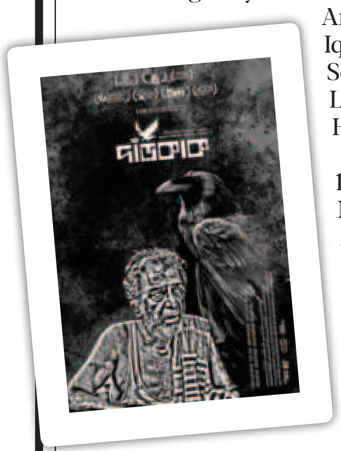
Now, Gaan Bangla has officially resumed operations and is again offering its content, including soothing music from ***Wind of Change*** and international music videos.

Taposh shared the news on his social media account via a video still from Gaan Bangla with the caption, "Welcome Back! Let's keep spreading the magic of music."

Jayanta Chattopadhyay starrer 'Darkak' selected in 3 int'l film festivals

Bangladeshi director Zayed Siddiki's short film ***Darkak*** (Raven) has been selected for three notable film festivals in three different countries.

The short film stars the Ekushey Padak-winning Jayanta Chattopadhyay, along with Aminur Rahman Mukul, Iqbal Hossain, Tuntuni Sobhan, Fazlul Haque, Tahua Labib Tura, and ABM Saeedul Haque.



It will be screened at the 15th Indian Film Festival of Melbourne in Australia in August and September, the 10th Shimla International Film Festival in India, and the 13th DC South Asian Film Festival in the United States.

The director confirmed via press note and social media that his film ***Raven*** was selected for three notable diaspora festivals, despite recent challenges. He expressed gratitude to the cast and crew.

NEWS

Adani

FROM PAGE 12

week after longtime Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fled Bangladesh after deadly protests, could also benefit future projects where all output is locked into export contracts.

An Adani Group spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request seeking comment.

A senior industry official said the move is intended to protect Indian interests, including energy security.

"If a plant has idling capacity and the country needs power, why should you stop it supplying to the local grid? It is also Indian banks who paid for it," said the official, who declined to be identified as he was not authorised to speak on the issue.

UN urges

FROM PAGE 12

we are alarmed at the reports of attacks that have taken place," he said.

He made the comment when asked about the UN's position on the killings of three journalists and the injuries of many during the student movement.

Even after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, the media and many journalists were attacked. The rooms of the president and secretary of the National Press Club in Dhaka have been ransacked.

He was also asked if the UN has any information on how long the interim government of Bangladesh will remain in place.

"We are in touch with the current transitional body, and we hope that there will continue to be an open, inclusive process of government formation and that there can be a quick timetable for the restoration of democratic rule," Haq said.

BNP to hold

FROM PAGE 12

"We also urged the interim government to seek an UN investigation," he added.

Besides, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told a rally in Saidpur, Nilphamari, that the Awami League was attacking Hindu people and their properties to tarnish Bangladesh's image.

He urged the general public to be vigilant against such conspiracies.

"They are trying to create chaos by falsely accusing others of attacking the Hindu community. Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, and Christians -- we all are free citizens of this independent country," he added.

Students put forward

FROM PAGE 12

3. Immediate removal and prosecution of those in the administration and judiciary who legitimised attacks and cases against students and the general public, and those who repeatedly attempted to establish a fascist regime.

4. Equal opportunities must be ensured soon for those who have been victims of discrimination within the administration and judiciary until now.

As part of the "Resistance Week" programme, there will be a road march today on the points where students were killed during the quota reform movement and subsequent anti-government protests across the country.

After gathering at specific points during the road march, the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement will observe a one-minute silence and pray for the students and people who were killed during the movement.

34 STUDENT BODIES MEET

Thirty-four student organisations, except Chhatra League, in a meeting on Monday night arrived at the opinion that the National Mourning Day on August 15 should not be observed at the state level.

Nahid Islam and Asif Mahmud, the youngest advisers to the interim government, were present at the meeting held at the TSC auditorium at Dhaka University.

The organisations also reached a consensus about remaining "united" with the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement to thwart any "conspiracy" against the interim government formed through the student movement.

Apart from Nahid and Asif, two key coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, the platform that spearheaded the recent quota reform protest, members of its liaison committee also participated in the meeting.

Leaders of student organisations including Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Chhatra Federation, Chhatra Union, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Gonotantrik Chhatra Shakti, Islami Chhatra Shibir, Islami Chhatra Andolon, Khilafat Chhatra Majlis took part in the meeting.

After the meeting, several student leaders told The Daily Star that the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement pledged that it would be dissolved as soon as the purpose of the movement was fulfilled.

They also discussed how the student movement would be conducted in the coming days, with most leaders opining against banning student politics on university campus.

Ahsan H Mansur

FROM PAGE 1

July 2020 to accommodate the re-appointment of then-governor Fazle Kabir.

The law ministry has issued a notification eliminating the age limit provision, clearing the way for Mansur's appointment.

Mansur, also the executive director of the Policy Research Institute, has been appointed for four years, according to a notification issued by the Financial Institutions Division of the finance ministry yesterday.

"Inflation containment is one of my major priorities," he told The Daily Star after being confirmed as the new BB governor.

Last month, inflation hit a 13-year high of 11.66 percent, according to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

"We have to bring back discipline in the banking sector immediately," said Mansur, a former economist of the International Monetary Fund.

At the end of March, defaulted loans hit a record Tk 182,259 crore, which is 11.11 percent of total outstanding loans, according to data from the BB.

Another priority will be to reduce pressure on the external account and boost forex reserves.

As of July 31, gross foreign reserves stood at $20.5 billion, enough to meet about four months' imports.

"We will prepare a strategy to boost forex reserves. We will identify reform priorities for the financial sector and start implementation," said Mansur, who is expected to join the central bank today.

A former chairman of Brac Bank, Mansur has been critical of the authorities' decision to impose and maintain a 9 percent cap on the interest rate for loans and BB's intervention control over the foreign exchange market and exchange rates.

He has an undergraduate degree in economics from the University of Dhaka and a PhD in economics (on general equilibrium analysis) from the University of Western Ontario.

He joined the IMF in 1981 and served as the mission chief for Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman.

Bank accounts

FROM PAGE 12

"The BFIU ordered a freeze on the accounts after getting reports of suspicious transactions in their name," the official said.

In a letter, the intelligence unit asked the banks to block all types of withdrawals through individual or business accounts in their names.

In the last three days, BFIU instructed all banks to take similar steps against former foreign minister Hasan Mahmud, his wife Nuran Fatema, and their daughter Nafisa Jumyina Mahmud; Mohammad Ali Arafat, former state minister for information and broadcasting, and his wife Sharmin Mustary; Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, former land minister, and his wife Rukhmila Zaman, who is also the chairman of United Commercial Bank PLC.

Shayan F Rahman

FROM PAGE 12

appointment at the 47th annual general meeting. The central bank rejected the request as per Section 15 of the Bank Company Act 1991.

Rahman holds 3.86 percent stakes at IFIC while his father, who was the private industry and investment adviser to the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the status of a cabinet minister, held 3.66 percent stakes.

He was the vice-chairman of the bank while his father was the chairman.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

for the victims, including students, teachers, police, journalists, cultural activists and a pregnant policewoman, members of the Awami League and its associate bodies, pedestrians, and various professionals."

She conveyed sympathy to the bereaved families.

In her statement, Hasina also recalled the massacre of August 15, 1975, when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members were assassinated.

Hasina, the eldest daughter of Bangabandhu, also expressed grief over the vandalism and arson at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32 and sought justice from the country's people.

She urged all to observe the National Mourning Day on August 15 in a befitting manner by placing floral wreaths at Bangabandhu Bhaban and offering prayers.

Gave shelter to AL leaders

FROM PAGE 2

place in 20 districts."

He said they do not want any such incidents to take place.

"We are looking into the incidents. We will bring the criminals to book."

Speaking about the situation in Rahshahi division, Waker-Uz-Zaman said, "Nothing like this [attacks on minority community] happened in the eight districts of Rajshahi division. Such congenial atmosphere should always be maintained. We will all work together and take the country towards development."

The army chief said, "The situation has become normal. But the police are still in trauma. Once it's over, the police will be able to perform their duties properly again.

"Police have already started working in different police stations. We are giving protection to the police. Once they start functioning fully, the situation will become normal. Then we will return to the cantonment," he added.

He said the army will provide all-out support to the government. "The government wants some reform, and to hold a free and fair election. We will provide all sorts of assistance in this regard."

The army chief said many looted arms of police have already been recovered and more will be recovered soon.

Regarding the recent attack on army men in Gopalganj, Waker-Uz-Zaman said it was nothing but a misunderstanding.

"The situation is calm there. We have talked with them. But the crime they have committed must be investigated, and those who were involved will be brought to justice."

Rights offices in Yemen stormed by Houthi rebels: UN

AFP, *Geneva*

The United Nations said yesterday their human rights offices in Sanaa had been stormed by Yemen's Houthi rebels, with the UN's rights chief demanding they leave immediately and return all seized assets.

On August 3, the Iran-backed Houthis sent a delegation to the UN Human Rights Office's premises in Sanaa and forced staff to hand over the keys. They are still in control of the premises, the Geneva-based office said.

"Entering a UN office without permission and seizing documents and property by force are wholly inconsistent with the privileges and immunities of the United Nations," UN rights chief Volker Turk said in a statement.

"This is also a serious attack on the ability of the UN to perform its mandate, including with respect to the promotion and protection of human rights, which my office is there to defend.

"Ansar Allah forces must leave the premises and return all assets and belongings immediately."

The Houthis are engaged in a long-running civil war that has triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. More than half of the population is dependent on aid in the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country.

The rebels seized control of the capital Sanaa in September 2014, prompting a Saudi-led military intervention on behalf of the government the following March.

In June this year, the Houthis detained 13 UN staff, including six employees of the Human Rights Office, plus more than 50 staff from non-governmental organisations, plus an embassy staff member.

The Houthis claimed they had arrested "an American-Israeli spy network" operating under the cover of humanitarian organisations -- allegations emphatically rejected by the UN Human Rights Office.

Two other UN Human Rights staff had already been detained since November 2021 and August 2023 respectively. They are all being held incommunicado.

"I appeal again, with a heavy heart, for their immediate and unconditional release," said Turk.

‘Concerned’ about civilian deaths in Gaza

Putin tells Abbas

AFP, *Moscow*

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday told Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas that Moscow was “concerned” about civilian deaths in Gaza.

“We are concerned above all about civilian losses,” Putin said, according to images shown on Russian state television. “We are doing everything ... to support Palestine and the Palestinian people,” he said.

The only way to create “long-lasting, reliable, stable peace in the region” is implementation of all UN resolutions and the “creation of a fully-fledged Palestinian state,” he added.

Abbas told Putin: “We feel that Russia is one of the dearest friends of the Palestinian people”.

The leaders held talks after a weekend strike on a Gaza school building left at least 93 people dead, including 11 children, according to the Gaza civil defence agency.

Israel’s military said the raid had “eliminated 31 militants”.

Moscow for years tried to balance relations with all major players in the Middle East -- including Israel and the Palestinians.

But since the Israel’s offensive in Gaza and Russia’s own offensive on Ukraine, Putin has moved closer to Israel’s foes, Hamas and Iran.

The Kremlin has repeatedly criticised Israel’s response to the October 7 attacks and called for restraint.

Israel’s military offensive in the Gaza Strip has killed at least 39,929 Palestinians and wounded 92,240 since October 7, the Palestinian enclave’s health ministry said yesterday.

A total of 32 Palestinians have been killed and 88 wounded in the past 24 hours, the ministry said in a statement.

The United States and its European allies also called for a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, with difficult talks set for tomorrow on halting the conflict.

NGO Open Arms rescue boat “Astral” lifeguard Manel Cabanes Carbonell, 22, hands out life jackets to migrants aboard the rubber boat in international waters south of Lampedusa, in the central Mediterranean Sea yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Extreme heat in Gaza poses new challenge

Say aid groups already hamstrung in their work by Israeli strikes

THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION,
Beirut

In Gaza, the sky is full of menace. As well as the missiles that rain down on schools and shelters, the brutal rays of the sun have made the summer unbearable for those struggling to survive in a ravaged landscape of ruins and rubble.

Samaher al-Daour sometimes wishes she had been killed in the early days of the Israel’s offensive rather than have to watch her son, who lost a leg during the conflict, endure the unbearable heat.

“The situation is horrible,” said Daour, 42, as she sat beside her 20-year-old son Haitham in their sweltering tent in the southern city of Khan Younis in June.

“During the day, it is incredibly hot inside and outside the tent,” she said in a telephone interview. “We go to the sea but it is still very difficult.”

Haitham lost his leg in February during an Israeli airstrike on a school run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNWRA) in the Maghazi refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip.

Now the stifling heat is denying him the rest he needs to recover his strength. He sweats all the time and this is irritating his leg and making it swell. “He is suffering because of this,” said Daour.

After 10 months of offensive, almost all of Gaza’s 2.3 million people are displaced. They live in tents or overcrowded shelters, and there is almost no electricity and little clean water.

Hungry and weak, they cannot shower and struggle to sleep in their boiling shelters. In the heat, food is rotting, drawing insects and flies to crowded camps where people, who have been forced to flee again and again, now risk heatstroke and other heat-related diseases.

Since April, Gaza has experienced several periods of extreme heat, with temperatures reaching around 40 degrees Celsius during that month. Temperatures throughout August reached an average high of 34 degrees Celcius, according to US private forecaster AccuWeather.

In late June, the World Health Organization said scorching heat could exacerbate health problems for the millions of displaced, warning that a public health crisis was looming due to the lack of clean water, food and medical supplies.

The heat is also making things more difficult for aid agencies, already hamstrung in their work by the airstrikes, fighting and ravaged infrastructure. “It would be fair to say that the majority of humanitarian responders, including donors ... have not really considered the threats of heat and extreme heat,” said Paul Knox Clarke, principal at ADAPT, a climate and humanitarian initiative.

“It has been complicating everything,” said Prabu Selvam, medical officer for the Americares relief agency, adding that the transport of medicines that need to be kept cool was proving particularly challenging.

2 explosions reported near vessels off Yemen

AFP, *Dubai*

Two ships yesterday reported nearby explosions off the coast of Yemen, maritime security agencies said, though neither event resulted in damage or injuries.

The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden off Yemen have become perilous for shipping with the country’s Houthi rebels, who control the capital Sanaa, attacking vessels in strikes they say are in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza.

One ship positioned 63 nautical miles southwest of the Yemeni port city of Hodeida reported two nearby explosions early yesterday.

“A small craft was observed in the vicinity acting suspiciously and flashing lights towards the vessel,” the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said.

The ship was then “attacked by an uncrewed surface vehicle (USV), which was successfully disabled”, the agency said.

Russia strikes back in Kursk region

Halts Ukraine’s advance

REUTERS, *Moscow*

Russian forces yesterday struck back at Ukrainian troops with missiles, drones and airstrikes in actions that one senior commander said had halted Ukraine’s advance after the biggest attack on sovereign Russian territory since the war began.

Ukrainian soldiers smashed through the Russian border a week ago in a surprise attack that Russian President Vladimir Putin said was aimed at improving Kyiv’s negotiating position ahead of possible talks and slowing the advance of Russian forces along the front.

Ukraine carved out a slice of Russian territory, illustrating the weakness of Russia’s border defences and prompting Moscow to evacuate at least 200,000 people while it rushed in reserves and imposed a security lockdown. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that Russia had to be forced to make peace.

Meanwhile, Ukraine said yesterday it had no interest in occupying territory in Kursk region and that its major cross-border incursion would complicate Russian military logistics and its ability to send more units to fight in Ukraine’s east.

Russian war bloggers reported intense battles across the Kursk front as Ukrainian forces tried to expand their control, though they said Russia was bringing in soldiers and heavy weaponry and had repelled many of the Ukrainian attacks.

Africa’s CDC declares mpox emergency

AFP, *Nairobi*

The African Union’s health watchdog yesterday declared a public health emergency over the growing mpox outbreak on the continent.

The outbreak has swept through several African countries, particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“With a heavy heart but with an unyielding commitment to our people, to our African citizens, we declare mpox as public health emergency of continental security,” Jean Kaseya, head of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), said during an online media briefing.

“Mpox has now crossed borders, affecting thousands across our continent, families have been torn apart and the pain and suffering have touched every corner of our continent,” he said.

According to CDC data as of August 4, there had been 38,465 cases of mpox and 1,456 deaths in Africa since January 2022.

“This declaration is not merely a formality, it is a clarion call to action. It is a recognition that we can no longer afford to be reactive. We must be proactive and aggressive in our efforts to contain and eliminate this threat,” said Kaseya.

A milder version of the virus spread to over a hundred countries in 2022, largely through sexual contact, prompting the WHO to declare a public health emergency of international concern, its highest level of alert.

Families split by India-Pakistan rivalry lose hope

AFP, *Hunderman*

The ancient trade route over the Himalayan passes of Hunderman once brought communities together, but the rugged peaks are now used as fortifications by nuclear-armed rivals India and Pakistan.

Indian apricot farmer Ghulam Ahmad, 66, separated from his parents as a teenager in the chaos of war that saw control of his village swap from Pakistan to India, dreams of seeing his mother’s grave.

If the crossing was open, it would be a day’s trek of 50 kilometres (30 miles) to Pakistani territory.

But to visit the site now requires a roundtrip of some 2,500 kilometres (1,550 miles), visa permission that is hard to obtain, and expenses he cannot afford.

“What can we do?” said Ahmad. “Many here have died without meeting, only in hope of meeting.” India and Pakistan have only one tightly restricted border point where people can cross, in Punjab state far to the south, but few do so.

The rivals, who both celebrate their 77th independence day this week, have fought three major wars and countless border conflicts since they were partitioned out of the Indian subcontinent in 1947.

They remain bitterly at odds over control of the restive territory of Kashmir, divided between the two countries and claimed in full by both.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Mymensingh

Memo No. 37.07.6100.001.34.001.24.50 Date: 13-08-2024

e-Tender Notice No. 04/EED/MYM/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works, details are given below.

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Description of works	Procurement method
1	1007245	Construction of Boundary Wall at Aulianagar Alim Madrasah, Trishal, Mymensingh.	LTM
2	1007246	Repair & Renovation Works at Halima High School, Trishal, Mymensingh.	LTM
3	1007248	Construction of Shahid Minar Repair & Renovation Works at Sonar Bangla High School, Trishal, Mymensingh.	LTM
4	1007249	Palasiding Work & Repair & Renovation Works at Office of the Regional Director, Sadar, Mymensingh.	LTM
5	1007250	Earth Filling Work & Repair & Renovation Works at Office of the Regional Director, Sadar, Mymensingh.	LTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to one hour before tender last selling time. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

13/8/24
Md. Yusuf Ali
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Mymensingh
E-mail: xeneedmym@gmail.com

GD- 164

Khulna Development Authority
Khulna
www.kda.gov.bd

Memo No: 25.41.0000.021.0244.24- Date: 11/08/2024

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works, details are given below.

Sl. No	Name of the work	Tender Package No	Tender ID No	Tender Last selling (date & time)	Tender Opening (date &time)
1.	Upward Extension of KDA Multipurpose Building. (Construction of total 09 (nine) storied steel framed building on existing 3 storied building with 9-storied foundation, including semi basement floor. It includes civil, sanitary, water supply and internal electrification, fire protection etc.)	WD-1/multipurpose building/2024-25	1007160	08-Sep-2024 17:00	09-Sep-2024 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

11/08/24
(Montasir Mamun)
Project Director
Upward Extension of KDA Multipurpose Building
&
Executive Engineer (Maintanance) (C.C)
Khulna Development Authority, Khulna.
e-mail: kda.khulna@gmail.com

GD-159

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Healthcare staff must return to work

Doctors should rise to the occasion, fulfil their duties

We are concerned about the sweeping absenteeism of doctors, as well as other medical and administrative staff, in healthcare facilities across the country following the fall of the Awami League government. According to a report by daily *Samakal*, about 45 percent of the 93,834 staff—the total workforce in medical colleges, and specialised and autonomous hospitals under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS)—have not been coming to work since August 5. This is quite alarming. Although absenteeism is an old problem in the public healthcare sector, compared to normal times, 12,000 more medical professionals have remained absent from work during the last week, according to the report.

Our health sector is already plagued by a number of problems including manpower shortage, corruption in recruitment and medical procurement, inefficiency, poor quality of services, high treatment costs—to mention just a few. In addition, the weeks of violence that the nation witnessed recently increased the number of patients who need urgent medical attention. In such moments of crisis, the culture of doctors and nurses staying away from work without any formal leave is causing disruptions in both regular and emergency healthcare services.

Political appointments and nepotism in the recruitment process have also given rise to the current situation, as those who gained undue favours from the previous regime now fear reprisals and even replacement by their more deserving colleagues. Sadly, it is always the patients that have to pay the price for such crises. The situation is worse for the rural populace for whom accessing quality healthcare is difficult even during normal times. So we can only imagine how the lack of medical service outside the capital—caused by the wilful absenteeism of doctors, directors, assistant directors, and civil surgeons in district hospitals—is exacerbating their suffering.

We, therefore, urge the health adviser to take steps to ensure that absentee doctors and other staff in public hospitals join work without delay. Physicians must be reminded of their Hippocratic Oath to not harm their patients and perform their professional duty, or face consequences. In the long run, we expect the interim government to initiate reforms in the healthcare sector so that similar disruptions do not occur in the future because of irregularities and corruption. The administration should try to build a system where patient care comes before everything else, and people can receive prompt, quality and low-cost healthcare without having to travel abroad for treatment.

Address the crisis of stolen firearms

It is a matter of not just law and order but also national security

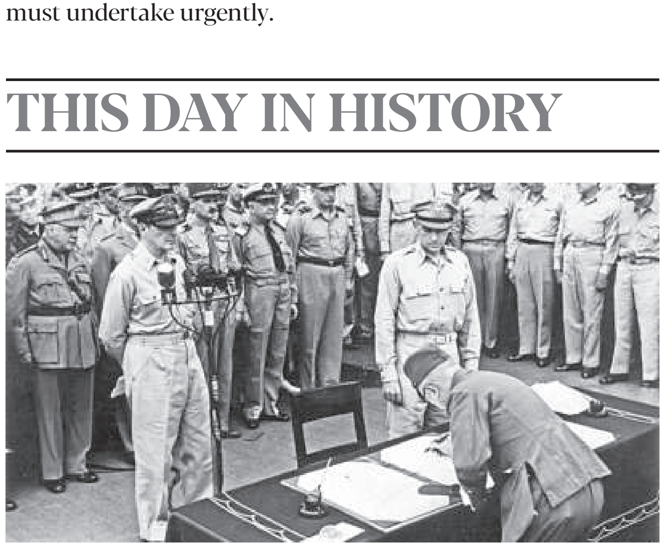
The looting of firearms from at least 22 police stations in Dhaka—a number that may increase as assessments continue—is deeply concerning. Following Sheikh Hasina's resignation, many police stations across the country were attacked by mobs aggrieved by the actions of police personnel during the student protests that led to her downfall. Beside the damage caused to police stations in the process, the extent of the looted weaponry also remains unclear. We hope the new IGP will soon provide a detailed account of the number of weapons stolen and the measures being taken to recover them.

In Cumilla, we are told that police have recovered 28 firearms and 667 rounds of ammunition. We hope that more missing firearms will be recovered in the near future. It has become evident from the incidence of looting weapons that certain factions are attempting to undermine the nation's stability, and the risk of criminal and political elements exploiting the situation remains a major concern. Given the country's volatile state at present, the possibility of these weapons falling into the wrong hands is extremely troubling. We urge law enforcement agencies to focus their attention on recovering these firearms as quickly as possible—before they can be used to cause further harm to people or property.

The dangers of these firearms remaining untraced are multifaceted. During the quota reform movement, as well as on multiple occasions before, we have often seen individuals connected with power using firearms—sometimes even legally acquired ones—in broad daylight. With an unknown number of weapons missing from the police arsenal, a new law and order crisis could be created by saboteurs.

With the vast majority of police stations in the country now operating again, even if partially, law enforcers need to take fresh initiatives to account for all the legal and illegal firearms in circulation. We urge the new IGP to take strong and comprehensive steps in this regard. Additionally, the entire process of licensing possession of weapons should be reviewed, and the supply and procurement of illegal weapons must be completely halted. This may prove to be a tall task given the circumstances, but it is one that our security forces must undertake urgently.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Japan's surrender made public

On this day in 1945, the Empire of Japan surrendered unconditionally to the Allies, ending World War II.

Principles, party, power or politics?

THE OVERTON WINDOW

Eresh Omar Jamal
is deputy head of editorial at The Daily Star. His X handle is @EreshOmarJamal.

ERESH OMAR JAMAL

There are many takeaways from the sudden fall of Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League government, which for 15 long years projected an air of invincibility. We all know how the AL suppressed dissent and movements that it perceived as threats, often resorting to extreme and criminal measures. Yet, despite the gruesome violence, intimidation, and threats, countless people took to the streets—even on the day Hasina fell—without any guarantee that they would return home alive.

The student movement's ability to inspire people to stand up to a vicious oppressor was truly remarkable. How did the students manage to achieve this? Clearly, the oppressor's behaviour played a significant role. However, the more I hear these young people speak across various media platforms, the more I want to give them credit for the unity we recently witnessed.

As a society, we are divided along many lines. However, what became evident during these protests—especially if you were present in them—was that the majority of Bangladeshis share some core values, such as the sanctity of life, the belief that killing is wrong, a commitment to justice, etc. Through their actions, the students staunchly upheld these principles, inspiring people to unite.

On the day of Hasina's ouster, one of the student coordinators mentioned something interesting on television. When asked if he wanted to see a new Bangladesh where people have freedom of speech, he replied that he wanted people to have the freedom to dissent. The nuanced difference between the two is important. Most of us claim to believe in freedom of speech when it comes to speech we agree with. However, it is precisely how we react to speech we don't agree with that reveals whether our claim is genuine.

All of us claim to believe in justice. However, following the fall of the AL and the vengeful violence that ensued against its activists, these students reminded us of the importance of pursuing justice in a morally and legally correct way. After all, everyone, regardless of their crimes, deserves their day in court, because the concept of "*habeas corpus*" is a monumentally important civilisational discovery. Equally crucial is the principle of "innocent until proven guilty," which is larger than any individual as it originates from the Magna Carta, a cornerstone of justice for which humanity has paid an immeasurable price. To punish those responsible for the crimes of the AL government in ways that violate these principles would transform us into the very monsters from which we seek to distance ourselves.

The downfall of Sheikh Hasina is a tragic story, not only on a personal level but also for Bangladesh. Regardless of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's governance failures, there is no denying his crucial role in our country's independence. Growing up in the 90s, I remember hearing about attempts to erase him from the history books in earlier decades. Yet, the damage that Hasina and her AL have done to Sheikh Mujib's legacy and that of the party is unmatched.

As she and other key AL leaders fled the country, they left thousands of their party activists in a terrible state. This should serve as a warning to us all: when you prioritise a party over principles, you risk facing a similarly tragic fate.

Without downplaying the crimes of Hasina and the AL, one must admit that the other political parties in our country have not proven to be much better. We have seen them attempt similar atrocities and power grabs before. Perhaps the difference is that they never managed to hold onto power for as long, and the state machinery did not have the same capacity to enable them to wield so much power. The longer the AL stayed in power, the more power it acquired.

The student movement's ability to inspire people to stand up to a vicious oppressor was truly remarkable.
FILE PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

As the saying goes, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Therefore, we can't say for certain whether another party in AL's position would not have abused it in a similar way. This is why we must reform the structure of our state institutions, so that no party can acquire such unquestioned power again. But how do we do that?

When the student protests were happening, the AL kept trying to connect them with a conspiracy involving BNP and Jamaat. Meanwhile, we in the media and others kept saying these students were "ordinary students" who were "not involved in politics." One of the student coordinators, Sarjis Alam, recently said something interesting.

He said that for years, people avoided getting involved in politics because those engaged in it were seen as corrupt and dishonourable. It is true that politicians in Bangladesh have often been perceived this way—and for good reasons. However, the only way to reform our corrupt political and governance systems is through politics. Therefore, it is crucial for honest people—individuals who do not compromise on their principles—to enter the political arena.

Not only that, as Aristotle said, "Man is a political animal." There is no way around this, because humans are social creatures with the power of speech and moral reasoning—both of which greatly affect the state they live in.

Therefore, if we are to truly become a "democratic society"—within a "republican state structure" that functions properly—ordinary people must also become politically conscious. And there is no reason why this cannot happen.

Since the student movement began until today, ordinary Bangladeshis have shown significant political maturity. Yes, there have been mistakes, and the road ahead will also be filled with pitfalls. However, the people must not believe they can simply hand over the fate of their future to someone else and then go about their business without concerning themselves with politics. If we are to truly have a democratic society where power belongs to the people, then the people themselves must be willing to take responsibility for wielding that power.

For most of our history, those who have wielded power have used it to serve themselves and their parties or to gain even more power and wealth. However, when power is properly utilised, it can inspire hope. That is what the student movement did: it gave people hope for a better future. What happens to that hope now depends on the choices we make. What will we choose? Will we choose to remain politically involved? If so, for what purpose: for power, for party or for principles?

The case for an ombudsman in Bangladesh

Muhidul Islam
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MUHIDUL ISLAM

Bangladesh stands at a critical juncture, grappling with a political crisis that threatens the very foundation of its democracy. The resignation of Sheikh Hasina, amidst massive protests and widespread violence, underscores the urgent need for mechanisms that can restore public trust in governance. One glaring omission from Bangladesh's political landscape is the absence of an ombudsman—a constitutional institution designed to uphold transparency, accountability, and democracy by investigating whether or not administrative officials are legally exercising their jurisdictional powers.

The Constitution of Bangladesh, adopted in 1972, discusses the ombudsman under Article 77. This article does not mandate Parliament to establish the office of ombudsman but rather leaves the decision to Parliament's discretion and wisdom. However, Section 3 of The Ombudsman Act, 1980 clarifies that Parliament has indeed made the establishment of the ombudsman office mandatory by using the word "shall." This legal framework outlines the ombudsman's functions, powers, and responsibilities, including the authority to investigate actions taken by ministries, public officers, and statutory public authorities. Yet, despite the legal framework being in place for over four decades, no ombudsman has ever been appointed. This failure to operationalise the office deprives citizens of a critical tool for holding public officials accountable and addressing grievances related to governance.

Globally, the ombudsman institution has proven effective in enhancing transparency and accountability. Sweden, where the ombudsman institution originated in 1809, serves as a good model. The Swedish Ombudsman oversees public authorities, ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, and can investigate complaints and prosecute officials. New Zealand's Ombudsman, established in 1962, investigates complaints against government departments and agencies, often leading to significant reforms. India's Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act of 2013, and South Africa's Public Protector, also demonstrate the potential impact of an ombudsman in curbing corruption and ensuring accountability.

Implementing the ombudsman institution in Bangladesh could have transformative effects. It would provide citizens with a formal channel to voice grievances and seek redress, potentially reducing public discontent and unrest. Additionally, the ombudsman could serve as a check on the executive branch, deterring corruption and abuse of power, and strengthening the rule of law.

The resignation of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina plunged the country into political uncertainty. The protests and violent clashes that took place in the days leading up to her resignation were symptomatic of deep-seated frustrations with the previous system, where public trust in government institutions had eroded over time. After the resignation, Dr Muhammad Yunus took the oath as head of Bangladesh's interim government on August 8, facing the daunting task of stabilising the nation and restoring public confidence. The new leadership is well-positioned to spearhead efforts to establish the ombudsman institution. Leadership at this time is crucial in navigating the challenges posed by the current political crisis. The new government must prioritise transparency and accountability, addressing the root causes of public discontent.

The government should make a public declaration of its intent to establish the ombudsman office, emphasising its role in restoring transparency and democracy. This should be followed by allocating the necessary resources to operationalise the institution. The Ombudsman Act of 1980 may require updates to clarify the ombudsman's jurisdiction and powers, ensuring it is robust enough to address contemporary governance challenges.

The new government should lead the efforts to amend the Act to reflect current realities. It should establish a non-partisan committee to oversee the appointment of the ombudsman. This committee should include representatives from civil society, the judiciary, and other independent bodies to ensure the ombudsman is impartial and capable of carrying out their duties effectively. A campaign should be launched to educate citizens about the ombudsman's role and how to file complaints. This will be crucial in building public awareness and trust in the institution. Civil society organisations should be involved in the establishment process, providing input and supporting citizens in accessing the ombudsman's services. This will help ensure the institution is responsive to the needs of the people. The government should seek technical assistance from countries with successful ombudsman institutions. Additionally, the ombudsman's office should be subject to regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure it meets its objectives.

The previous governments were often criticised for their reluctance to limit executive power and their failure to implement key constitutional provisions, including the ombudsman. This inaction contributed to growing public dissatisfaction and weakened the checks and balances necessary for a functioning democracy.

In contrast, the current government, focused on stabilising the nation, has both the opportunity and the moral imperative to establish the ombudsman. By doing so, it can set a precedent for future governments, ensuring that transparency and accountability remain at the forefront of governance.

By learning from global examples and addressing the challenges ahead, Bangladesh can create a governance system that is more responsive to citizens' needs and better equipped to uphold justice and fairness. This will restore public trust and lay the groundwork for a more stable and democratic future.

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Why can't India accept Bangladeshis toppled Sheikh Hasina?

WINKERS AWEIGH!

Tanim Ahmed
is a journalist at The Daily Star.

TANIM AHMED

The most striking feature of Indian foreign minister S Jaishankar's statement at the Lok Sabha on August 6 was the complete absence of the Awami League government's egregious violation of human rights, and the killings of over 400 people (as documented so far), including youth, since July 16.

He began setting up a context for the people's uprising saying that there had been "considerable tensions, deep divides and growing polarisation in Bangladesh politics" since the January election. "This underlying foundation aggravated a student agitation that started in June this year," he continued. "There was growing violence, including attacks on public buildings and infrastructure, as well as traffic and rail obstructions. The violence continued through the month of July."

While there was dissatisfaction over the 2024 election—as well as the previous two elections—the quota reform protests did not really have much to do with that. It began as merely a student movement asking for reforms in the existing quota system in public service recruitment, which turned into an anti-government movement much later due to the government's brutal crackdown on protesters.

Jaishankar's statement does not even hint that Sheikh Hasina's government reacted with overwhelmingly excessive force against students, and police opened fire on protesters with live rounds, killing more than 400 people in the span of 23 days. The ruling party unleashed its student cadres, the Chhatra League, armed with machetes and firearms, on the unarmed protesters. It was only after then that attacks on public buildings began, which no one condoned.

Jaishankar went on to note that "Despite a Supreme Court judgement on 21 July, there was no let-up in the public agitation." He added, "Various decisions and actions taken thereafter only exacerbated the situation. The agitation at this stage coalesced around a one-point agenda, that is that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina should step down."

PHOTO: **AFP**

Protesters wave Bangladesh's national flag as they celebrate at Shahbag area, near Dhaka university in Dhaka on August 5, 2024.

Since the Indian foreign minister glosses over the former government's brutality, it appears to paint the democratic movement behind Sheikh Hasina's fall with a nefarious intention from its genesis—which fits into the Awami League's narrative—that this was a movement fomented by the BNP, Jamaat or even external forces such as the US. This is far removed from the reality of the Bangladeshi public sentiment. Sheikh Hasina's government murdered so many people before meeting the quota demands. There was a nationwide internet blackout for five days. The student movement had nine demands before the hearing and verdict, including an apology from the ousted prime minister and resignation of former ministers, including Obaidul Quader and Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, for abusing law enforcement.

On the surface, the government said it was open to negotiations with students, yet there were block raids during the nights where law enforcers came hunting for students. More than 11,000 people were arrested in just two weeks. Innocent children were put in jails and framed for murders committed by the police—even ones that were recorded, like Abu Sayed's. The "step down" demand came to the fore on August 3. It was certainly not soon after the court verdict, when the situation was still reversible had Hasina wished to apologise and reconcile. But that was simply out of the question for an increasingly egotistical autocrat.

Jaishankar then jumps to August 4, when he says, "Events took a very serious turn." It did indeed. Awami League had by then decided to unleash its full force onto the protesters, who took to the streets despite the curfew, only to face the police baby-sitting armed goons of the Awami League. Violence shook the nation; the death toll kept climbing to nearly 100 people—the highest and deadliest ever for a single-day protest in the nation's history. Public anger only mounted; student protesters called for a "March to Dhaka" on August 5. In response, hundreds of thousands took to the streets in Dhaka and other surrounding towns ready to converge on Shahbag.

That was when the law enforcers realised the situation was beyond salvation and counselled Sheikh Hasina to leave. Initially, she reportedly refused and urged for using even more force to subdue the crowd. The army refused. Hasina was finally convinced to leave. It was a revolution spearheaded by students that succeeded in toppling a dictatorial regime of 15 years.

The fact that the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami took advantage of what turned into an anti-government campaign and publicly supported it was public knowledge. But entire communities—civilians from all walks of life—came out in support of the campaigners; the nation stood united against the ruling party. Hospitals gave free medical support, and general people donated to their common funds for food and water. Everyone sympathised with the protesters who were braving bullets on the streets and torture in the jail cells. Six coordinators were detained by the police and confined at the detective bureau against their will for several days without any regard for law or their rights.

What followed after she left her official residence was an outpouring of pent-up hatred for anything and everything linked to Hasina and the Awami League. Desecration of Sheikh Mujib's statues and murals and even his residence in Dhanmondi was heart-wrenching and hurt millions of Bangladeshis.

With the police gone and no law and order in place, minorities became an unfortunate target. The Daily Star reported violence against Hindu homes and businesses in 27 districts on August 5. These crimes must be investigated as the police are getting back on duty.

Hasina's Awami League consciously colluded with the religious fundamentalists, placating them and pandering to them to keep them at bay, only to make sure that Hasina remained at the helm without too much trouble from the right. It was the Awami League government that changed school textbooks, took out pieces by Hindu authors to replace them with stories and poems by unknown Muslim authors. Pictures and drawings were changed exactly as demanded. Besides restoring democracy, reviving the truly secular mindset of the masses is another uphill task that Bangladesh will have to undertake, now that Awami League is gone.

But, back to Jaishankar's statement: the blatant disregard for brewing tension among Bangladeshis, Awami League's intolerance for dissent and telltale signs of the Hasina regime turning into a classic autocrat shows a rather myopic and oversimplified Indian take of what is happening in Bangladesh. Jaishankar's articulate and witty tete-a-tetes with journalists or at discussion panels around the world convincingly demonstrates that he does not lack the calibre to appreciate these nuances. One wonders, then, if he had not been properly briefed by his aides on what actually happened in Bangladesh.

Just as this is an opportunity for Bangladesh to rebuild its future free from Awami League's clutches, it is also an opportunity for India to do some introspection. Bangladesh has just witnessed a people's uprising toppling a dictator—which will be a classic textbook case of the fall of an autocratic regime like Ceausescu or Marcos. And yet India remains extremely apprehensive about what is to come. India built relations with Awami League instead of Bangladesh. The Indian establishment has been more than happy to support Awami League for expedience despite its faults, and in the process alienated the people of the country. Today, with the ouster of Hasina and the Awami League, India is quite naturally seeing more than its fair share of criticism and dip in popularity.

It is really high time that Jaishankar asked his aides, or whoever is in charge of setting the Bangladesh agenda, how India backed itself to such a corner that it cannot join in the jubilation of a nation or empathise with our celebrations. He should ask how it is that India fails to see the new regime as a result of the mass people's uprising that it was, and why it needs to distort it by labelling it as the machinations of Pakistan, China or the US. Why is it that when we are relieved to have rid ourselves of a dictator, India is apprehensive that the djinn is out of the bottle?

Debunking the conspiracy theories surrounding Sheikh Hasina's fall

After Bangladesh's 'Iron Lady' Sheikh Hasina was ousted, a number of conspiracy theories have emerged regarding international players. **Michael Kuggelman***, director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center, addresses these speculations in an exclusive interview with* **Ramisa Rob** *of* **The Daily Star**.

How would you describe the overall response of the international community?
The watchword is concern: about stability risks, a weakened economy, and an uncertain political transition. I don't want to overstate the international community's sense of worry, however; this crisis in Bangladesh was an internal one after all—there are multiple wars and other major crises playing out around the world. But Bangladesh is a significant player, especially because of its economy, and many global capitals have substantive partnerships with Dhaka, especially commercial ones. The US, China, Russia and India will all have strong incentives to engage and to maintain influence. Dhaka will welcome this engagement—even though it will face the same conundrum that the Hasina government did of being a nonaligned state amid intensifying great power rivalry. Ultimately, I don't think Bangladesh's status as a battleground for great power competition will change.

How is the US viewing India giving refuge to Sheikh Hasina after her ouster?
Hasina taking refuge in India makes perfect sense, given that she had no closer friend than India, and especially the Narendra Modi government. I suspect the US isn't thrilled about India hosting her for a long period. At the end of the day, if India wants to build new relationships in Dhaka—and it surely does—it should have a strong interest in not giving Hasina a long-term home in India.

There has been mixed signals regarding India's response to the fall of Sheikh Hasina. How do you view it?
No country was more upset to see Hasina fall than India. We all know that New Delhi had put all its eggs in the Hasina and Awami League basket for years, and that it couldn't accept any alternative to her party. India has long bought into Hasina's argument that "she was the only thing standing between a secular and moderate Bangladesh and a nation that is destabilising by Islamists." At the same time, no country's security interests are more impacted by Hasina's ouster than India. New Delhi's concerns—from threats to the Bangladeshi Hindu community to potential new surges of refugees crossing the border—are real and understandable.

But despite all this, India's foreign policy is pragmatic and agile. It will want to adjust to Bangladesh's dramatic new political reality. It will try to reach out to the country's new leaders. Trade, border security, great power competition—it has many compelling reasons to form a workable relationship with post-Hasina Bangladesh.

There are many conspiracy theories regarding US interference. Can you debunk them from the US perspective?
First, it's significant that other than Hasina and her family, and some die-hard Awami League supporters, Bangladeshis themselves are not embracing the conspiracy theory about a US—or any external—hand in her ouster. It's mostly an Indian narrative. That's a telling sign right there.

The tricky thing about conspiracy theories is they're often hard to disprove conclusively—and especially when they involve allegations such as covert "CIA" activities, for example. But they're also hard to prove conclusively. The onus is on those that make such allegations to make a plausible case for why they should be viewed as true. And there's nothing plausible about this idea of a US hand.

Abroad, the US is dealing with a world on fire. At home, it's dealing with an intense presidential election campaign. Bangladesh is not exactly foremost on its mind. It's true the Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus has many supporters and admirers in the US, and those that believe the baseless allegation of a US hand in Hasina's ouster will use his appointment as head of the interim government as a data point to try to validate their view. But it's hard to imagine how he can be working against Bangladesh's interests given that he commands considerable levels of support there, that he took leadership of the interim government only when requested by the student protest leaders (and presumably the army had no issue with it), and given that he has pledged to pursue democracy and across-the-board reform.

Michael Kuggelman

The US tends to look at Bangladesh through the lens of great power competition, and that means that while it will welcome Yunus as the head of the interim government, it will worry about the implications of a new government that may be poised to take the country even closer to China. Assuming stability returns to Bangladesh, we will see Washington pick up where it left off with a focus on trade, climate change, and strategic cooperation. Let's not forget that soon after Hasina began her ill-fated final term, President Joe Biden sent a letter to her that spoke of beginning a new era in relations, one focused on a variety of issues. And I'm quite confident that if Washington becomes concerned again about rights and democracy in Bangladesh, it won't hold back from voicing its concerns. Such a move would hopefully shatter another misconception about US policy in Bangladesh—that it favours non-Awami League parties and entities.

What's especially painful about all these allegations of a foreign hand is that they deny agency to the scores of young and brave Bangladeshis who waged a massive campaign for change, and in many cases lost their lives in the process.

There have been communal attacks against Hindus in Bangladesh and many cases of persecution since August 5. What do you make of this communal violence?
Unfortunately, religious violence is a longstanding reality in South Asia. Sometimes it is inspired by pure hate, at other times by broader political factors. It appears that the attacks on the Hindu community in Bangladesh in recent days have mostly been part of a wave of revenge acts against anyone considered to be a Hasina supporter. But this issue definitely needs more investigation to get a better sense of the scale of these attacks and what is driving them.

We're seeing some fake news—debunked by reputable fact-checker sites—about attacks on minorities. But there are still attacks taking place. This is one of the many dangerous things about this fake news: it distracts attention from the attacks that are actually happening. No one can afford to be complacent, or in denial.

For the interim government, stopping the attacks begins with restoring law and order. And that involves getting the police back out on the streets. This is an understandably sensitive issue, given that the police were on the frontlines of the vicious crackdown on peaceful protesters, but you can't restore law and order without law enforcement. With many police members now starting to return to work, that should help. More will need to be done by the interim government, including taking legal actions against those behind the attacks, and engaging with the affected communities to ensure they're getting the protection they need.

There is a theory on social media that Bangladesh will become the next Afghanistan. As an expert on South Asia, do you think there exists a serious threat that Bangladesh will become an Islamist country?
I wholly reject this notion that Bangladesh could become the next Afghanistan. Even the most casual observer of Bangladesh knows that it's a country with robust—albeit flawed—institutions, a strong state writ that extends across the country, and also a tradition of moderate Islam. Yes, there are influential religious groups like Jamaat and Hefazat that excel with mobilisation, and there have been terror groups like JMB. But these entities don't influence politics and society to the extent that you see in Afghanistan, or Pakistan for that matter. This is another case where many in India are falling prey to the Awami League narrative that a Bangladesh without Hasina and her party can only mean the unleashing of Islamist forces that will destabilise the country. Ultimately, these false narratives are inflating and exaggerating the notion of an Islamist threat, which risks heightening volatilities in Bangladesh at an especially sensitive time.

What happened in Bangladesh was a mass democratic uprising. As far as I know, that is the fact. I hope the world views it that way as well.

Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University
Khulshi, Chattogram-4225

Memo No. CVASU/EO/**REV**/24-25/IFT-2 Date: 13/08/2024

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of goods as follows:

Tender ID No.	Package name	Tender closing date	Tender notice publication date
1008357	Procurement of ELISA Kits for the PRTC Lab of CVASU.	28-Aug-2024 15:00	**14-Aug-2024 10:30**

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for **last downloading** the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to date & time (28-Aug-2024 12:30 for **Tender ID 1008357).**

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Signed/-
Chief Engineer
Engineering Office
Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University

GD- 168

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭ তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা,
ঢাকা-১২০৮।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমটি প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাহিত জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করছে :-

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমান
০১।	ইডিসিএল/ ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/দরপত্র/২০২৪/৩৩৮ তারিখঃ ১৩/০৮/২০২৪ইং	Doxycycline Hyclate BP (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	৫০০ কেজি

সিকিউরিটি/ আর্নেষ্ট মানি	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরৎযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহনের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
২.৫%	টাকা ১,৫০০.০০ (এক হাজার পাঁচশত টাকা) প্রতি সেট	২৮/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	২৮/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকলিন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্য্যালয় হইতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাইবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, যাহাদের ভ্যাট রেজিষ্ট্রেশন নাই তাহাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহন করার প্রয়োজন নাই।
দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র শিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হইবে না। কর্তৃপক্ষ যেকোন দরপত্র গ্রহন বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, প্রকিউরমেন্ট
পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

(৫ ইন্সি ৪ কলাম)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Health Service Division
National Electro-Medical Equipment Maintenance
Workshop & Training Center (NEMEMW&TC)
Office of the Chief Technical Manager
Mohakhali, Dhaka-1213.
www.nememw.gov.bd

Memo No- 45.07.0000.004.07.015.16- 2754 Date: 12/08/2024

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender Notice is invited in the National e-GP System portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following.

Sl No	Tender ID	Package No. & Description	Last Selling Date & Time	Opening and Closing Date & Time
1.	1006611	egp/repair/anesthesia_machine-2 Repairing and upgradation of 55 nos anesthesia machine at difeerent level of hospital (UHC, Fulbari, Dinajpur; Adhunik Sadar Hospital, Natore; UHC, Gurudaspur, Narore; UHC, Boraigram, Natore; UHC, Bagatipara, Natore; M A Rahim MCH, Dinajpur; UHC, Khansama, Dinajpur; 250 Beded General Hospital, Thakurgaon; UHC, Muktagacha, Mymensingh; 250 Beded Sadar Hospital, Khagrachari; UHC, Karimganj, Kisorganj; UHC, Nikli, Kisorganj; UHC, Kuliarchar, Kisorganj; Shahid Tajuddin MCH, Gazipur, Dhaka; UHC, Daulatpur, Kushtia; UHC, Kotchadpur, Jhenaidah; UHC, Kolaroa, Satkhira; UHC, Alamdanga, Chuadanga; UHC, Shoilakupa, Jhenaidah; UHC, Digholia, Khulna; UHC, Rupsha, Khulna; UHC, Mongla, Bagerhat; UHC Tala, Shatkhira; UHC, Daulatpur, Kushtia; 250 Beded General Hospital, Kushtia; UHC, Kalia, Narail; UHC, Keshobpur, Jessore; UHC, Paikgacha, Khulna; UHC, Mollahat, Bagerhat; UHC, Manirampur, Jessore) with 02 (two) years of comprehensive warranty of whole machine.	25-Aug-2024 12:00	25-Aug-2024 14:00
2.	1006631	egp/repair/anesthesia_machine-3 Repairing and upgradation of 46 nos Anesthesia Machine at different level of hospitals of Barishal & Chattaogram Division with 02 (years) comprehensive warranty.	25-Aug-2024 12:00	25-Aug-2024 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no office/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks, branches.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and also from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(M N Nashid Rahman)
Technical Manager (Training)
Tel: 0258810613

GD-170

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
BANGLADESH TELEVISION
CHATTOGRAM CENTER
CHATTOGRAM

Invitation for National Tender

01.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
02.	Agency	Bangladesh Television
03.	Procuring Entity Name	General Manager, Bangladesh Television, Chattogram Center, 669/A, Zakir Hossain Road, Khulshi, Chattogram.
04.	Procuring Entity District	Chattogram
05.	Invitation for	"Supply of Desktop Computer, Printer, Scanner & Related Accessories for BTV Chattogram Center on turn key basis "
06.	Invitation ref no.	15.54.1543.023.07.072.24. 3568
07.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM) National Competitive Tender (NCT)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
08.	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB, Annual revenue budget of BTV Chattogram
09.	Tender Package No.	Single
10.	Tender Publication Date	13/08/2024
11.	Tender Last selling Date	01/09/2024 (During office Hours)
12.	Tender Closing Date and Time	02/09/2024 12:00 hrs BST
13.	Tender Opening Date and Time	02/09/2024 12:10 hrs BST
14.	Name & Address of the Selling of Tender Document	Office of the Assistant Director (Finance) Room No-101, Bangladesh Television, Chattogram Center, 669/A, Zakir Hossain Road, khulshi, Chattogram.(During office Hours)
15.	Receiving Tender Document	Conference Room (3rd floor), Bangladesh Television, Chattogram Center, 669/A, Zakir Hossain Road, khulshi, Chattogram.
16.	Opening Tender Document	Conference Room (3rd floor), Bangladesh Television, Chattogram Center, 669/A, Zakir Hossain Road, khulshi, Chattogram.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
17.	Eligibility of Tenderer	The minimum number of years of general experience of the Tenderer in the supply of Goods as Supplier shall be 05 years and The minimum number of years of specific experience for the supply of similar Goods as Supplier shall be 02 years.
18.	Brief Description of Goods & Related service	"Supply of Desktop Computer, Printer, Scanner & Related Accessories for BTV Chattogram Center on turn key basis "
19.	Price of Tender Document (Tk.)	Tk. 500.00 (Five Hundred) Only

	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk) in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft	Completion Time in Days/Weeks /Months
20.	01	"Supply of Desktop Computer, Printer, Scanner & Related Accessories for BTV Chattogram Center on turn key basis "	Bangladesh Television, Chattogram Center,	Tk. 17,500.00 (Seventeen Thousand Five Hundred) Taka Only in favor of Drawing & Disbursing Officer, Bangladesh Television, Chattogram.	30 days

PURCHASER DETAILS		
21.	Name of official inviting Tender	Md. Muzammel Hoque
22.	Designation of official Inviting Tender	Sub-Assistant Engineer
23.	Address of official Inviting Tender	Bangladesh Television, Chattogram Center, 669/A, Zakir Hossain Road, Khulshi, Chattogram.
24.	Contact details of official Inviting Tender	Tel: 02333379309
25.	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.	

22/06/2028
Md. Muzammel Hoque
Sub-Assistant Engineer
Bangladesh Television, Chattogram Center
On behalf of General Manager
muzammelhoquebtv@gmail.com

GD- 162

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Integrated and Participatory Project to Control Noise Pollution
Department of Environment
E / 16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

No-22.02.0000.044.14.008.24-142 Date: 13/08/2024

Request for Express of Interest (EoI)

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
2	Agency	Department of Environment
3	Procuring Entity Name	Project Director, Integrated and Participatory Project to Control Noise Pollution
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5	EoI for	Consulting Firm (National)
6	Title of Service	Consulting Firm for Noise Awareness through Various Social Media Platform including YouTube, Radio, FM Radio & Mobile Phone SMS
7	EoI Ref. No.	22.02.0000.044.14.008.24-142
8	Date	13.08.2024
	Key Information	
9	Procurement Method	Fixed Budget Selection (FBS)
	Funding Information	
10	Budget and Source of Funds	GoB
	Particular Information	
11	EoI Publication Date	14.08.2024
12	Project/Programme Name	Integrated and Participatory Project to Control Noise Pollution
13	EoI Closing Date and Time	29.08.2024 12:00PM
	Information for Tenderer	
14	Brief Description of Assignment	OVC (Online Video Commercial), Celebrity Announcement & Short reel for social media, Animated Content, Web Banner development for online media, Media Ad Design, Media Ads Publication in Online News portal, Social Media Boosting (Facebook) for video, Social Media Boosting (YouTube channel) for video, Influencer Engagement, Public awareness campaign (Wall Painting & Flyover Painting), Organize Youth Festival, Mobile Phone SMS
15	Experience, Resources and Delivery Capacity Required	1. Applicant Organization/Firm must have at least 5 years of experience in creating and broadcasting environmental awareness programs; 2. Preference will be given to organizations/Firms with previous work experience with the Department of Environment; 3. Applicant Organization/Firm must have relevant work experience on of TV Spot making and airing, Documentary making and social campaign; 4. Work experience with national and international organizations; 5. Preference will be given of previous work experience to manage any government organization's social pages and conducting social media promotion 6. Preference will be given to organizations with previous work experience to organize outdoor event 7. Applicant organization/firm must have separate sections for manuscript writing and special video editing panel. 8. The organization/firm must have at least a single work order of BDT 250,00,000.00 (Two crore fifty lakh). 9. The team leader and other members of the team must be experienced in the relevant work. 10.Credit Facility certificate in favor of "PD, Integrated and Participatory Project to Control Noise Pollution" from a schedule bank of TK 2.50 Crore (Two Crore Fifty Lakh) 11.Valid Trade license of the firm, Tax Identification Number (TIN) with 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 income tax clearance certificate, VAT registration number, Bank Solvency Certificate from any recognized bank, Brushier of the organization/firm, Previous work experience with mentioning the name of organization, Audit Report (2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23).
16	Other Details (If Applicable)	Expected date for commencement of the services is December 2024 and completion by May 2025. The tentative duration of the entire assignment is about 6 months from the date of contract singing. The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment is available in Department of Environment's website https://doe.portal.gov.bd/site/view/tenders/-
17	Associate with foreign firms is	Not Accepted
	Procuring Entity Details	
18	Name of Official Inviting EoI	Syeda Masuma Khanam
19	Designation of Official Inviting EoI	Director (Joint Secretary) and Project Director, Integrated and Participatory Project to Control Noise Pollution, Department of Environment, Dhaka.
20	Address of Official Inviting EoI	Office of the Project Director, Integrated and Participatory Project to Control Noise Pollution, Paribesh Bhaban, E/16, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207 (8th floor, Room No. 901).
21	Contact Details of Official Inviting EoI	Phone: 222218387, E-mail: dirnrm@doe.gov.bd
22	Short list shall comprise minimum 4 or maximum 7 consulting firms who will be requested to submit the technical and financial proposal. The authority reserves the right to cancel any or all EoIs without assigning any reason.	

13.08.2024
(Syeda Masuma Khanam)
Project Director
Phone: 222218387

GD-165

What to WATCH

SONY SPORTS 2
UEFA Super Cup
Real Madrid vs Atalanta
Live from 1:00 am (Thursday)

T SPORTS
The Hundred
Southern Brave vs Welsh Fire
Live from 8:00 pm
Trent Rockets vs Oval Invincibles
Live from 11:30 pm

Real Madrid seek record 6th Super Cup

AGENCIES

Real Madrid and Atalanta will face off in the UEFA Super Cup in Warsaw on Wednesday in a bid to taste the first slice of European stardom for the 2024-25 season.

Los Blancos added Champions League title number 15 to their ever-growing collection last season, while their Italian foes unexpectedly slayed a hitherto invincible Bayer Leverkusen in the Europa League final.

The match-up also provides a chance for Real Madrid to become record six-time winners of the UEFA Super Cup, having been tied at the top with five Super Cup titles with rivals Barcelona and Italian giants AC Milan.

The UEFA Super Cup is the first step for teams to see how their tuning up for the season has gone, along with a chance to begin the season with momentum gained through silverware. However, for Real Madrid fans, this particular fixture remains a point of interest for one more reason: Kylian Mbappe.

The French forward, who was finally landed by Real Madrid as their latest number nine after years of trying to get him from PSG, could make his competitive debut for the Spanish giants in this match.

The former PSG forward has been observing Real's mixed pre-season from afar -- Carlo Ancelotti's men overcame Chelsea and Albacete either side of defeats to AC Milan and Barcelona -- but will now be ready to aid Los Blancos' quest for an unprecedented sixth UEFA Super Cup honour.

In customary Blancos fashion, the European champions have not undertaken a major summer overhaul of their squad -- which is now without two stalwarts in Toni Kroos and Nacho Fernandez -- but the addition of Mbappe and Brazilian teenage sensation Endrick now makes their forward line, also including Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo, even more fearsome.

Meanwhile, Europa League champions Atalanta are significantly less competitive at the moment compared to just a few months ago as coach Gian Piero Gasperini warned fans of the Bergamo club not to expect a strong start to the season.

"It's inevitable that it's turned out like this, but at this moment, the season has already become complicated," he told the local newspaper, l'Eco di Bergamo.

The 66-year-old coach confirmed that central midfielder Teun Koopmeiners is set to join Juventus and is no longer training with the first team.

"We've had two very serious injuries, two cruciate ligaments in practically three games with (Giorgio) Scalvini and (Gianluca) Scamaccama, and then the Koopmeiners situation."

However, Gasperini was hopeful new recruits would be found before the end of the transfer window.

Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior, Jude Bellingham, and the season's star signing Kylian Mbappe looked to be enjoying themselves in training ahead of their UEFA Super Cup encounter against Atalanta in Warsaw today. Real, who won a record-extending 15th Champions League and 36th LaLiga last season, will be gunning for more accolades this season, especially with the inclusion of superstar forward Mbappe in their already enviable squad.
PHOTO: **REAL MADRID**

Tigers look to overcome hindered preparations

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Test team reached Pakistan yesterday, five days ahead of schedule, to officially begin the final phase of their preparations for the forthcoming two-Test series against the hosts, having failed to do so at home owing to weeks of unrest.

The Tigers were slated to begin practice on August 3 but had to make do with individual sessions at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium instead as many of their foreign coaches expressed their inability to attend the sessions, citing the advisories issued by their respective embassies.

The Bangladesh Tigers' programme was the only exception as red-ball players were able to train and take part in two-intra squad matches in Chattogram even as the schedules were hindered by political unrest.

Several members of the 16-member squad – Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Zakir Hasan, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim and Nayeem Hasan – are already in Pakistan with the 'A' team and are playing the first four-dayer against their Pakistani counterparts which began yesterday in Lahore.

The 2-0 loss in the home Test series against Sri Lanka this year sparked a debate as the players seemingly did not get enough time to prepare for red-ball cricket. This time, even though the team had ample time, the situation did not allow the preparations to go through smoothly.

"There were shortcomings in preparation for the Sri Lanka series. This time we had the opportunity but the last phase of the preparation had some lackings," chief selectior Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu said in a press conference on Monday before the squad's departure.

"After arriving in Dhaka, we were supposed to begin practice on August 3, but later players had to undertake individual sessions as national team coaches could not arrive [on the field]. To make up for these shortcomings we are going to Pakistan earlier than scheduled," he added.

The Tigers will begin training at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore from Tuesday before travelling to Islamabad. Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan and Shoriful Islam will join the side in Islamabad, having finished their franchise league stints in Canada's Global T20 League.

Shoriful returned to the country on Monday and trained in Mirpur yesterday with the red-ball after having played only white-ball cricket since the T20 World Cup in June.

"Everyone began red-ball practice sessions after a while. I have begun a bit late so it will be a bit difficult [to adjust]. I am trying and there is time," said Shoriful, who will depart for Pakistan on Wednesday.

The pacer is also hoping that the batters would stand their ground against a potent Pakistan attack and take advantage of the flat surfaces in Rawalpindi.

"From what I have seen, Rawalpindi has batting friendly wickets. We have good batters so we will fight there."

The Tigers will have a few days to practice with the whole squad in Pakistan before the first Test in Rawalpindi begins on August 21.

City's PL charges hearing could be fast-tracked

AFP, *London*

Manchester City's hearing into 115 alleged breaches of Premier League financial regulations could be brought forward to next month, according to a report in The Times.

The newspaper said on Monday that the start of an independent commission hearing, planned for November, would now begin in mid-to-late September. The hearing is scheduled to last 10 weeks, with a verdict likely to be delivered early in 2025.

Neither the Premier League nor Manchester City have commented.

The Times report added that the outcome of a separate legal case which City have brought against league rules that regulate how clubs strike sponsorship or revenue deals with businesses linked to their owners, is now due in the next fortnight.

That in turn, said the paper, would allow the hearing into the 115 charges -- all of which City deny - to be brought forward.

City are facing the charges for alleged breaches of regulations and financial rules between 2009 and 2023. If found guilty, City, who last season won an unprecedented fourth successive English top-flight title, could face points deductions and even relegation from the Premier League.

Trans sprinter set for historic Paralympics debut

REUTERS

Valentina Petrillo is set to become the first openly transgender athlete to participate in the Paralympic Games, scheduled to run from August 28 to September 8, after the visually impaired sprinter was selected to represent Italy in the women's 200 and 400 metres races in Paris.

The 50-year-old, who transitioned in 2019, won bronze medals in both events at the World Para Athletics Championships last year in Paris. Prior to transitioning, Petrillo won 11 national titles in the men's category.

"I still find it hard to believe it and I'm keeping my feet on the ground because my chance to participate in Tokyo was missed by a whisker," Petrillo said in a statement on Monday.

"I will only start thinking about the Paris Games once I arrive in France."

Diagnosed with Stargardt's syndrome at the age of 14, Petrillo's visual abilities are limited to 1/50th of the normal range.

International Paralympic Committee (IPC) President Andrew Parsons told BBC Sport that while Petrillo is welcome in Paris under World Para Athletics policies, he wants to see the sporting world "unite" on its transgender policies.

The governing bodies of many sports including athletics, cycling and swimming have tightened their participation rules for transgender athletes in elite women's competitions over the last couple of years.

However, the IPC allows governing bodies to set their own policies and World Para Athletics permits an individual legally recognised as a woman to compete in the category for which their impairment qualifies them.

Abahani icons plea for return of looted trophies

SPORTS REPORTER

The premises of Abahani in Dhanmondi yesterday became a rare gathering place for former star players from various sporting disciplines, including football, cricket, and hockey, united by a common plea: to return all the looted trophies the powerhouse club has achieved over the past 52 years.

Abahani officials from different eras, its fans, and some local residents joined the former stars in urging those who looted the trophies on 5 August -- shortly after former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned in the face of the student-led movement -- to return the cherished trophies so that their achievements can be preserved for future generations.

Before the former star players began delivering their speeches, some people were vocal about opening the Dhanmondi ground for public use, as it has been reserved exclusively for Abahani for a long time.

Former national hockey captain Abdus Sadeque said, "I first played for Abahani in 1972... and captained both the football and hockey teams during their debut seasons. I've returned here after a long time and noticed a few trophies have been recovered.

"I can confidently say that Abahani has been the best club in the country for 52 years. They excel not only in football but also in cricket, hockey, and table tennis. The number of championships they have won is unmatched by any other club in the country... but unfortunately, all of them were taken away. I want to appeal through the media for those trophies to be returned to the club."

Former national cricket captain Gazi Ashraful Hossain Lipu said, "When I heard that Abahani had been vandalised and the valuable trophies looted, I was deeply disappointed because those trophies were earned through our performances... I urge everyone to return those memorable trophies. It would be the greatest reward for us to see those trophies once again placed in Abahani's trophy cases."

Echoing the sentiments of Sadeque and Lipu, former national footballer Dewan Shafiul Alam Tutul said, "Most of us are no longer involved with the club, but we are here for one reason: we want our achievements returned because you cannot keep those trophies at home."

"I believe those trophies have little market value and could be sold as scrap... If necessary, we will provide financial compensation, but please return the achievements we earned over the years," said Tutul, adding that Abahani has no political affiliations.

Abahani director Inam Ahmed urged the administration and the interim government's advisers to "ensure security" not only for Abahani but also for other clubs that have been vandalised.

"Our achievements have been looted. This is not just a club of Bangladesh; it is a club for all players and the Dhanmondi community," said Inam, adding that Abahani will continue to form squads in all disciplines to participate in their respective sports despite the vandalism at the club.

PHOTO: **PPCB**

Bangladesh 'A' opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy looks dejected after being caught and bowled by Umar Amin during the opening day of the first of the two-match four-day series against Pakistan Shaheens at the Islamabad Club Ground yesterday. Joy struck 65 off 116 balls but Bangladesh 'A', who were 91-3 at one stage, suffered a massive batting collapse to get bowled out for just 122 runs in their first innings. Mushfiqur Rahim and Mominul Haque didn't have an ideal batting practice ahead of the upcoming two-match Test series as they could make 14 and 11 runs, respectively. Pakistan Shaheens reached 2-0 at stumps, trailing by 120 runs.

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Students put forward four-point demand

Seek formation of special tribunal for speedy trial of killings during protests

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement launched a weeklong programme yesterday to press their four-point demand, the first of which is the trial of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

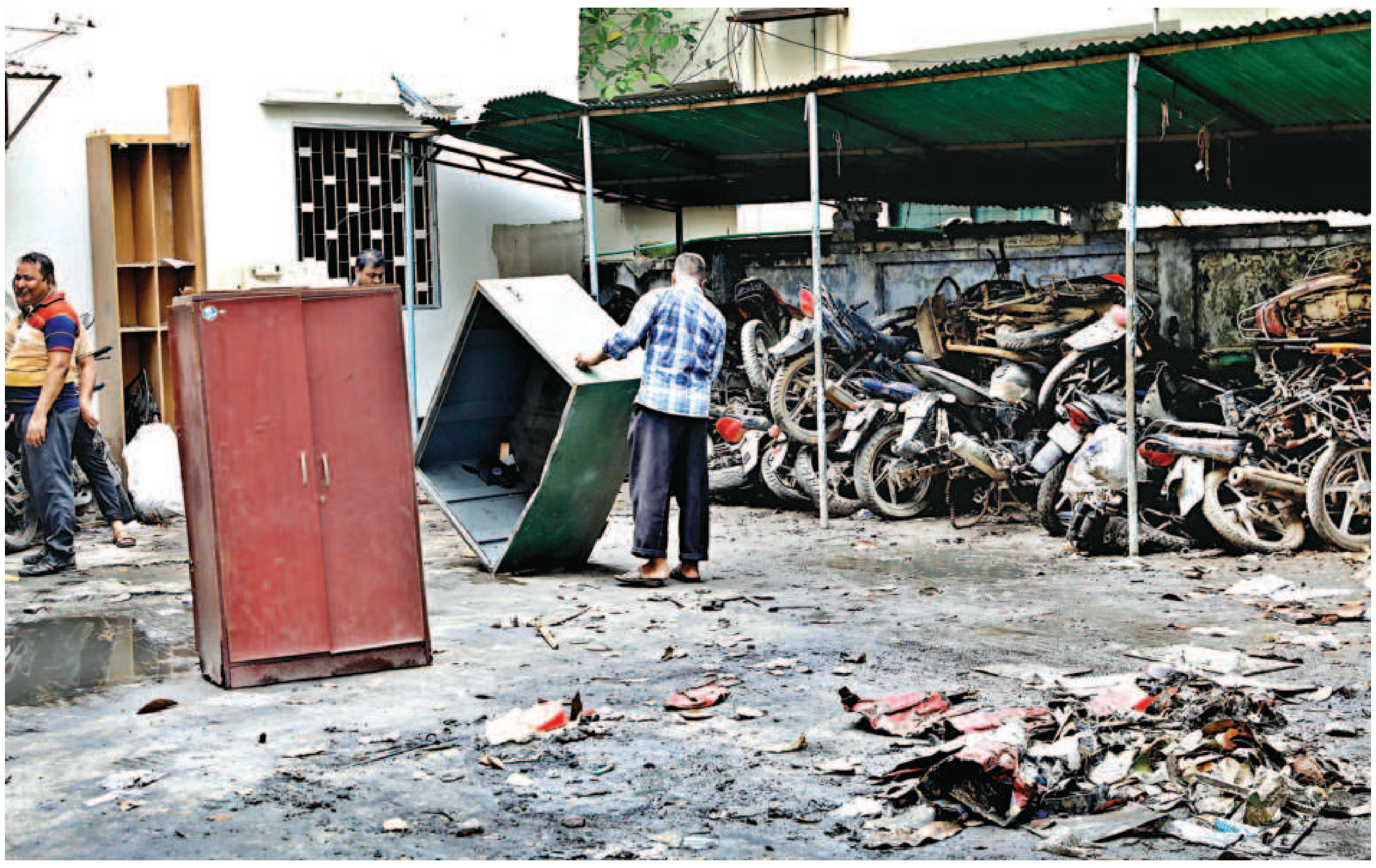
As part of the "Resistance Week" students gathered in front of the Raju Sculpture on the Dhaka University campus around 3:00pm and announced the four-point demand.

The demands are as follows:

1. A special tribunal must be formed to ensure the swift trial of Sheikh Hasina and her party leaders for "massacres" carried out using the fascist framework.

2. Those involved in the planned killings, robberies, and looting by the Awami League and its affiliates to undermine the mass uprising must be brought to justice swiftly, and the rightful demands of minorities must be acknowledged.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



Staffers cleaning up the premises of Khilgaon Police Station in the capital yesterday, following a mob attack just over a week ago. The attack caused extensive damage to the police station that resumed partial operations yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BNP to hold sit-in today, tomorrow

Calls for bringing Hasina, her aides to justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP will organise sit-in programmes at its offices across the country today and tomorrow, demanding that former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her accomplices be brought to justice.

The party will also hold a milad mahfil at its offices on August 16 to pray for BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's good health, and those killed and injured during the mass uprising, said a press release.

Meanwhile, the BNP yesterday handed a letter to the UN resident coordinator, Gwyn Lewis, requesting an impartial investigation into the "mass murder" committed by the Awami League government during the uprising that toppled the government.

After handing over the letter, BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury told journalists that AL President Sheikh Hasina and her party leaders must face trial.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Shayan F Rahman removed as IFIC director

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahmed Shayan Fazlur Rahman, the son of Salman F Rahman, lost his directorship at the IFIC Bank due to loan defaults.

The central bank sent a letter on August 11 to the managing director of the private commercial bank, saying that Rahman's company Esses Fashions defaulted on loan repayments.

Esses Fashions, one of the concerns of Beximco Group, started its commercial production in November 2004, as per its website.

Beximco Group is one of the top borrowers of the state-run Janata Bank.

Esses Fashions's loans at Janata Bank stood at Tk 278 crore at the end of last year.

"Thus, Shayan will not be able to hold his directorship," the letter added.

Earlier on June 27, the IFIC Bank's board requested Shayan's re-

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Bank accounts of Asaduzzaman, Palak to be frozen

BFIU issues directive to banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) yesterday instructed all banks to freeze the accounts of two more ministers from the recently overthrown Awami League government, along with their family members.

They are Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, former home minister, and Zunaid Ahmed Palak, former state minister for posts, telecommunications and information technology.

With this, BFIU has so far instructed banks to freeze the accounts of five former ministers of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, which fell on August 5 in the face of student-led mass uprising.

All banks were told to freeze the accounts of Asaduzzaman, his wife Lutful Tahmina Khan, along with his son and daughter, said a senior official of the anti-money laundering agency.

The instruction came after the BFIU received reports of suspicious transactions in accounts under their names, said the official, wishing to remain unnamed.

In a letter, the BFIU asked all banks to block all kinds of withdrawals from the accounts of Asaduzzaman and his family members.

Earlier in the day, BFIU also instructed all banks to freeze the accounts of Palak and his wife, Arifa Jesmin Konika, a senior official said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

TENSIONS WITH ISRAEL

Iran rejects Western calls for restraint

32 more Palestinians killed as Israel keeps up strikes in Gaza

AGENCIES

Iran yesterday rejected Western calls to stand down its threat to retaliate against Israel for the killing of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran late last month.

The Islamic republic and its allies have blamed Israel for Haniyeh's killing on July 31 during a visit to the Iranian capital for the swearing-in of President Masoud Pezeshkian. Israel has not commented.

Iran has vowed to avenge the death, which came hours after an Israeli strike in Beirut killed a senior commander of Hezbollah, the powerful Iran-backed militant group in Lebanon.

Western diplomats have scrambled to avert a major conflagration in the Middle East, where tensions were already high due to the Israel's offensive in Gaza. In a statement on Monday, the United States and its European allies urged Iran to de-escalate.

The White House warned that a "significant set of attacks" by Iran and its allies was possible as soon as this week, saying Israel shared the same assessment.

The United States has deployed an aircraft carrier strike group and a guided missile submarine to the region in support of Israel.

Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani criticised the Western call for it to de-escalate.

"The declaration by France, Germany and Britain, which raised no objection to the international crimes of the Zionist regime, brazenly asks Iran to take no deterrent action against a regime which has violated its sovereignty and territorial integrity," he said in a statement.

"Such a request lacks political logic, flies in the face of the principles and rules of international law, and constitutes public and practical support" for Israel.

The United States and its European allies also called for a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, with difficult talks set for tomorrow on halting the conflict. They also called for the "unfettered" delivery of aid to devastated Gaza.

Hamas is sticking to its demand that truce talks focus on a deal already discussed with Israel and mediators rather than starting anew, an official said.

Israel's military offensive in the Gaza Strip has killed at least 39,929 Palestinians and wounded 92,240 since October 7, the Palestinian enclave's health ministry said yesterday. A total of 32 Palestinians have been killed and 88 wounded in the past 24 hours, the ministry said in a statement.

» Hamas fires two rockets at Tel Aviv

» US, allies call for "unfettered" delivery of aid to Gaza

» Gaza death toll rises to 39,929

UN urges interim govt to be inclusive

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has urged the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government to continue to make every effort to be inclusive.

"In the coming weeks, the interim government should take into account the voices of women, youth and people across the country as well as that of minority and indigenous communities as the country moves towards parliamentary elections," said his spokesman Stephane Dujarric in a statement yesterday.

Guterres welcomed the efforts of the interim government to restore calm and organise parliamentary elections in Bangladesh.

The interim government was formed on August 8 following the fall of the Awami League government on August 5 in the wake of a student-led mass upsurge.

He underscored the need for a full, independent, impartial and transparent investigation into all acts of violence, the statement said.

More than 400 people were killed during and after the fall of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

UN earlier said it stands ready to deploy a fact-finding team to Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, in another briefing, UN Secretary-General's Deputy Spokesperson Farhan Haq said the UN is alarmed by the attacks on journalists in Bangladesh.

"Yes, we are against all attacks on journalists anywhere for any reason. And

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Adani can now sell Bangladesh-bound power in India

REUTERS, *Singapore*

An Adani Power coal-fired power plant under contract to sell all its output to Bangladesh can now supply the domestic market as the government has amended its power export rules.

An internal federal power ministry memo, dated August 12 and seen by Reuters, amends 2018 guidelines governing generators supplying electricity "exclusively to a neighbouring country".

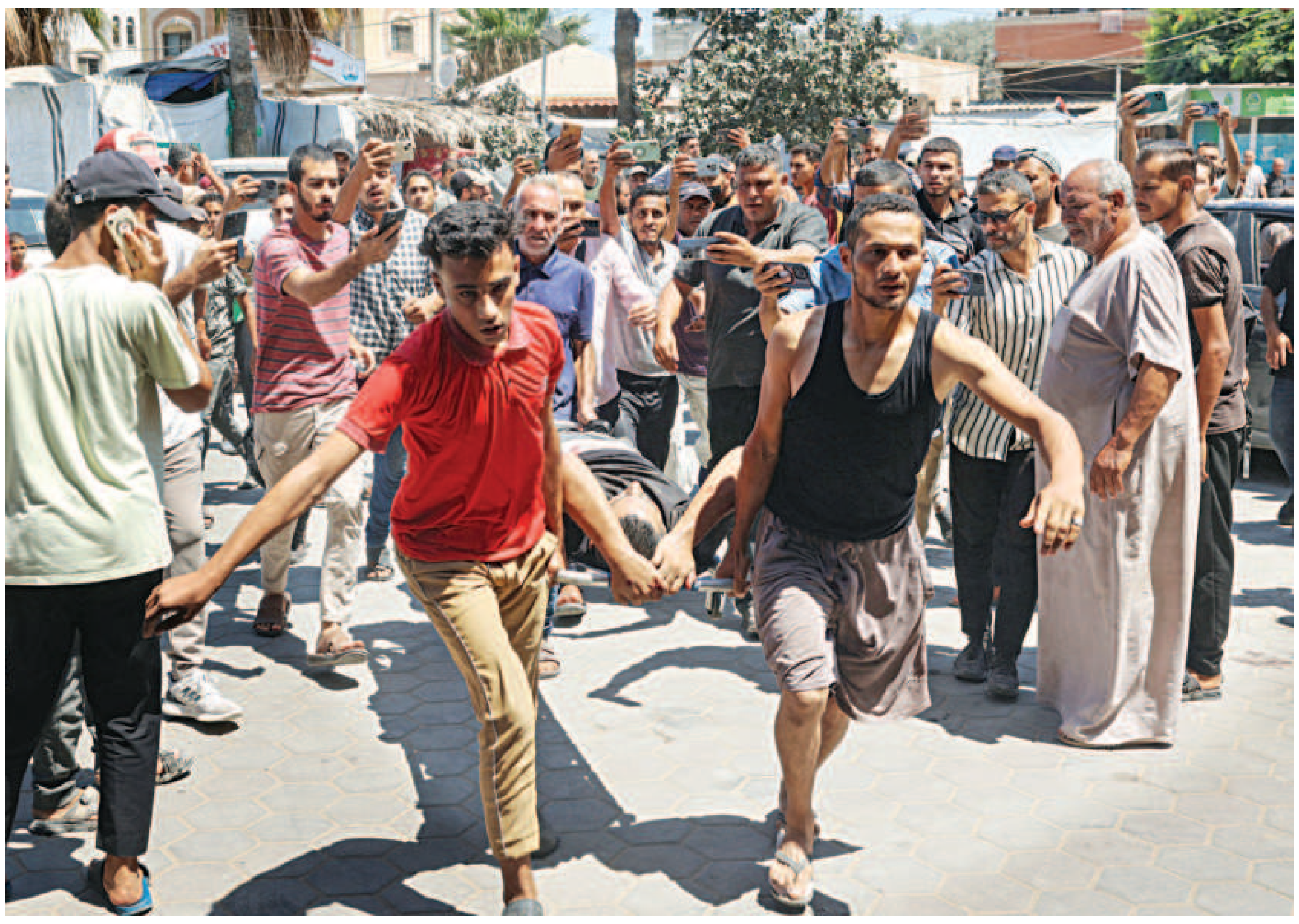
Currently only one plant in India -- Adani Power's 1,600 megawatt (MW) Godda plant in eastern Jharkhand state -- is under contract to export 100 percent of its power to a neighbouring country.

The memo says "the government of India may permit connection of such generating station to the Indian grid to facilitate sale of power within India in case of sustained non-scheduling of full or part capacity".

The sale of power to the local grid might also be allowed if there is a delay in payments, it said.

The move, which comes nearly a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Palestinians carry a wounded person following an Israeli airstrike on the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Subsurface of Mars harbours oceans of water

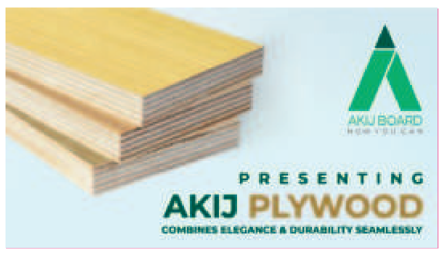
REUTERS, *Singapore*

Data from Nasa's Mars InSight lander shows evidence of liquid water far below the surface of the fourth planet, advancing the search for life there and showing what might have happened to Mars' ancient oceans.

The lander, which has been on the Red Planet since 2018, measured seismic data over four years, examining how quakes shook the ground and determining what materials or substances were beneath the surface, according to a study released on Monday.

Based on that data, the researchers found liquid water was most likely present deep beneath the lander. Water is considered essential for life, and geological studies show the planet's surface had lakes, rivers and oceans more than 3 billion years ago.

"On Earth what we know is where it is wet enough and there are enough sources of energy, there is microbial life very deep in Earth's subsurface," said one of the authors, Vashan Wright of the University of California San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography. "The ingredients for life as we know it exist in the Martian subsurface if these interpretations are correct."



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Hasina sued for genocide, crimes against humanity

Former ministers, law enforcers co-accused; AL, Jubo League, BCL may be prosecuted as organisations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A complaint was filed with the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday accusing former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and eight others of committing crimes against humanity and genocide between July 15 and August 5.

Supreme Court lawyer Gazi MH Tamim filed the complaint on behalf of Bulbul Kabir, father of Alif Ahmed Siam, a 9th grader who, as per the complaint, was shot by police in Savar on August 5 and died two days later.

> **Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said the interim government decided to hold the trial at the International Crimes Tribunal for the killings during the mass uprising that toppled the government.**

Tamim, who was a lawyer for several war crimes accused at the International Crimes Tribunal, appealed to the investigation agency to take legal proceedings following a proper investigation.

"We registered the complaint, and thus the investigation has started," Ataur Rahman, deputy director (admin) of the investigation agency, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Once the probe is done, we will submit the report to the Chief Prosecutor's Office of the tribunal so that the next procedures can begin," he added.

The others accused are Obaidul Quader, Awami League general secretary and former road transport and bridges minister; Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, former home minister; Zunaid Ahmed Palak, former state minister

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

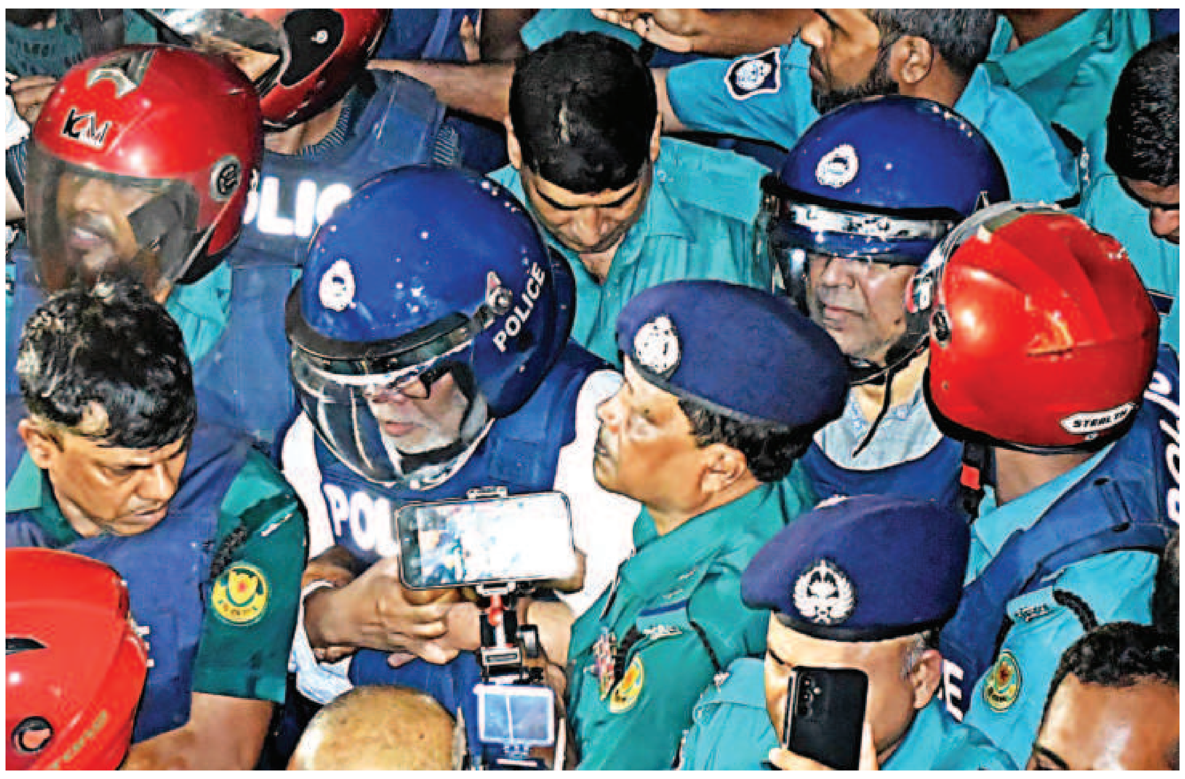


PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and Anisul Huq, former law minister, *in blue helmets,* being taken to a Dhaka court yesterday evening.

Beximco leaves Janata Bank in poor health

MD MEHEDI HASAN

What is the purpose of a single borrower exposure limit? It is to ensure that a bank's fortune is not tied to the ebb and flow of a conglomerate's business.

But this rule, documents show, was not enforced by state-owned Janata Bank in the case of Beximco Group, arguably the largest conglomerate in the country led by Salman F Rahman, the private industry and investment affairs adviser of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina -- a post that afforded him the rank of a minister.

This has left the health of the state-owned bank in a precarious position: about 49 percent of Janata's outstanding loans have gone bad -- and 37.5 percent of the defaulted loans are of Beximco Group, whose vice-chairman Salman was put on ten-day remand yesterday.

At the end of June, Janata's total exposure to Beximco Group stood at Tk 25,000 crore, which is about 950 percent of the lender's paid-up capital.

Banks are not allowed to lend more than 25 percent of their paid-up capital to a single party. At the end of June, Janata's paid-up capital stood at Tk 2,314 crore.

What's more, as much as 72 percent of Beximco's outstanding loans with Janata have defaulted, documents show.

Of Janata's total disbursed loans of Tk 98,000 crore, 25.51 percent were given to 30 companies under the Beximco umbrella. And 26 of the 30 companies breached the single borrower exposure limit.

Salman, who was a member of

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

August 15, the darkest of dawns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The dawn had not broken yet.

Tanks rumbled down the empty roads to their destinations -- one of the teams headed for President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's residence at House 677 of Road 32 in Dhanmondi.

A contingent of security personnel composed of police and army was discharging their duties there. Nurul Islam Khan, the then deputy superintendent of police, was supervising the guards on that night.

Inside the house, everybody was still in sleep: President Mujib, his wife Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib, his sons Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russell, daughters-in-law, and his brother Sheikh Naser.

They did not know they would not live to see the light of the next day as preparations for carrying out a barbaric assassination were almost done.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

AN EPICENTRE OF INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE-- PAGE 2

Tuku, Palak, BCL's Shaikat held at Nikunja

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers arrested former deputy speaker Shamsul Haque Tuku and ex-state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak from the capital's Nikunja residential area in Khilkhet last night.

Police also arrested Dhaka University Chhatra League General Secretary Tanbir Hasan Shaikat from the same area.

Confirming their arrests, the media wing of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police said the three were hiding there.

Md Sentu Miah, officer-in-charge of Paltan Police Station, said acting on a tip-off, they conducted a drive in Nikunja and arrested the three.

"They were arrested in the murder case of rickshaw puller Kamal Mia. The victim's wife, Fatema Khatun, filed the case at Paltan Police Station on July 20," he told The Daily Star.

According to the case statement, Kamal, 39, was waiting for passengers near the VIP Road intersection in

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Govt scraps contractual appointments of 11 secretaries

NBR gets new chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government yesterday cancelled the contractual appointments of 11 officials of secretary or equivalent ranks and sent another secretary into forced retirement.

It also transferred three other secretaries. The government issued separate notifications in this regard.

This is the first major change to the civil administration since the interim government took office on August 8.

Jahangir Alam, secretary of the Public Security Division under the home ministry, was sent into forced retirement.

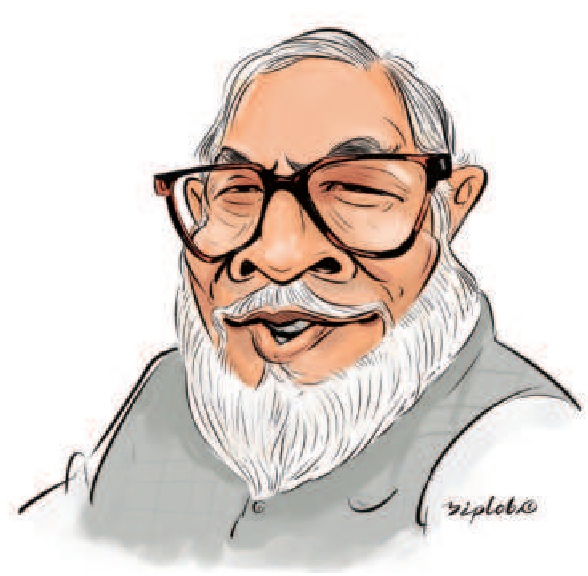
Jahangir served as the secretary of the Election Commission during the last national election on January 7, which was boycotted by almost all opposition political parties, including the BNP.

Md Mokabbir Hossain, chairman

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

SALMAN F RAHMAN

'The architect of default culture'



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Salman F Rahman, one of Sheikh Hasina's trusted advisers with a ministerial rank, is now a disgraced suspect held in police custody. He was arrested in a case over the killing of a shop employee, not for financial misconduct he has long been known for. But this high-profile arrest brings into stark relief, once again, the rise of a man who used murky politics to drive his business empire. His proximity to Hasina and her political circle helped him bend the rules at ease in the corporate world.

Salman thrived on financial transgression, with his big footprints in the banking sector, now one of the beleaguered areas of the economy. Before his downfall, his last target was the country's burgeoning Islamic finance that he used to supercharge his business.

Many familiar with Salman's wrongdoing described him as "the father of default culture" in Bangladesh. That toxic malpractice encouraged other businesses to borrow and never repay, exposing Bangladesh's banking industry to serious risks.

The Centre for Policy Dialogue concluded that several banks are now "clinically dead".

One of the lenders with huge exposure to Salman's Beximco Group is Janata Bank. Beximco borrowed a colossal amount, nine times higher than the bank's paid-up capital, bringing significant risks to the state-run lender. That's just one example.

Salman seemed to have left his legacy to his son, Ahmed Shayan Fazlur Rahman, who recently lost directorship at IFIC Bank due to loan defaults.

Founded in 1972 by Salman and his elder brother Sohail F Rahman as a commodity trading company, Beximco got its defaulted loans rescheduled on many occasions by compelling the regulators to make or amend rules. It also shielded itself from legal peril by securing court orders in its favour.

One of the instances of loan restructuring or rescheduling was in 2014 when Salman rescheduled Beximco's loans taken from Sonali Bank citing a liquidity crisis.

The company blamed the crisis on politically motivated credit restrictions between 2001 and 2008, repayment of Tk 800 crore in bank loans in the previous three years and economic disruptions during the prolonged spell of blockades and shutdowns in 2013-14.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

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DHANMONDI 32

An epicentre of independence struggle

AHMAD ISTIAK

An undated file photo of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Dhanmondi 32 house. *Inset,* the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum burns on August 5 as it was set on fire after the fall of the Awami League government.

PHOTO: COLLECTED/AFP

House 677, Road 32 (old), Dhanmondi, Dhaka. A seemingly ordinary two-storey house.

Although it does not look any different than many other old Dhanmondi residences, its role in Bangladesh's liberation struggle sets it apart.

This house witnessed the birth of numerous pivotal movements, including the anti-Ayub movement of 1962, Six-Point Movement, Agartala Conspiracy Case, the mass uprising of 1969, the 1970 election and finally the Liberation War.

It was from this house that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared the independence of Bangladesh in the early hours of March 26, 1971.

BIRTH OF DHANMONDI 32 HOME

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was first elected to the constituent assembly in 1955 and subsequently appointed labour minister. At the time, he used to live at House No. 15 on Abdul Gani Road. That year, the government initiated a land allotment programme for different segments of society. Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib expressed her interest, and Nuruzzaman, Bangabandhu's personal secretary, picked up an application form on her behalf, according to Dr Jagannath Barua's book titled "Bangabandhur 32 Number Bari".

In 1957, a one bigha plot was allotted in the name of Fazilatunnesa in Dhanmondi for a price of Tk 6,000. Sheikh Mujib, then chairman of Pakistan Tea Board, made an initial payment of Tk 2,000 and paid the remaining Tk 4,000 in installments.

During those turbulent times, Mujib faced frequent arrests and was forced to change his location to avoid arrest.

After his arrest in 1958, his family was even evicted from their government-allotted residence in Segunbagicha (house#115), forcing them to rent a house near Siddheswari Boys' School for a monthly rent of Tk 200, according to the book.

In the face of persistent threats from the Pakistan government, the family had to move again and found a temporary shelter at 76 Segunbagicha with the help of poet Sufia Kamal.

By 1960, Fazilatunnesa came to realise that they need a permanent place in Dhaka, and asked her husband to begin construction on their Dhanmondi plot.

Mujib began the construction with financial support from friends and a loan from the House Building Finance Corporation, and moved into the residence in 1961, when a three-room single-storey house was completed, according to a book titled Shiekh Mujib Amar Pita, by Sheikh Hasina.

By 1965, a two-room second floor was completed. Mujib subsequently converted a significant portion of the ground floor into a library and party office.

CRADLE OF MANY MOVEMENTS

Apparently unimpressive, this house stands as a silent witness to many movements that the Bangalee nation launched against Pakistan government under Bangabandhu's leadership.

Its political journey began with the anti-Ayub movement of 1962. It was from these very rooms that Mujib initiated the challenges against the Ayub regime.

As Jagannath Barua noted in his book "Bangabandhur 32 Number Bari", this house quickly became the epicentre for East Bengal's political aspirations.

After the death of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy in December 1963, the Awami League found itself adrift without a leader. A crucial meeting at this house on January 25, 1964, Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish was elected president and Mujib the general secretary of Awami League. This critical gathering marked a turning point for AL, laying the groundwork for its subsequent resurgence, according to Mohiuddin Ahmed's book titled "Awami League: Utthan Parba 1948-1970".

Outside politics, this house sheltered numerous people during the communal strife in 1964.

The historic Six Points of 1966 were also drafted at this very house.

Following Mujib's public announcement of the Six Points in Lahore, it was formally adopted at a meeting of the East Pakistan Awami League's executive committee at the Dhanmondi 32 house on February 21, 1966, the book says.

Despite Bangabandhu's arrest from his house on May 8, the momentum of the Six-Point Movement continued to build from within its walls. In her husband's absence, Begum Mujib hosted frequent meetings with party leaders and activists.

In January 1968, the military regime initiated Mujib's trial in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, sparking a widespread movement that intensified by December that year.

After his unconditional release in the case in 1969 in the face of massive protests, Mujib chalked up the strategy for the 1970 election campaign from this house, according to a book titled "Swadhinatar Swapno, Unmesh O Arjan" by Abdul Aziz Bagmar.

During the non-cooperation movement announced on March 1, 1971, after Yahya Khan postponed the National Assembly session, US Ambassador Joseph Farland and General Rao Farman Ali visited Mujib's residence for talks, according to Oli Ahad's "Jatiya Rajniti 1945-75".

In the days leading up to the historic March 7 speech, Bangabandhu planned his address from this home. On the evening of March 6, he held one of the most crucial meetings in his political career with the four national leaders and student leaders, seeking counsel also from Begum Mujib.

Mujib defied the Pakistan authorities by hoisting the flag of independent Bangladesh atop this house on March 23, according to Afsan Chowdhury's "1971 Oshohojog Andolon O Protirodh".

A few hours before the declaration of independence, he had a meeting with four central leaders of the Awami League and Dr Kamal Hossain at Dhanmondi 32 on March 25.

Late at night, the Pakistan army surrounded the house and arrested him. But before that, he declared independence through a trunk call.

The house remained unoccupied throughout the Liberation War. Before Mujib's arrest, his family had already relocated to a pre-arranged rented house.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Take 'concrete action' to protect minorities

Amnesty urges interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International yesterday urged the interim government to take "concrete action" to protect the Hindus and other minority communities in Bangladesh.

It also urged the Bangladeshi authorities to conduct a swift, thorough, impartial and independent investigation into the crimes against the minority communities and associated incidents of mob violence and ensure that those responsible are prosecuted in fair and transparent trials.

The statement came a day after Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus's address to the minority communities in Bangladesh.

"The call for ensuring human rights and freedom of expression for all is a welcome first step by the interim government in Bangladesh but it must be urgently followed up by concrete actions to ensure justice, reparations and guarantee of non-recurrence," said Babu Ram Pant, deputy regional director for South Asia at Amnesty International.

"The new interim government must ensure the rights to equality, non-discrimination, and bodily integrity of everyone and bring an end to the revenge culture of attacking political opponents that Bangladesh has witnessed in the past," he said.

Rokeya Prachi attacked at Dhanmondi-32

Says the actress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Award-winning actress Rokeya Prachi was attacked as she and others were lighting candles at the historic residence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Dhanmondi-32 yesterday evening.

In commemoration of Bangabandhu's death anniversary on August 15, Prachi planned to lit the candles.

The actress told The Daily Star, "Around 7:15pm, we were suddenly attacked. We were protesting, but then we were surrounded andbeaten up."

Earlier in the morning, Prachi staged a silent protest at Dhanmondi-32. The house, once a symbol of national pride, was set on fire after the fall of Hasina-led government.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Hasina sued for genocide, crimes against humanity

FROM PAGE 1

for telecommunications and IT; Mohammad Ali Arafat, former state minister for information; Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, former inspector general of police; Harun Or Rashid, former additional commissioner (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP); Habibur Rahman, former DMP commissioner; Harun Ar Rashid, former director general of Rab.

Besides them, some unnamed individuals from law enforcement agencies and AL leaders, the AL, Jubo League, Chhatra League, and other wings of the party were accused as organisations.

The development came hours after Law Adviser Asif Nazrul said the interim government decided to hold the trial at the International Crimes Tribunal for the killings during the mass uprising that toppled the Hasina-led government.

The involvement of the highest position holders of the immediate past government has been examined, and it is possible to put them on trial, he told reporters at the secretariat.

The previous government fell after Hasina on August 5 fled to India amid a mass uprising that began as a student protest for reforming quotas in government jobs.

Over 550 people, including students and law enforcers, were killed in violence during the uprising. Hasina and several top AL leaders -- some of them already arrested -- have been accused in several other cases.

The Hasina-led government in March 2010 formed the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) to try those who committed crimes in 1971. A second ICT was formed later. Five Jamaat and a BNP leader were executed following the verdicts of the two tribunals.

THE COMPLAINT

The complaint, a copy of which was obtained by The Daily Star, was filed under section 3(2) and 4(1) (2) of the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act-1973.

Section 3(2)(a) of the act says, "Crimes against humanity: namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, imprisonment, abduction, confinement, torture, rape or other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population or persecutions on political, racial, ethnic or religious grounds, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where perpetrated."

Section 3(2)(C) says, "Genocide: meaning and including any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, religious or political group, such as: (i) killing members of the group; (ii) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (iii) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (iv) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (v) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

Section 4(1) and 2(2) deals with the liability of crimes.

According to the compliant, the accused, with an intent to destroy, in whole or in part, the unarmed students and people involved with the anti-discrimination movement by indiscriminate shooting committed genocide and crimes against humanity.

Copies of different newspapers published from July 16 to August 6 were submitted as evidence.

The complaint said students and job seekers started quota-reform protests on June 1 and held different programmes to press home their demands.

Hasina, then prime minister, made inciting remarks at a press conference and directed law enforcers and leaders and activists of the AL, Jubo League and Chhatra League "to destroy, in whole or in part, the protesting students and general people", reads the complaint.

Quader and several other ministers, state-ministers, and lawmakers also made inciting comments.

Following the directives of Sheikh Hasina, Obaidul Quader and other accused, leaders and activists of Awami League, Jubo League and Chhatra League and law enforcers attacked the protesting students and people, shot and hacked them to death, and therefore, committed crimes against humanity and genocide, the complaint reads.

Following the directives of Palak and Arafat and other accused, genocide was committed keeping the internet service shut across the country in an attempt to hide the offence and spread rumors. The accused "forcibly controlled the electronic and print media" to keep people from knowing about the genocide, it adds.

As the DB chief, accused Harun mentally and physically tortured many, including the organisers of the student protests, and kept them confined to the DB office, it reads.

As per the directives of the named accused, 286 "false cases" were filed against 4.5 lakh people, and over 12,000 were arrested and then tortured in prisons, reads the complaint.

MORE CASES AGAINST HASINA

Yesterday, another murder case was filed against Hasina and 23 others over the death of college student Faizul Islam Rajon, 18, in the capital's Kafrul on July 19.

Rajon's brother Rajib filed the case with Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Court.

The other accused include former ministers Asaduzzaman, Quader, Anisul, former IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, former DB chief Harun, former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, and former DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarkar.

The court asked the officer-in-charge of Kafrul Police Station to register the case.

Another case was filed against Hasina and four others over the abduction and torture of Supreme Court lawyer Sohel Rana in February 2015.

The other accused are Asaduzzaman, Anisul, former IGP Shahidul Haque, former Rab DG Benazir Ahmed, and 20-25 unnamed others.

A court asked the OC of Uttara West Police Station to register the complaint.

Sohel Rana mentioned in the complaint that members of law enforcement agencies in plainclothes abducted him from Uttara in 2015 and released him after over six months.

A total of four cases have been filed against Hasina so far.

'The architect of default culture'

FROM PAGE 1

With Tk 5,245 crore loans to seven banks at that time, Beximco, in a letter to the central bank, called for urgent debt restructuring to survive. On January 29, 2015, the Bangladesh Bank issued a new large loan restructuring policy, under which the central bank entertained applications from borrowers of Tk 500 crore and above.

Some 11 business groups quickly grabbed the opportunity and restructured about Tk 15,000 crore of their defaulted loans -- and Beximco alone accounted for a third of the amount, according to a report published by this newspaper at that time.

The borrowers were given a lenient rescheduling benefit of only a 1-2 percent down payment instead of the usual 10 percent and a maximum repayment tenure of 12 years. The policy allowed banks to withdraw the facility if any borrower failed to repay two consecutive installments.

The Bangladesh Bank added that the lenders may sue the borrowers in case of failure to repay the loans. The subsequent actions of Beximco showed that it did not bother.

Under the policy, state-owned Sonali Bank had restructured Tk 1,070 crore in Beximco's loans for 12 years to 2027 at an interest rate of 10 percent, which was much lower than the 13-14 percent interest rate prevailing then.

After a year's grace period, effective from September 2016, the borrower was supposed to pay Tk 57.4 crore each quarter to Sonali. By December 2017, the borrower was obliged to pay six installments, but Beximco made only two payments. And it became a defaulter at the end of December 2017.

Sonali did not withdraw the facility, nor did it sue Beximco.

Rather, it rescheduled the loans given to Beximco again in March 2018. In doing so, Beximco was not required to make any down payment although the central bank's rules said at least a 10 percent down payment of the defaulted loans was necessary to restructure the loans.

"Salman F Rahman has become synonymous with a loan defaulter despite his contribution to the industrial sector," said Faruq Mainuddin, a banking sector analyst.

"When Beximco began, it was the first conglomerate to establish a corporate culture in Bangladesh," he said, adding that the company's loan default culture goes as far back as the regime of the late military ruler HM Ershad.

"But it enjoyed leverage everywhere because of its enormous industrial presence," said Mainuddin, noting that banks were shy of taking legal steps against Salman's company.

Beximco has operations and investments across a wide range of industries, including textiles, pharmaceuticals, ceramics, real estate, food, information and communication technology, media, DTH, financial services, and energy. Beximco Group employs over 70,000 people worldwide and generates $2 billion in revenue a year, according to the company's website.

HIS DARK PAST IN GMG AIRLINES

Salman's dark past in GMG Airlines is a textbook case of manipulation. GMG had been sliding financially since starting operations in 1998, accumulating a loss of Tk 42 crore until 2006. In 2007, it started making a trivial annual profit of Tk 1 crore. Then it got a messiah. Beximco suddenly bought half the equity stake in GMG in 2009, and things started looking up since.

The profit of GMG jumped to Tk 79 crore in 2010 without any discernible reason, and it showed a golden dream to the public by offering Tk 300 crore in a private sale at a 400 percent premium with the promise that it would soon be traded on the stock markets. New planes would be bought and GMG would fly to new skies.

None of them happened though. The Securities and Exchange Commission discovered financial fraud in the company's books and found its profits fictitious. It did not allow GMG to offer IPOs. Those who bought its shares in private placements never got back their money.

Sonali Bank, which lent GMG Tk 247 crore with a guarantee from Beximco, also never got back its money.

Salman successfully halted a move by Sonali Bank to auction his and his brother's property in 2016 for the failure of GMG Airlines to repay loans.

RUINED DEBENTURES MARKET

Salman is still accused of ruining the debentures market in Bangladesh as he delayed the repayment of around Tk 100 crore in funds that he raised in the 1990s.

A debenture is a type of debt instrument that is unsecured by collateral and investors rely on the creditworthiness and reputation of the issuer while corporations and governments issue debentures to raise capital or funds and pay interest for holding the debentures.

Beximco issued four debentures in 1994-95 for a tenure of 10 years. Although their tenure ended in 2004 and 2005, the issuer did not repay the funds to investors until 2021.

As Beximco was preparing to issue sukuk to raise Tk 3,000 crore in the same year, the company's debenture default issue came to a head. Public criticism by investors prompted the SEC to order the company to repay the dues. Beximco repaid the funds 15 years after the cut-off time.

BOND MARKET

Beximco issued the country's largest sukuk in 2021 through which it raised Tk 3,000 crore. Salman used his political leverage for the bond sales. No banks and non-banks were interested in subscribing to the bonds.

Salman pressurised institutional investors to park money in his company's sukuk, with some banks hesitatingly investing a low amount. So, the SEC had to extend the subscription time at least twice.

Salman went as far as to "force" Bangladesh Bank to change rules so that banks can invest in sukuk by borrowing funds from a scheme designed only for the stock market, not for shariah-compliant bonds.

His company has never admitted wrongdoing, but people familiar with the issue say the central bank was forced to issue a circular allowing the banks to invest borrowed funds in sukuk.

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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

'Arrest guilty officials in 24 hours'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mayer Daak yesterday issued a 24-hour ultimatum to the government demanding the arrest of law enforcement officials involved in enforced disappearances.

The ultimatum was announced by Sanjida Islam Tulee, one of the coordinators of Mayer Daak, a platform for the families of victims, at a human chain at Jatiya Press Club.

Six days have passed since the formation of the interim government, and only three people have been released from "Aynaghor", she said.

However, the remaining missing persons have not yet been found.

"We are issuing a 24-hour ultimatum for the arrest of Ziaul Hasan, Tarique Siddique, and other officials involved in these disappearances."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Family members of the victims of enforced disappearance break down in tears at a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday. "Mayer Dak", a platform of the victim families, organised the event demanding arrest of the law enforcers involved in forcibly disappearing people.

PHOTO: **STAR**

Rizwana vows stern action against corruption

BSS, *Dhaka*

Environment Ministry adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan yesterday warned that stern action will be taken if anyone from her ministry is found involved in corruption.

She made the remarks at a meeting with Forest Department officials.

Rizwana said the Wildlife Crime Control Unit should monitor bird markets at Katabon regularly.

"Legal action should be taken against all types of illegal bird trade and traders who are cruel to animals. She sought cooperation from students to this end.

Earlier, the adviser visited the DoE and gave instructions to take effective steps against hill razing and river pollution.

She urged for transparency and accountability from the DoE.

CITY CORPORATIONS

CEOs now in charge of cities

LGD empowers them with full admin, financial power

HELEMUL ALAM

The interim government yesterday decided to give chief executive officers (CEO) full administrative and financial power to run the city corporations where mayors and panel mayors are absent.

In an office order, the Local Government Division said many mayors and panel mayors have been absent due to the existing circumstances. The LGD tried to communicate with them but to no avail.

Due to their absence, works and services remain halted. So, the decision was taken for the sake of people's interest and to continue services as well as administrative works, said the order, signed by Abu Hena Morshed Zaman, secretary to the LGD. It came into effect yesterday.

There are 12 city corporations -- Dhaka south, Dhaka north, Khulna, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barishal, Cumilla, Sylhet, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Mymensingh.

According to sources, several mayors including Dhaka north and south, Chattogram, Khulna, Barishal, Mymensingh and Cumilla were absent from their offices since the ouster of Awami League government on August 5.

All the absentee mayors were elected with AL support. This is the first time such a decision was taken in the country.

Disruption of services leave residents in limbo

Two Dhaka mayors, most councillors absent from office

Ward-10 councillor office in Motijheel.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Ward-27 councillor office in Farmgate.

HELEMUL ALAM *and* **DIPAN NANDY**

Mohammad Atique, a resident of Gandaria, has been visiting the local councillor's office for the last several days as he needs a citizenship certificate for his son.

However, Atique could not manage the certificate as the ward-46 councillor's office has remained closed since August 5, following the fall of the Awami League government.

Similarly, many councillors' offices of two Dhaka city corporations are non-operational, as most of those came under attack following the resignation of Sheikh Hasina.

With the two mayors and councillors absent, the regular activities of the two city corporations of Dhaka have been severely disrupted.

As per media reports, Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh left the country on August 3, while Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam is said to have gone underground.

However, a DNCC official said Atiqul is still in the country and providing them with instructions virtually.

Of the councillors, some have reportedly fled the country, while many are in hiding and are not joining work, fearing further attacks.

In addition, a good number of DNCC and DSCC officials are currently absent from their duties.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Students for political reform on campus

Demand transparency from govt at MJF discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

University students expressed their support for student politics on campus, but were against allowing traditional party-affiliated groups like Chhatra League, Chhatra Dal and Chhatra Shibir, during a discussion organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation yesterday.

They also emphasised the need for transparency and accountability from the government.

The session brought 25 young men and women from various parts of the country, who took part in the anti-discrimination student movement, to share their experiences and demands for the future of Bangladesh.

Speaking about how the quota reform movement turned into a mass uprising, the youth shared that when former prime minister Sheikh Hasina called the protesting students "Razakars", it angered everyone.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Staffers cleaning up the premises of Mohammadpur Police Station in the capital yesterday, following a mob attack just over a week ago. The attack caused extensive damage to the police station that resumed partial operations on Tuesday.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

DAY AT A GLANCE

Lamiya Morshed chief coordinator for SDG affairs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lamiya Morshed, the executive director of Yunus Centre, has been appointed as the chief coordinator of SDG affairs of the chief adviser's office.

She replaced by Akhtar Hossain, whose contractual appointment was cancelled yesterday.

A source in the Ministry of Public Administration confirmed it to the Daily Star.

Notification in this regard will be issued shortly, sources said.

Allow relatives to visit prisoners in jails: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to allow the relatives and lawyers to visit prisoners in jails under the provisions of the Jail Code.

The court also stayed a previous government notification that had barred relatives and lawyers from visiting prisoners in jails and also issued a rule asking the authorities to explain why the notification should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif and Justice Md Bazlur Rahman issued the order and rule.

Journo Rozina Islam cleared of charges

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Prothom Alo senior journalist Rozina Islam has been cleared of the charges in an Official Secrets Act case.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Sultan Sohag Uddin yesterday exempted Rozina, accepting a final report in the case, a court staffer told The Daily Star.

Earlier in the day, the PBI submitted the final report before the court, clearing Rozina of the charges in the case.

On May 17, 2021, Rozina was sued by a deputy secretary of the Health Services Division on allegations of stealing and capturing photos of "highly sensitive" government documents.

Ban AL, its associate bodies: Gono Odhikar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Gono Odhikar Parishad yesterday called for the banning of the Awami League, Jubo League, and Chhatra League, which it labelled as "terrorist organisations".

After a one-and-half-hour meeting with the Home Affairs Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain at the secretariat, the parishad president Nurul Haque Nur and general secretary Rashed Khan laid out the party's eight-point demand.

They also demanded that the interim government appoint new superintendents of police and officers-in-charge in all 64 districts.

They urged the home adviser deploy a 10-member military team in vulnerable police stations to increase the morale of the cops and to normalise the law-and-order situation.

Gono Odhikar Parishad also demanded a people-friendly police system free of bribery and corruption.

Fakhrul visits Abu Sayed's family

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday visited the family of Abu Sayed, a student of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur, who was killed by police during quota reform movement.

Upon arrival at Sayed's home in Zafarpur Babanpur village in Pirganj around 1:45pm, Fakhrul offered prayers at Abu Sayed's grave and met his family members.

Later, he addressed a rally at Zafarpur Madrasa field at 3:00pm. He urged his party men to refrain from any attacks on minorities and resist evil plans by Awami League.

Primary schools reopen after 28 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Classes at all primary schools across the country resumed yesterday after a 28-day closure due to the quota reform movement, which was followed by widespread violence.

All government primary schools under eight city corporation areas of the country were declared closed for an indefinite period on July 17 amid tension over students' quota reform movement.

After nearly a month of closure, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education issued an order on Tuesday to resume academic activities. The directive instructed all government primary schools under the ministry, primary schools operated by the Children's Welfare Trust, and learning centres run by the Bureau of Non-Formal Education, to take necessary measures to fully resume classroom activities.

However, despite an earlier announcement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on August 6 about the reopening of all educational institutions, student attendance remained low.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 15

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-38	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-41	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Probe attacks on

FROM PAGE 5

temples, churches, and houses of minorities and to prevent attacks, which deserve special recognition.

"At the same time, we are observing that some groups have become very active in confusing the public by spreading exaggerated news, false information, and rumours regarding the attacks on the houses of minorities," the statement added.

It cited various reports published in certain sections of the Indian media as examples.

"We urge everyone to be cautious of rumours and propaganda on social media," said the statement.

"We are especially concerned that there is a possibility that vested interests associated with the ruling party in India may be involved in this propaganda. We believe this is undermining the credibility of the Indian media," the statement said.

It urged the Indian media authorities to refrain from publishing such misleading, false, and distorted information. "We believe that they should do this in the interest of maintaining and strengthening the good historical relations between our countries," it read.

The signatories of the statement include Sultana Kamal, rights activist; Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori; Anu Muhammad, former teacher at Jahangirnagar University; Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB; Rasheda K Chowdhury, former adviser of the caretaker government; ZI Khan Panna, senior advocate of the Supreme Court; Prof Gitiara Nasreen, teacher at Dhaka University; and photographer Shahidul Alam.

Students for political

FROM PAGE 3

Following that, Chhatra League and the police attacked their peaceful movement, leaving students, especially female students, beaten, bruised and bleeding.

The "unjust" actions taken by the former government, one after another, strengthened their movement.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said, "We have a lot of hope for this generation. They will bring change to our society. We are all looking up to them. They just have to work together."

Fariha S Aumi, chairperson of youth-led non-profit organisation Brighters, said, "Abu Sayed was shot dead. Public universities were closed. We were worried about the movement being stopped. But when students from private universities joined the protests, along with students from schools and colleges, the movement gained more momentum. Soon, people also joined in. Parents even stood by the students with food and water. That is how this became a mass uprising."

Five killed in Dhaka in a day

FROM PAGE 5

Some people rescued and took them to Jatrabari Police Station, said Samrat Sheikh, a scout member who was discharging duty at the police station.

Of them, two were taken to DMCH, where doctors declared them dead, said Bachchu Mia. Later, people brought the other youth's body to DMCH in the afternoon.

Samrat said they came to know that locals beat them up over an allegation that the three youths raped a woman, tying up her husband in the hotel.

Shilpi Akhter, mother of Yasin, denied the allegation.

"Yasin was working as a volunteer on the streets for the last couple of days. On Tuesday morning, he left the house at Dhalpur Boubazar, saying he would work at night. An unknown caller called me this morning saying Yasin's condition was not good, and told me to go to Jatrabari Police Station. I immediately went there and found Yasin in serious condition," she said.

Shilpi said her son was still able to speak while being taken to the hospital.

"My son told me that they were beaten on false charges. They did not commit any crime," she said.

Disruption of services leave

FROM PAGE 3

Consequently, services provided by the city corporations, such as financial activities, birth and death registrations, holding tax collection, and trade licence issuance, alongside issuing marriage and citizenship certificates, have remained halted.

Only the waste management and mosquito control programmes are running partially, according to sources.

This newspaper tried to contact at least 103 councillors of the two city corporations and could only reach 39 of them.

Among the councillors who The Daily Star contacted, 19 of their offices were vandalised and looted and three faced arson, while 18 councillors said they have already resumed their operations and 20 are waiting for the government's direction.

The Daily Star found the mobile phones of 41 councillors switched off while 41 did not receive the phone calls.

Among the 75 general councillors of DSCC, 67 are pro-AL, while 51 out of 54 general DNCC councillors are pro-AL.

Md Abu Nasher, public relations officer of DSCC, said their birth registration, mosquito control, and garbage management activities are going on. However, the activities of the councillor offices are being hampered, he added.

DNCC Chief Executive Officer Mir Khairul Alam also gave a similar statement.

Contacted, Shahid Ullah, councillor of ward-46 at DSCC, said his office was vandalised after Hasina fled the country.

"If our security is ensured, we will start our regular activities," said Shahid.

Mujib Sorwar Masum, councillor of ward-9 at DNCC, said his office was vandalised and looted for which services have remained halted.

He said they usually provide 17 types of services, along with various certificates, but all activities are stopped now.

Masum said when they get proper security and the necessary equipment to run the office, they will start operation.

"The interim government urged us to continue services; but how will we start doing so without security and refurbishment?" he asked.

Abdur Rouf Nannu, DNCC ward-5 councillor whose office was not vandalised, said he did not make any trouble for anybody for which he did not face any problems.

Mohammad Jahir Ahmed, DNCC ward-15 councillor, said he attends the office regularly but stays there for a brief time.

"My office at Balurghat came under attack but the Bhashantake office is still okay as locals protected it. However, I am still feeling insecure," he said.

M Ali Akbar, DNCC ward-46 councillor, said they are providing service but not in full swing yet.

"We are conducting anti-mosquito drives three days a week instead of six days due to a shortage of insecticide. We hope the drives will resume in full swing from next week," he said.

Chittaranjan Das, DSCC ward-5 councillor, said they have been conducting garbage management and mosquito control activities over the phone since August 7.

However, 28 other services are not functional currently, he added.

"We are waiting for the direction of the interim government, as without security we can't join the office," said Chittaranjan, whose office was vandalised and looted.

Chittaranjan said their insecurity derives from the non-operation of the local police station.

Arrest guilty officials

FROM PAGE 3

Information regarding the missing persons should be obtained from these officials and the victims should be freed and returned to their families.

"I stand with my family and everyone for my brother, who went missing 12 years ago. I have been on the road for the last 11 years, hoping that after the country's 'second independence', we will get back all those who went missing," she said.

Earlier on Tuesday, Mayer Daak met with Muhammad Yunus, chief advisor to the interim government, requesting information about their missing relatives.

On August 6, a day after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, members of Mayer Daak gathered in front of the DGFI office to demand to know the whereabouts of their missing relatives. Several victims of enforced disappearances have been released since then.

At yesterday's event, Adiba Islam Hridi, 12, daughter of Parvez Hossain, general secretary of Bangshal Thana Chhatra Dal, was present. Law enforcement agencies picked up Hossain on December 2, 2013. "I was only a year old when I last saw my father... I have only one demand -- to get my father back," Hridi said.

Laima Akhter Mim, 13, daughter of driver Kawsar Hossain, who was picked up by law enforcers on December 4, 2013, along with six BNP leaders, including Sajedul Islam Suman, general secretary of the Ward 38 Unit BNP, urged the interim government to provide the whereabouts of all the enforced disappeared persons.

CR Abrar, a former professor of Dhaka University and the president of Odhikar, said, "We have enough information about those behind these enforced disappearances. Law enforcement agencies also have this information. Merge all the information, find out the whereabouts of the victims and free them."

Mahmudur Rahman Manna, convener of Nagarik Oikya; Faizul Hakim Lala, secretary of Jatiya Mukti Council; Saleh Uddin Sifat, president of Students Against Torture; Tarek Reza, one of the coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement; and family members of the enforced disappeared persons also spoke at the programme, among others.

At a separate human chain in the area, DSA Victims' Network urged the government to scrap all repressive laws, including the Cyber Security Act.

Their demands included release of those convicted under the law and the dismissal of ongoing cases filed under the Digital Security Act. They called for the CSA and other repressive laws to be scrapped.

They emphasised that all accused should be compensated.

World Health Organization
Bangladesh

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The World Health Organization in Bangladesh invites proposals/bids from the interested Companies in Bangladesh for the following service:

1. **RFP/BAN/2024/029:** Provision of Media Monitoring Service related to Health Topics/Issues for WHO Bangladesh under Long Term Agreement (LTA).

Deadline for the submission of RFP: **14:00hrs, 28 August 2024 (Dhaka time).**

Interested Companies can view and download the relevant RFP documents from: **https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/procurement-notice.**

Interested bidders are requested to submit their financial and technical proposals in two separate sealed envelopes as per the instructions provided in the RFP documents at the Reception of WHO Bangladesh, House-SW(I)1/A, Road-8, Gulshan-1, Dhaka.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Jail Super
Jhalokathi District Jail
jhalokathijail@gmail.com

Memo No. 58.04.4200.152.04.003.2024-1861 Date: 14-08-2024

e-Tender Notice (R-Tender)

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal:

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Name of work	Publishing, closing date & time
1	1006590	Supply of Foodstuff for the period of July/2024 to December/2024. Package No. 07	13-Aug-2024 11:30, 25-Aug-2024 12:30

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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বিষয় ঃ বেসরকারি পর্যায়ের মাধ্যমে নন-ইউরিয়া (টিএসপি ও ডিএপি) সার আমদানির লক্ষ্যে প্রস্তাব আহবান।

চলতি ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থ বছরের ফসল উৎপাদন মৌসুমসমূহে ব্যবহারের জন্য ভর্তুকির আওতায় প্রয়োজনীয় পরিমাণ টিএসপি ও ডিএপি সার আমদানির লক্ষ্যে "নন-ইউরিয়া সার আমদানি, বিক্রয় এবং ভর্তুকি প্রদান পদ্ধতি সংক্রান্ত পরিপত্র" মোতাবেক বেসরকারি সার আমদানিকারকগণের নিকট হতে প্রস্তাব আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

- বেসরকারি পর্যায়ের মাধ্যমে নন-ইউরিয়া (টিএসপি ও ডিএপি) সার আমদানির লক্ষ্যে আগামী ২৫ আগস্ট ২০২৪ তারিখ সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে সীলগালাকৃত খামে প্রস্তাব দাখিল করতে হবে। সীলগালাকৃত খামের উপর সারের নাম উল্লেখ করতে হবে। সীলগালাকৃত খামে প্রস্তাবসমূহ বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়ের ৪নং ভবনের ৫১১ নং কক্ষের সামনে রক্ষিত নির্ধারিত বাক্সে অথবা বিএডিসি'র সদস্য-পরিচালক (সার ব্যবস্থাপনা বিভাগ), {৪৯-৫১, দিলকুশা বা/এ, ঢাকা} এর দপ্তরে রক্ষিত বাক্সে জমা দিতে হবে। একটি আমদানিকারক প্রতিষ্ঠান একটি মাত্র প্রস্তাব দাখিল করতে পারবেন। একটি প্রস্তাবে একাধিক দর উল্লেখ থাকলে প্রস্তাব বাতিল মর্মে গণ্য হবে।
- নন-ইউরিয়া সার আমদানি, বিক্রয় এবং ভর্তুকি প্রদান পদ্ধতি সংক্রান্ত পরিপত্র অনুসারে আমদানিকারকগণকে প্রস্তাবের সাথে সারের উৎপাদক প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিজস্ব প্যাডে **Manufacturer Certificate** জমা দিতে হবে। **Manufacturer Certificate**-এ সারের বিনির্দেশসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট আমদানিকারককে নির্দিষ্ট পরিমাণ সার নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে সরবরাহে সম্মত মর্মে উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে। উক্ত পরিপত্রে বর্ণিত অন্যান্য শর্ত মোতাবেক প্রস্তাব দাখিলে ব্যর্থ হলে বা কোন অসম্পূর্ণ/ত্রুটিপূর্ণ প্রস্তাব দাখিল করলে তা বাতিল মর্মে গণ্য হবে।
- এছাড়াও এ সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত তথ্য/নির্দেশনা এবং "নন-ইউরিয়া সার আমদানি, বিক্রয় এবং ভর্তুকি প্রদান পদ্ধতি সংক্রান্ত পরিপত্র" কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট (**www.moa.gov.bd**) হতে সংগ্রহের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

১৩/০৮/২৪
(শেখ বদিউল আলম)
উপ-প্রধান
ফোন: +৮৮০২৫৫১০০৬০৬

GD- 178

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Tourism Board
(National Tourism Organization)
Level-9-10 (Parjatan Bhaban), E-5 C/1, West Agargaon
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Administrative Area, Dhaka-1207

Invitation for Tender Notice

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism
2.	Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB)
3.	Invitation for	Non-Consulting Services for the participation of Bangladesh in 5 International Tourism Fairs
4.	Invitation Ref No.	30.33.0000.221.32.003.22.416
KEY INFORMATION		
5.	Procurement method	Open Tender Method (OTM)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
6.	Budget and source of funds	GOB
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
7.	Tender publication date	August 15, 2024
8.	Place, last date & time of selling tender documents	Marketing and Branding Section, Bangladesh Tourism Board, Level-9-10 (Parjatan Bhaban), E-5 C/1, West Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Administrative Area, Dhaka-1207, August 28, 2024; Time: 5:00pm.
9.	Last date & time of submission of tender documents	Chief Executive Officer (Additional Secretary), Bangladesh Tourism Board, Date: August 29, 2024; Time: 1:00pm.
10.	Place of submission	Office of the Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Tourism Board, Level-9-10 (Parjatan Bhaban), E-5 C/1, West Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Administrative Area, Dhaka-1207.
11.	Tender opening date and time	August 29, 2024; Time: 2:30pm.
12.	Place of opening	Office of the Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Tourism Board, Level-9-10 (Parjatan Bhaban), E-5 C/1, West Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Administrative Area, Dhaka-1207.
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
13.	Brief eligibility and qualification of tenderer	1. 10 years' experience as marketing agency/Communications agency/PR firm or relevant organization in Bangladesh who had International Affiliation. 2. At least two proven track records for exhibiting products/ services/ crafts of Bangladesh in any international event /expo / side event / promotional booth design, placement, PR activities etc. held in outside of Bangladesh. 3. Experience of arranging 3 international media placement/ editorial content / news circulation/Press release about Bangladesh by multiple local languages will get preference. 4. The agency must have proven experience to provide facilitation/organize in B2B meeting/ Country Presentation in International Event/Roadshows/Fairs with the presences of at least 30-100 participants. 5. At least two proven track records for making international payment with Bangladesh Bank permission for country promotion under government contract. 6. Proof as letter of consent to make international payment by any international / foreign partner of the bidder. 7. Valid document of Annual Turnover at least 10 (Ten) crore and minimum amount of liquid assets i.e., working capital or credit line(s) of the tenderer shall be 4 crore BDT by the bidder. 8. In order to prove the expertise, the firm must provide a list of experts and technical manpower including Communications Specialist, PR Specialist, Creative Director, Copy Writer, Event Manager with International Experience, Assistant Event Manager, Business Consultant Development, Translator. (Details As Per Term of Reference) 9. Valid trade license & and VAT registration certificate as Communication agency/Consultancy agency PR firm/Event Management/Marketing firm/or the relevant organizations 10. Updated income tax clearance certificate, RJSC certificate, BIDA registration certificate, 11. Audited financial reports of the Company/Firm of last 03 (three) years.
14.	Brief description of services	1. Space booking, stall design, stall fabrication and facility creation for stakeholders in international tourism fairs held in China, Japan, Italy, UK, Singapore. 2. PR Activities, In booth Activities, Sideline Events, Social Media management, B2B programs, Networking activities etc.
15.	Price of tender document (BDT)	BDT 1000.00 (one thousand Taka) non-refundable
16.	Tender security	The amount of the Tender Security shall be for Tk 15.70 lac (Fifteen lac seventy thousand) Taka in the form of Pay Order in favour of the **"Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Tourism Board".**
PROCURMENT ENTITIY DETAILS		
17.	Name & designation of official initiating tender	Mohibul Islam, Deputy Director (Marketing & Branding), Bangladesh Tourism Board. Bangladesh Tourism Board (National Tourism Organization), Level-9-10 (Parjatan Bhaban), E-5 C/1, West Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Administrative Area, Dhaka-1207.
18.	Contact details of the official inviting tender	Phone: +88-02-41024234 E-mail: btbnto@gmail.com
The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all tenders of annul the tender proceedings without assigning any reason.		

Sd/-
Mohibul Islam
Deputy Director (Marketing & Branding)
Bangladesh Tourism Board

GD-184

Merit, quality to be basis of all evaluations

Chief justice says on judiciary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed yesterday said merit and quality will be the basis of evaluation in all spheres of the judiciary.

"We [judiciary] are not an elected body. So, I think our accountability to the people is much higher," he also said, adding that he aspires to ensure excellence and run the judiciary based on merit.

He made the remarks when leaders and members of Law Reporters Forum, an organisation of journalists covering constitution, law, justice and human rights issues, met him at his Supreme Court office.

Replying to a query, the chief justice said activities of all the High Court benches will resume from next Sunday. Of the 50 HC benches, only eight have been functioning for the past few days.

He also said steps will be taken immediately so that all the HC benches mention the results of daily cases on the website.

Barguna AL leader held for 'talking to Hasina over phone'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Police have arrested Md Jahangir Kabir, general secretary of Barguna District Awami League, who purportedly had a phone conversation with former prime minister Sheikh Hasina after her ouster and escape to India.

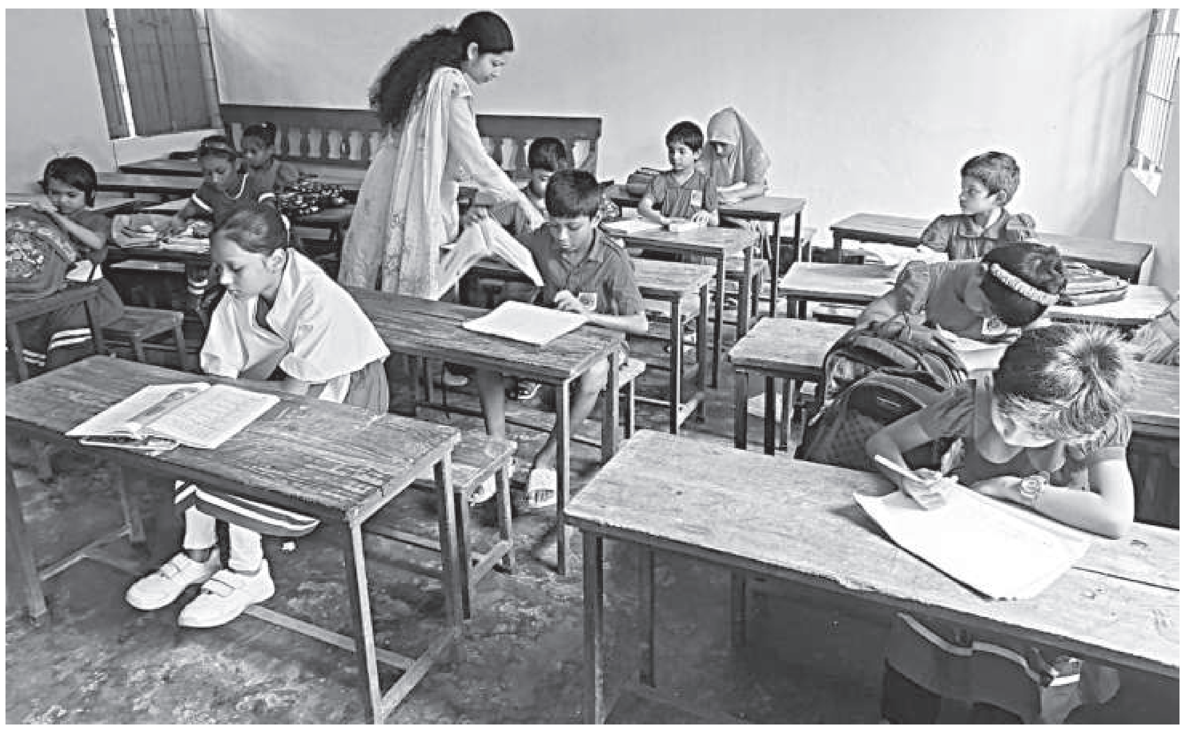
The law enforcers arrested him around 6:00am yesterday.

The charges against Jahangir include conspiring with Hasina to create chaos by speaking to her, said Abdul Halim, additional superintendent of police (Sadar Circle).

He said a team of the Police Bureau of Investigation from Dhaka arrested Jahangir and took him to the capital.

A call record of about three minutes purportedly between Hasina and Jahangir went viral recently. The phone call took place at 8:10pm on August 12.

In that phone call, a woman believed to be Hasina instructed Jahangir to conduct party activities in a disciplined manner and observe the National Mourning Day on August 15.



A WELCOME SIGHT... Students attending class at a school in Barishal city yesterday. Classes at all primary schools across the country resumed yesterday after a 28-day closure.

PHOTO: **TITU DAS**

Probe attacks on minorities

Demand 37 eminent citizens; urge Indian media to refrain from circulating misinformation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Condemning attacks, arson, and looting incidents at minority communities' homes, businesses, and places of worship in several districts across the country, 37 eminent citizens issued a statement yesterday.

They demanded a fair investigation and legal action against those involved, and called for strengthening the sense of security among the people.

"In recent days, the homes, businesses, and temples of hundreds of minority people, especially Hindus, have been attacked, looted, and set on fire in different parts of the country. We have also received information that miscreants have attacked the homes of indigenous people in some areas and vandalised or set fire to the houses and places of worship of the Ahmadiyya community in two districts," the statement said.

"We have received reports from most places indicating that not all attacks have been motivated by religious reasons or property grabbing. In many cases, the attacks were carried out due to political anger and vengeance," it said.

At the same time, the historic sculpture of Shashi Lodge in Mymensingh, the sculpture of Sidhu-Kanu in Dinajpur, and the sculpture on the High Court premises were also vandalised.

"We condemn and protest all these attacks -- every act of violence and every attempt that destroys communal harmony. Our clear and unequivocal demand is that every incident be properly investigated and those involved be identified and punished immediately according to the law," the statement said.

The statement also mentioned that they are receiving reports of students, political party activists, and common people coming forward in many areas to protect

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Five killed in Dhaka in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five people, including two siblings, were stabbed and beaten to death in two separate incidents in the capital's Sayedabad and Wari areas yesterday.

Al Amin Bhuiyan, 41, joint secretary of Ward 41 unit BNP, and his brother Nurul Amin Bhuiyan were beaten and stabbed in Wari's Hatkhola area in the morning.

Al Amin's wife Munmun Akter Bhuiyan said he had a dispute with some local Awami League leaders over a flat he bought in Hatkhola area.

"My husband had a scuffle with those Awami League men on Tuesday night. When he and his brother went to the flat this [yesterday] morning, those men hacked them to death," she alleged.

She also alleged that the killers worked for the real estate company that sold the flat to Al Amin.

The bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of DMCH police outpost.

Meanwhile, Saif Arafat Sharif, 20, Saidul Islam Yasin, 19, and an unidentified youth, aged around 25, were beaten to death in the morning at a hotel in the Sayedabad area.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Hindu family's house torched in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Unidentified miscreants torched the house of a Hindu family in Thakurgaon on Tuesday night.

The incident occurred around 7:30pm at Farabari Mandirpara village in Sadar upazila, said Shubrata Barman, chairman of Akcha Union Parishad.

Shubrata said the miscreants set fire to Kaleshwar Barman's house when his wife was in the kitchen.

As the fire quickly spread, locals rushed to the scene and managed to bring the blaze under control.

Just a few days ago, another arson attack took place in the same union, where miscreants set fire to Ananta Barman's house in Nimbari Kamarpara village.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Gazipur PWD Division, Gazipur
Phone: 02224423439, Fax No.:02-49273123

Tender Notice

Memo No. : 1979

Date: 12/08/2024

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (http//:www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of Works as mentioned in the following table:

Tender ID	Last selling date & time	On-line(e-GP System) tender closing date & time
1008207	11-09-2024 12:11 PM	11-09-2024 15:30 PM

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (http//:www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-tendering documents from the national e-GP Portal have to be deposited on line through any registered banks branches up to schedule time. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Executive Engineer
Gazipur PWD Division
Gazipur.

GD- 173

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
পরিকল্পনা মন্ত্রণালয়
বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ
পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টর-৬
IVA Unit, PEDP4 (1st Revised)
শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭
www.imed.gov.bd

নং ২১.০০.০০০০.১৫৬.১৪.১০৯.২৩-১২

তারিখ : ৩০ শ্রাবণ, ১৪৩১ / ১৪ আগস্ট, ২০২৪

আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্র আহ্বান বিজ্ঞপ্তি

"চতুর্থ প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচি (পিইডিপি-৪) (১ম সংশোধিত)" শীর্ষক বিনিয়োগ প্রকল্পের ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থবছরে Year-6 এর নিম্নোক্ত Disbursement Linked Indicator (DLI) Targets ভেরিফিকেশন কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার লক্ষ্যে DLI Targets ভিত্তিক পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্র আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

প্যাকেজ নং	প্যাকেজের নাম: ডিএলআই ভেরিফিকেশন
এসআর-১	**DLI Target 3.10**: At least 2,000 head teachers of GPS trained in classroom observation and feedback
এসআর-২	**DLI Target 3.14:** Continuous assessment for students' learning and classroom observations through the digital platform conducted in at least 1,000 GPS (at least 50% in rural areas)
এসআর-৩	**DLI Target 5.2:** At least 75 % of planned need-based infrastructure development works (additional classrooms, gender segregated WASH blocks, drinking water source) has been completed according to the IPG and as per standard of BNBC
এসআর-৪	**DLI Target 5.3:** Number of single shift schools increased by 3000 from baseline
এসআর-৫	**DLI Target 9.6:** ISP under updated ODCBG has been implemented

১। পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নির্ধারিত টিওআর অনুযায়ী ডিএলআই ভেরিফিকেশন কাজ সম্পাদন করতে হবে এবং **www.imed.gov.bd-এই ওয়েবসাইটে টিওআর পাওয়া যাবে;**
২। ডিএলআই ভেরিফিকেশন কাজে পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও বিধিমালা-২০০৮ অনুসরণ করতে হবে;
৩। ডিএলআই ভেরিফিকেশন কাজ চুক্তি সম্পাদনের পরবর্তী সর্বোচ্চ ০২ (দুই) মাস সময়ে সম্পন্ন করতে হবে;
৪। পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের আওতায় সমীক্ষায় নিয়োজিতব্য পরামর্শক দলের সদস্যদের শারীরিক ও মানসিকভাবে এ কাজ সম্পাদনের উপযুক্ত হতে হবে;
৫। ডিএলআই ভেরিফিকেশন কাজের জন্য আগ্রহী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্রের সাথে (ক) পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের ইতঃপূর্বে এ সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা, (খ) প্রয়োজনীয় বুদ্ধিবৃত্তিক এবং পেশাগত সেবার পরিসরের বিস্তারিত বর্ণনাসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের বিবরণ, (গ) বর্ণিত কাজ সম্পাদনের জন্য যোগ্যতার প্রমাণস্বরূপ সম্ভাব্য আবেদনকারীদের অভিজ্ঞতা, সম্পদ, পেশাদার জনবল ও সেবা প্রদানের সামর্থ্য, (ঘ) প্রয়োজনীয় জনবলের শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও পেশাগত অভিজ্ঞতা, (ঙ) হালনাগাদ আয়কর সনদপত্র, (চ) বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, (ছ) বাৎসরিক টার্ন-ওভার, (জ) প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রোফাইলসহ সকল সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি সংযুক্ত করতে হবে;
৬। খামের উপর ডিএলআই এর নাম ও আবেদনকারী পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম স্পষ্টভাবে লিখতে হবে। EOI মূল্যায়নের ভিত্তিতে পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের শর্টলিস্ট করা হবে। শর্টলিস্টেড পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের অনুকূলে Request for Proposal (RFP) ইস্যু করা হবে;
৭। EOI এর বিস্তারিত তথ্য **www.cptu.gov.bd** এবং **www.imed.gov.bd** website-এ পাওয়া যাবে। এ বিষয়ে প্রয়োজনে ৪৮১১৫৪৬৮ টেলিফোন নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করা যাবে;
৮। পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানকে বন্ধ খামে ভরে ডিএলআই ভেরিফিকেশনের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্র (EOI) অনুচ্ছেদ-৫ এ বর্ণিত কাগজপত্রসহ ৭ (সাত) সেট আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্র ডাকযোগে/সরাসরি আগামী **২৮/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে মহাপরিচালক, পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টর-৬, ভবন নং-১১, কক্ষ নং-২৫, বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ, পরিকল্পনা মন্ত্রণালয়, শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭** এর বরাবরে প্রেরণ করতে হবে; এবং
৯। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন প্রকার কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে প্রয়োজনবোধে সকল কিংবা যে কোন আবেদন বাতিল ঘোষণা করতে পারবে।

১৪/০৮/২০২৪
(ড. মোঃ মাহমুদুল হাসান)
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সিভিল ডিভিশন-২, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা-১২২৯
www.caab.gov.bd

নথি নং-৩০.৩১.০০০০.৪২৩.০২.০০৪.২৪-১১২৫

তারিখঃ ১৩.০৮.২০২৪খ্রিঃ

নিলাম দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নিম্নে বর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে বর্ণিত কাজটির জন্য সীলমোহরকৃত নিলাম দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইতেছে।

১	নিলাম কাজের নাম	:	সিএএবি'র কুর্মিটোলাস্থ (কাওলার) আবাসিক এলাকায় বিদ্যমান আমবাগান জামে মসজিদ ও তৎসংলগ্ন এলাকায় পুরাতন অকেজো মালামালসমূহ জরুরী ভিত্তিতে অপসারণ ও পরিস্কারকরণ হতে প্রাপ্ত মালামালসমূহ নিলামে বিক্রয়।
২	নিলাম দরপত্র আহবানের সূত্র	:	১) ৩০.৩১.০০০০.৪০১.২৯.৭২৬.২০ (১৬)/১৯১৫, তারিখঃ ০১/০৭/২০২৪খ্রিঃ। ২) ৩০.৩১.০০০০.২১১.৩২.৯৩৯.২২/১০৯, তারিখঃ ০৪/০৭/২০২৪খ্রিঃ।
৩	বায়নার টাকার পরিমাণ	:	উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ) (অকৃতকার্য দরদাতার ক্ষেত্রে ফেরতযোগ্য) বায়নার টাকা হিসাবে "নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সিভিল ডিভিশন-২, সিএএবি, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা" এর অনুকূলে যে কোন তফসিলভূক্ত ব্যাংক হইতে ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে দরপত্রের সহিত দাখিল করিতে হইবে।
৪	নিলাম দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত নিলাম পদ্ধতি।
৫	নিলাম দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য	:	৳ ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা ও ১৫% ভ্যাটসহ সর্বমোট ৳ ১,১৫০/- (এক হাজার একশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা মাত্র (অফেরতযোগ্য)।
৬	নিলামকারীদের যোগ্যতা	:	সিএএবি'র তালিকাভূক্ত ঠিকাদার অথবা প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/আগ্রহী ক্রেতা বা প্রতিষ্ঠান, যাহাদের হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনদ, ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন এবং এনআইডি কার্ড রহিয়াছে।
৭	মালামাল অপসারণের সময়	:	কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্তির পর হইতে ৩০ (ত্রিশ) দিনের মধ্যে।
৮	যে সমস্ত অফিসে নিলাম দরপত্র বিক্রয় হইবে	:	(ক)- হিসাব শাখা, নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর, সিভিল ডিভিশন-২, সিএএবি, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা। (খ)- হিসাব শাখা, সিভিল সার্কেল, সিএএবি, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা। (গ)- ব্যক্তিগত সহকারী, প্রধান প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর, সিএএবি সদর দপ্তর, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা। (ঘ)- ক্যাশ শাখা, সিএএবি সদর দপ্তর, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা।
৯	যে সমস্ত অফিসে নিলাম দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে	:	নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর, সিভিল ডিভিশন-২, সিএএবি, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা।
১০	যে সমস্ত অফিসে নিলাম দরপত্র খোলা হইবে		নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী দপ্তর, সিভিল ডিভিশন-২, সিএএবি, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা।
১১	নিলাম দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ		২৭/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১৭.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত অথবা সরকার নির্ধারিত অফিস সময়ের মধ্যে।
১২	নিলাম দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ সময় ও তারিখ		২৮/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৩	নিলাম দরপত্র খোলার সময় ও তারিখ		২৮/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত। অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ নির্ধারিত তারিখে অফিস বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী ১ম কর্মদিবসের একই সময়ে নিলাম দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলা হইবে।
১৪	যে সকল কারণে নিলাম দরপত্র বাতিল হইবে		ক) হালনাগাদ বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স এর সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি নিলাম দরপত্রের সহিত সংযুক্ত না থাকিলে। খ) ভ্যাট রেজিষ্ট্রেশন ও হালনাগাদ আয়কর সার্টিফিকেট এর সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি সংযুক্ত না থাকিলে। গ) নিলাম দরপত্র ক্রয়ের মূল রশিদ দরপত্রের সহিত সংযুক্ত না থাকিলে। ঘ) নিলাম দরপত্রের সহিত বায়নার টাকা (শতকরা দশ শতাংশ) না থাকিলে। ঙ) নিলামদাতাকে নিলামের দাখিলকৃত দরের সমপরিমাণ টাকা ব্যাংকে থাকিতে হইবে এবং ব্যাংক কর্তৃক উহার ইস্যুকৃত সনদপত্র নিলাম দরপত্রের সহিত দাখিল করিতে হইবে। চ) সংশ্লিষ্ট নিলাম দরপত্রদাতার এনআইডি'র কপি সংযুক্ত থাকিতে হইবে।
১৫	বিশেষ শর্তাবলী		ক) সিলগালাকৃত খামে নিলাম দরপত্র দাখিল করিতে হইবে ও খামের উপর আগ্রহী ক্রেতা/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম, ঠিকানা ও মোবাইল নম্বর এবং কাজের নাম অবশ্যই লিখতে হইবে। দরপত্রের প্রতিটি পৃষ্ঠায় দরদাতাদের সীলমোহরসহ স্বাক্ষর থাকিতে হইবে। খ) নিলাম দরপত্র সিডিউলে প্রতিটি আইটেমের একক মূল্য এবং মোট মূল্য (অঙ্কে ও কথায়) এবং সর্বমোট মূল্য (অঙ্কে ও কথায়) পরিষ্কারভাবে লিখিতে হইবে। কোনরূপ কাটাকাটি, ঘষামাজা বা ওভাররাইটিং করা যাইবে না। মোট মূল্যের উপর সর্বোচ্চ দর বিবেচিত হইবে। গ) আগ্রহী নিলাম দরপত্রদাতাগণ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্ব দিন পর্যন্ত (বিক্রয়যোগ্য স্থাপনা/মালামাল যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে) সরেজমিনে পরিদর্শন করিতে পারিবেন। পরবর্তীতে নিলামকৃত মালামালের বিষয়ে কোন প্রকার অভিযোগ/ওজর আপত্তি গ্রহণযোগ্য হইবে না। যে কোন বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত চূড়ান্ত বলিয়া গণ্য হইবে। ঘ) একাধিক দরদাতার দর সমান হইলে কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক লটারীর মাধ্যমে সফল দরদাতা নির্ণয় করা হইবে। ঙ) নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে মালামালসমূহ অপসারণ করিতে হইবে। চ) সিএএবি'র প্রচলিত বিধি মোতাবেক ও শুধুমাত্র কার্যদিবসে এবং দাপ্তরিক সময়ের মধ্যে অপসারণকৃত মালামালসমূহ ডেলিভারী প্রদান করা হইবে। ছ) সিএএবি'র যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদনক্রমেই কেবলমাত্র বিক্রয়াদেশ জারী করা হইবে। জ) কৃতকার্য নিলামদাতাকে বিক্রয়াদেশ জারী হওয়ার ০৫ (পাঁচ) কর্মদিবসের মধ্যে উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের টাকা ও উহার উপর সরকার কর্তৃক ধার্যকৃত আয়কর ও ভ্যাটের টাকাসহ সমুদয় মূল্য পরিশোধ করিয়া নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে সম্পূর্ণ নিলামকৃত মালামাল ডেলিভারী নিতে হইবে। অন্যথায় প্রদত্ত বায়নার টাকা বিধি মোতাবেক বাজেয়াপ্ত করা হইবে। ঝ) নিলাম গ্রহণকারীর নিজ দায়িত্বে ও তাহার লোকবল দ্বারা মালামাল গ্রহণ করিতে হইবে এবং কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক বিক্রয়াদেশ ও ডেলিভারী আদেশ জারীকালীন প্রদত্ত শর্তাবলী মানিয়া চলিতে হইবে। ঞ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই সংশ্লিষ্ট নিলাম দরপত্রটি বাতিল, যে কোন নিলাম দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিলের অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন।

নং-৩০.৩১.০০০০.০৫১.১৪.০০১.২৪/৪৪৬
তারিখঃ ১৩/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ

১৩/০৮/২০২৪
অরুপ কুমার মাহি
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (সিভিল) (চঃ দাঃ)
সিভিল ডিভিশন-২
সিএএবি, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা

GD-172

‘False cases to be withdrawn by August 31’

FROM PAGE 12

But it did not happen as most of the police officials could not work on this, he added.

Over 400 people, including students and police personnel, were killed in the violence centring the protests.

According to the court records, over 270 cases were lodged with 39 police stations in the city between July 16 and August 4. The complainants in most cases were police personnel.

The charges in the cases include illegal gathering, rioting, assaulting law enforcers, damaging assets, and arson.

According to the police sources, at least 10,134 people, including students, leaders and activists of BNP and Jamaat-Shibir, were arrested in 872 cases filed in the capital and 51 districts between July 18 and 30.

Asif Nazrul, also a teacher at Dhaka University, said they decided that the trial for the killings that took place between July 1 and August 5 will be held at the International Crimes Tribunal.

He said they were trying to ensure that the investigation by the ICT is held under the supervision of the United Nations. They will sit with the UN resident coordinator in Bangladesh and seek its cooperation, he added.

Asif Nazrul said victims of enforced disappearances and their families can file cases with the ICT.

Asked whether the trial will be held at the ICT, he said, “You can go to the International Criminal Court only if you are unwilling or unable to try the cases at your own criminal court. We are not incompetent.”

The adviser said a list of the repressive laws on media has been prepared and sections the sections used for harassing journalists “will either be cancelled or amended”.

He said the murder case of journalist couple Sagar-Runi will be tried.

Asif Nazrul asked officials and employees of the judiciary to submit their wealth statements within 10 working days.

He said they have taken some initiatives to reform the judiciary, he added.

“The law ministry has cooperated in appointing the chief justice and the judges of the Appellate Division.

“We’re getting praise from all over the country. We are focusing on quality and integrity.

“Partisan appointments were earlier made by the Attorney General’s Office. About half the officers have already resigned.”

Asif Nazrul said they appointed a number of law officers hurriedly subjected to as much scrutiny as possible. “There may be a couple of mistakes, there will be scope to correct those.”

He said they banned the use of plastic products at courts to improve the environment.

Asked whether the special act on electricity and energy will be repealed, the law adviser said he would talk to the chief adviser. “I believe it will be revoked very soon.”

‘Our govt mishandled the protests’

FROM PAGE 12

judicial system to handle it,” the daily quoted Joy as saying.

Joy, who was Hasina’s IT adviser, reiterated a foreign intelligence agency was behind the violent turn the protests took.

“I firmly believe that a foreign intelligence agency was involved, especially because many of the demonstrators, starting from July 15, were armed with firearms. Firearms are very difficult to obtain in Bangladesh due to our successful control of militancy over the last 15 years. The only organisation capable of smuggling firearms into the country and supplying them to demonstrators would be a foreign intelligence agency,” he said.

Joy’s claims of students using firearms on police remain unverified as no media outlet reported such occurrences during the protests. However, there have been published articles in several media outlets of Awami League activists using firearms during clashes with protesters.

Describing the events of the 24 hours leading up to his mother’s departure from Bangladesh on August 5, Joy said neither he nor Hasina anticipated how rapidly the situation would deteriorate even a day before the situation spiralled out of control.

“She [Hasina] had no intention of leaving the country. She was going to resign, submit a resignation to the president and announce it in a public statement. I believe she was drafting the statement and preparing to record an interview. Everything was planned. In fact, she was about to start recording when the special security said, ‘Ma’am, there’s no time. We have to go now’,” according to Joy.

He said Hasina was adamant on not leaving but he convinced her to do so.

“The Special Security Force took her to a safe location inside the military air base, they had a helicopter ready for her, but she did not wish to go ... that’s when my aunt [Sheikh Rehana, Hasina’s younger sister] called me. I convinced my mother that ‘no, for your safety you have to leave’. If this mob finds you, catches up with you somewhere and there’s shooting, lots of people will die. Either you’ll get blamed or, if they catch you, they will kill you. So, your best option is to leave the country. And I’m the one who convinced her to leave.”

Asked what his message to India would be, Joy said he would urge New Delhi to take a leadership role and ensure the constitution of Bangladesh is upheld.

“...especially this being on India’s doorstep... I would hope India would ensure that elections are held within the constitutional timeframe of 90 days, that the mob rule is stopped and that the Awami League is allowed to campaign and reorganise. If that is ensured, I’m still confident that we will win the election... We still remain the most popular party,” he said.

Delhi eager to work with interim govt

FROM PAGE 12

minorities in Bangladesh.

He said these reports, along with former prime minister Sheikh Hasina’s statements while in India, were “not conducive to friendly relations or to fostering better bilateral relations”.

Asked about Verma’s reply on these issues, Touhid said the Indian envoy would inform New Delhi about his concerns and then India would make a decision on these matters.

Speaking about the attacks on minorities, the adviser said the interim government is committed to investigating each of the incidents and bringing the perpetrators to book.

The government is also pledge-bound to ensure the safety and security of all religious and ethnic groups, he added.

UK High Commissioner Sarah Cooke, Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen, Saudi Ambassador Isa bin Yusuf Al-Duhailan, and EU Deputy Chief of Mission Bernd Spanier also called on the foreign affairs adviser.

Touhid briefed all of them about how the interim government was formed. He informed them that the government’s objective is to make political, state and economic reforms as mandated by the students and the people, whose movement forced Hasina to resign and flee to India on August 5.

All the diplomats said corruption should be kept on check, according to the adviser. “The corrupt enjoy impunity. A few people looted banks and laundered money,” he said.

Saudi Ambassador Isa bin Yusuf Al-Duhailan said the embassy resumed issuing visas to Bangladeshi workers on Wednesday after a pause amid the recent demonstrations.

“The Saudi Embassy is now providing all types of services. Under normal circumstances, an average of 5,000 visas were issued daily,” he told the media.

About his meeting with Touhid Hossain, Yusuf said they discussed a number of issues, including economic matters and visa issuance, hoping for quick restoration of stability and peace.

Asked whether former prime minister Sheikh Hasina sought asylum in the Gulf kingdom, the ambassador said he had not heard anything like that.

EU’s Spanier in a post on X said the bloc looks forward to supporting the interim government and the transition process with a range of instruments at its disposal.

In a statement, the British High Commission said the UK will support the interim government in its efforts to restore peace and order, ensure accountability and chart a peaceful pathway to an inclusive, prosperous and democratic future for the people of Bangladesh.

British High Commissioner Cooke said she discussed with Touhid how the UK can support the interim government’s work towards a democratic and prosperous future, and other issues of mutual interest, including the Rohingya crisis.

Cooke praised the students and the people for their bravery in the protests for a different future for Bangladesh.

In a statement, Dan Jørgensen, the minister for development cooperation and global climate policy of Denmark, yesterday said his country wanted the interim government to focus on good governance, respect for human rights and democracy, including impartial investigations into the many tragic deaths during the protests.

August 15, the darkest of dawns

FROM PAGE 1

A few tanks stopped at the entrance to Road 32 while a few others went in, coming to a stop at the gate of the residence.

Bangabandhu’s personal assistant AFM Mohitul Islam was on night duty at the residence. Suddenly the phone rang, and he sleepily picked up the receiver.

“Serniabat’s [Bangabandhu’s brother-in-law Abdur Rab Serniabat] house is under attack!

“Get the police control room immediately,” Bangabandhu spoke on the phone from his first-floor bedroom.

Mohitul dialled the police but failed to get through. Just then Mujib came down to the office room and asked whether he could contact the police control room. Mohitul replied in the negative.

Mohitul finally got the line of the Gono Bhaban exchange. Someone picked up the phone there but would not speak. Impatient, the president took the handset himself and spoke into it: “This is President Sheikh Mujib speaking.”

Just then a barrage of bullets shattered the windowpanes and hit the wall of the office room. The gunshots continued for a while. Bangabandhu’s assassination mission by a group of disgruntled army officers had begun.

As the gunfire abated for a moment, Bangabandhu managed to talk to Gen Shafiullah over phone and asked him to send force immediately as his house was under attack. Shafiullah replied: “I am doing something; can you get out of the house?”

House help Abdul brought Bangabandhu’s white punjabi and glasses from the first floor. Putting those on, the president came out on the veranda.

“There are shootings all around. What are you doing?” he shouted at the sentries. And then he went back to the upper floor.

Sheikh Kamal came down to the ground floor. He requested the army and police members to come with him.

At that moment three to four soldiers in khaki and black fatigues entered the premises. Mohitul recognised one of them as Captain Bazlul Huda, who shot Kamal dead.

The army men asked some soldiers to keep watch on Mohitul and others gathered near the gate and hurried to the first floor.

Havildar Md Quddus Sikder, who had arrived at the residence around 4:45am on his regular duty, was detained as soon as the soldiers entered the house. He saw Captain Bazlul Huda, Major Nur and Major Mohiuddin at the gate.

What unfolded next before Quddus was the terrible events.

Huda and Nur ordered him to follow them as they went up to the first floor along with their troops. As they walked up to the landing of the staircase, they saw Major Mohiuddin and his soldiers leading Bangabandhu down.

“What do you want?” Bangabandhu had asked.

Nobody answered.

Suddenly, Huda and Nur aimed their Sten guns at Bangabandhu and pressed the triggers. Burst fire from the submachine guns hit him.

The president collapsed on the stairs.

After killing Bangabandhu, the soldiers ran riot all over the residence. Bangabandhu’s family members had taken shelter inside the bathroom of the main bedroom. But they were not spared.

The soldiers knocked on the door and fired a few rounds at it. Begum Mujib opened it and begged for the lives of her family.

The killers gunned Begum Mujib, Sheikh Jamal, his wife Rosy, and Kamal’s wife Sultana. The bodies fell in a heap.

Then they took Sheikh Naser and Sheikh Russell to the ground floor and made them stand in a line. Naser pleaded to live, but the killers took him into the bathroom attached to Mohitul’s office and shot him.

Naser begged for water, but a soldier shot him again.

Then happened the cruellest thing.

Trembling, Russell, Bangabandhu’s 10-year-old son, wailed to be taken to his mother. Clutching Mohitul he asked: “Bhaiya, will they kill me too?”

“No Bhaiya, they won’t kill you,” Mohitul had tried to console him.

One of the soldiers took Russel upstairs to the spot where his mother lay dead. Then came a burst of gunfire.

After a while, Major Farooq Rahman met Bazlul Huda at the gate and asked him something.

“All are finished,” Huda replied.

BNP focused

FROM PAGE 12

Talking to The Daily Star, BNP Standing Committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said, “We were busy over waging movements for many years. But now it is the time to do politics, and we will do whatever required to do so. Withdrawal of politically motivated cases against our party leaders and workers is at the top of our agenda as an oppressive regime filed the cases.”

He said they placed their demand in this regard before the interim government.

According to party sources, the BNP leaders will continuously create pressure on the interim government to hold elections at the soonest.

But the party will not have a confrontational stance since it has decided to give the government the time required to create an atmosphere conducive to polls.

After meeting Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on Monday, BNP high-ups believe that the gap between the interim government and the party was narrowing. They think they will be able to have their demands fulfilled by having a good relationship with the government.

At the meeting, withdrawal cases against party chairperson Khaleda Zia and BNP’s acting chairman Tarique Rahman and others had come up for discussion.

Party insiders said the party wants to influence the interim government to have its like-minded people at top positions in the bureaucracy, police force, and other places.

It will also try to bring back to work those who had been sent into forced retirement by the previous government for their soft spot for the BNP. Those who are now above 60 would be posted under contracts, they said.

The BNP will also go for trust-building programmes like market monitoring, curbing food inflation, they said.

To this end, the party has already started work. It has expelled or suspended about 100 of its leaders for their involvement in violence and breach of party discipline after the fall of the AL government to send the message that there is no room for violence in the party.

Around 50 more party leaders were served showcase notice for their alleged involvement in vandalism.

Beximco leaves Janata

FROM PAGE 1

parliament from Dhaka-1 (Dohar-Nawabganj) from 2018 until the dissolution of the 12th parliament on August 6, took out huge volumes of loans with the help of the Janata board and central bank higher-ups bypassing banking rules and regulation, The Daily Star has learnt from several Janata officials of past and present.

And the loans have increased at a brisk pace over the last three years.

In 2015, Beximco and its concerns’ loans amounted to Tk 2,045 crore, which increased to Tk 6,400 crore in 2020. At the end of June, the figure hit Tk 25,000 crore.

Between July 2021 and July 2022, Beximco opened nine new companies; in just one month of 2022, it created eight new companies and availed loans in the name of those companies, documents show.

Salman, vice-chairman of Beximco Group, used his clout in the Sheikh Hasina administration to get the central bank to grant special approval for large loans, the Janata officials said on the condition of anonymity to speak candidly on the issue.

For instance, on August 1 last year, the Bangladesh Bank gave a no-objection certificate to extend loans amounting to Tk 479 crore to Beximco although the amount violated Janata’s single borrower exposure limit.

Despite objection from the Department of Off-Site Supervision, the central bank wing responsible for monitoring and regulating banks, then governor Abdur Rouf Talukder gave the exemption to Beximco.

“This kind of exemption from the top undermines our efforts to establish good governance in the sector,” said a top BB official on the condition of anonymity.

At that time, BB Spokesman Md Mezbaul Haque told The Daily Star that the exemption was granted for the purpose of recovering the loans.

SM Mahfuzur Rahman, chairman of Janata Bank, told The Daily Star then that the lender provided the loan only after getting approval from the central bank.

Salman also used his political clout to always reschedule loans and get easy terms such that Beximco was not grouped with bank defaulters, the Janata officials said.

For instance, the business group -- which has interests in textiles, pharmaceuticals, PPE, ceramics, real estate, construction, trading, marine food, ICT, media, DTH, financial services and energy -- rescheduled a major portion of its loans in June 2022 and the rest in June last year.

A large portion of those loans had defaulted and a fresh rescheduling package was placed at the bank’s board meeting on July 30.

The proposal was not approved, documents show.

“That’s why, about Tk 18,000 crore of Beximco’s loans have turned bad,” said a Janata official on the condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal.

Of the loans that have gone sour, Tk 5,030 crore is from the Export Development Fund, which was formed by taking funds from the country’s foreign currency reserves.

Asked about Janata’s hazardous exposure to Beximco, Md Abdul Jabbar, the bank’s managing director, said some of the loans were approved or extended from the branch level and were not placed at the board meeting.

As much as 60 percent of the loans were taken from one branch: Janata’s local office in Dilkusha, Motijheel, documents show.

“That is why a single group availed a huge amount of loans. That type of misuse has come down after my appointment as the MD. I did not allow further deterioration of the financial health of the bank,” he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Jabbar was appointed the MD on a three-year contract on April 13 last year.

Once one of the most reputed banks in Bangladesh, Janata’s financial health worsened thanks to a series of loan scams involving AnonTex and Crescent.

Its other large borrowers are S Alam Group, AnonTex, Crescent, Orion Group and Ratanpur Group

In 2017, Janata Bank’s bad loans stood at Tk 5,818 crore. At the end of June, it stood at Tk 48,000 crore.

At the end of June last year, Janata had a capital shortfall of Tk 2,189 crore, according to data from BB.

Beximco Group declined The Daily Star’s request for comment.

AL attempt

FROM PAGE 12

Islami Chhatra Shibir.

The leaders and activists of leftist organisations, including Student Union, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, had participated in the programmes of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, but they did not take part in yesterday’s rally.

However, leaders of Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Shibir spoke at the rally.

The rally attendees also took an oath that they would never compromise with the national dignity and sovereignty and to raise their voices against the state power if it became oppressive or attempted to be so.

Attending the rally, Santosh Sharma, general secretary of Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad, said, “The minorities are still being subjected to torture in our country due to a culture of impunity. We want to see a Bangladesh where no place of worship will be attacked.”

Afterwards, the students brought out a procession around 5:45pm, which ended at Dhanmondi 27. Students offered prayers for those killed in the July-August violence. The students stayed at Dhanmondi 27 until midnight, according to witnesses.

Similar rallies and processions were held in Chattogram, Khulna, Barishal and Rangpur.

Salman and Anisul

FROM PAGE 12

defend themselves, lasted only around three minutes.

Army, BGB, and additional police personnel were deployed on the court premises.

Salman and Anisul were arrested in Dhaka’s Sadarghat on Tuesday in a case filed with New Market Police Station over the killing of Shahjahan, 24, during quota reform protests on July 16.

Shahjahan was critically injured and later died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, according to the case statement.

In the police forwarding report, the investigator said the accused’s involvement in the incident was preliminary found.

Salman and Anisul were trying to flee through the waterway, police earlier said.

Coast guards detained them in Narayanganj’s Pagla area and handed them over to police, said the media wing of Bangladesh Coast Guard on Tuesday night.

UN team to visit

FROM PAGE 12

cornerstone of his administration, and the protection of every citizen is the utmost priority of the government.

Prof Yunus also sought UN cooperation to rebuild the country and uphold human rights, said Shafiqul.

Govt scraps contractual appointments

FROM PAGE 1

(senior secretary) of Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council, has been made senior secretary of the home ministry’s Public Security Division.

Mohammad Emdad Ullah Mian, member (secretary) of Planning Commission, has been transferred to the agriculture ministry.

Md Abdur Rahman Khan, secretary of the Financial Institutions Division under the finance ministry, was transferred to the Internal Resources Division and made the NBR chairman.

CONTRACTS REVOKED

The top 11 bureaucrats, whose contracts were cancelled, include Rahmatul Muneem, NBR chairman (senior secretary); Lokman Hossain Miah, executive chairman (senior secretary) of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA); KM Abdus Salam, senior secretary of the Parliament Secretariat; Satyajit Karmaker, senior secretary of the Planning Division; Mokammel Hossain, senior secretary of the civil aviation and tourism ministry; ABM Amin Ullah Nuri, secretary of the Road Transport and Highways Division; Humayun Kabir, secretary of the railways ministry; Md Ali Hossain, secretary of the science and technology ministry; Wahida Akter, secretary of the agriculture ministry; and Akter Hossain, principal coordinator of SDG affairs at the Prime Minister’s Office.

The contractual appointment of Khairul Islam as a member (secretary) of BIDA, was also cancelled.

In another development, Lamiya Morshed, executive director of Yunus Centre, was appointed as the principal coordinator of SDG affairs at the Chief Adviser’s Office.

Sudan ceasefire talks start despite army no-show

AFP, *Geneva*

US-sponsored talks on agreeing a ceasefire in the devastating conflict in Sudan kicked off in Switzerland yesterday, despite the Sudanese government staying away.

War has raged since April 2023 between the Sudanese army under the country’s de facto ruler Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

“The talks have started,” a spokesman for the US mission in Geneva told AFP, adding that there was “no change” to the non-participation of the Sudanese government.

The brutal conflict has triggered one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises.

While the RSF is taking part in the talks, the Sudanese armed forces (SAF) are unhappy with the format arranged by Washington.

“The RSF delegation has arrived in Switzerland. Our US delegation, and the collective international partners, technical experts and Sudanese civil society, are still waiting on the SAF. The world is watching,” Tom Perriello, the US special envoy for Sudan, said before the talks began.

He urged the government to “seize the opportunity”, saying after the opening session that it was “high time for the guns to be silenced”.

The talks, which could last up to 10 days, are being held behind closed doors in an undisclosed location in Switzerland.

They are co-hosted by Saudi Arabia and Switzerland, with the African Union, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and the United Nations acting as a steering group.

Sudanese Media Minister Graham Abdelkader said ahead of the talks that the government was rejecting “any new observers or participants” -- after Washington “insisted on the participation of the United Arab Emirates as an observer”.

The Sudanese army has repeatedly accused the UAE of backing the RSF.

Without the SAF, other attendees will press on with the talks’ agenda.

The fighting has forced one in five people to flee their homes, while tens of thousands have died. More than 25 million across the country -- more than half its population -- face acute hunger.

Rokeya Prachi

FROM PAGE 2

“I am here at Dhanmondi-32,” she wrote on social media, “Let justice be served for all murders... Let there be justice for the erasure of Bangalee history. I am here. We also want justice. I will remember the history of independence and Bangabandhu in this peaceful protest. I am at the burnt Dhanmondi-32 ... “

J&K CLASHES

Indian soldier, suspected rebel killed

AFP, *Srinagar*

Soldiers in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir battled insurgents yesterday, with a captain and a suspected rebel killed in clashes in the territory, the army and police said.

The Indian army, in a post on social media platform X, offered its "deepest condolences" over the death of the officer.

Police said in a statement that "during the ongoing operation, one terrorist has been neutralised", a term they use indicating a gunman had been killed.

The violence is the latest in a string of clashes in the Hindu-dominated southern Jammu region this year.

Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called a meeting with army, security, and intelligence chiefs yesterday after the latest clashes in Jammu.

NO MORE RAPE
STOP RAPE NOW
WE WANT JUSTICE
#R.G.KAR MEDICAL COLLEGE

People hold posters during a vigil condemning the rape and murder of a trainee medic at a government-run hospital in Kolkata, on a street in Mumbai, India, yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

An epicentre

FROM PAGE 2

In May 1971, the Pakistan authorities put several of his family members under house arrest when they were living in House Number 26 on Road Number 18 in Dhanmondi.

DHANMONDI HOME OVER GONO BHABAN

After liberation, Sheikh Mujib chose to live in his Dhanmondi house rather than in Gono Bhaban, the official residence of prime minister.

Journalist ABM Musa in his book titled "Mujib Bhai" notes that it was because of Begum Mujib, who wanted to maintain her own identity beyond the role of the prime minister's wife.

In independent Bangladesh, this house hosted many international figures, including Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi, Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito.

The walls of this house have witnessed tragedy too.

On the fateful night of August 15, 1975, the house became a scene of horror as Sheikh Mujib and 16 of his family members were assassinated in a military coup.

FROM HOME TO MUSEUM

After Bangabandhu's assassination, the house was sealed off until 1981.

Meanwhile, the residence was put up for auction by the House Building Finance Corporation in June 1981. Sheikh Hasina, Mujib's daughter, reclaimed its ownership upon her return to Bangladesh that year by paying Tk 12,000 in principal amount and interest.

Subsequently on August 14, 1994, the house was turned into a memorial museum after extensive renovation.

The museum was open to the public for the past 30 years, from August 1994 to August 5, 2024.

Following the ouster of Sheikh Hasina on August 5 in the face of an uprising against her rule, most historical records, including books and memorabilia, were destroyed in an attack by a mob who vandalised and set almost everything on fire.

"While past regime changes have seen violence and vandalism, the extent of destruction this time is unprecedented," said eminent history professor Muntasir Mamun.

"These incidents are a stark reminder of our nation's alarming oblivion towards history. The Liberation War and Bangabandhu are the heritage of all Bangladeshis, and we will be held responsible by future generations for failing to safeguard these national symbols," said Prof Muntasir, also president of 1971: Genocide-Torture Archive and Museum.

POST-COUP MYANMAR

Military denies junta chief detained by generals

AFP, *Yangon*

Myanmar's military yesterday said rumours top generals had detained the embattled junta chief in a new coup were "propaganda" spread by "traitors" ahead of a visit by China's foreign minister.

Junta chief Min Aung Hlaing has faced public criticism from military supporters in recent weeks as government troops lose territory to ethnic minority armed groups and other opponents battling to overturn its 2021 coup.

On Tuesday several social media posts claimed that top generals had detained Min Aung Hlaing in the capital Naypyidaw in a bid to change the junta's top leadership.

The claims were "propaganda... with the aim of disrupting the country's peace and stability," the junta said in a statement, accusing those sharing the news of being "traitors".

"The head of state and authorities are fulfilling their national responsibility together," it said. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi was due to arrive in Myanmar yesterday for talks with Min Aung Hlaing. The visit is "aimed at deepening bilateral mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields," an unnamed Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said on Tuesday.

China is a major ally and arms supplier to the junta but analysts say it also maintains ties with ethnic armed groups. In recent weeks an alliance of ethnic armed groups has seized territory from the junta in northern Shan state, which borders China's Yunnan province.

Hamas to stay out of new Gaza truce talks

Demands adoption of Biden-backed proposal; 36 more Palestinians killed in Israeli attacks

REUTERS, *Cairo*

The Palestinian group Hamas said yesterday it would not take part in a new round of Gaza ceasefire talks slated for today in Qatar, dimming hopes for a negotiated truce that Iranian sources say could hold back an Iranian attack on Israel.

The US has said it expects indirect talks to go ahead as planned in Qatar's capital Doha today, and that a ceasefire agreement was still possible. However, Axios reported that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has postponed a trip to the Middle East that had been expected to begin on Tuesday.

Three senior Iranian officials have said that only a ceasefire deal in Gaza would hold Iran back from direct retaliation against Israel for the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on its soil last month.

The Israeli government said it would send a delegation to today's talks, but Hamas, the Palestinian group that controls Gaza, requested a workable plan to implement a proposal it has already accepted rather than more talks.

"Hamas is committed to the proposal presented to it on July 2, which is based on the US Security Council resolution and the Biden speech and the movement is prepared to immediately begin discussion over a mechanism to implement it," Senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told Reuters.

Israel intensifies shelling on eastern areas of Khan Younis

Gaza death toll rises to 39,965

There has been no let-up in fighting in Gaza, where residents of the southern city of Khan Younis said Israeli forces blew up homes in the east and intensified tank shelling on eastern areas of the city centre.

Israel said it was responding to Hamas rocket fire towards Tel Aviv on Tuesday and had struck "rocket launching pads and militants among 40 military targets over 24 hours, including in central Gaza, Khan Younis, and western Rafah in the south".

Armed groups of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad said they had attacked Israeli forces in several areas, while Palestinian health officials said Israeli strikes had killed at least 14 people yesterday, mostly in the centre and south.

Israel's military offensive in the Gaza Strip has killed at least 39,965 Palestinians and wounded 92,294 since October 7, the Palestinian enclave's health ministry said yesterday. A total of 36 Palestinians have been killed and 54 wounded in the past 24 hours, the ministry said in a statement.

Tuku, Palak

FROM PAGE 1

Paltan around 7:30pm on July 19. A little later, Fatema came to know from a neighbour that her husband was lying on the road, bleeding.

Fatema and her daughter went there and took Kamal to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, but the doctors pronounced him dead around 7:55pm, reads the case statement.

Fatema again went to the scene and came to know from locals that quota reforms protesters had gathered at VIP Road intersection on July 19.

"At one stage, criminals opened fire at police personnel and the cops also fired shots in the air. As the two sides chased and counter-chased each other, my husband was hit. Criminals then left the scene firing shots. My husband fell on the road after being hit by bullets," Fatema said in the complaint.

She accused unidentified assailants of the murder.

Interestingly, Palak and Shaikat were earlier detained at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport when they were attempting to leave the country, according to reports run by different media outlets on August 6.

An airport official had told The Daily Star that some airport employees had barred Palak from going abroad, kept him confined to the airport lounge and informed the army about the incident.

On the same day, the authorities detained Shaikat along with another Chhatra League leader at the Dhaka airport, reported Prothom Alo.

According to the HSIA sources, the two BCL leaders went to the airport to depart the country, but the immigration authorities prevented them from leaving.

কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়
প্রশাসন-২ অধিশাখা
www.moa.gov.bd

স্মারক: ১২.০০.০০০০.০২০.০৭.০৩২.২১-১০৯৪

তারিখ: ৩০ শ্রাবণ ১৪৩১
১৪ আগস্ট ২০২৪

সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভুক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ এর ৬৩ ও ৬৪ বিধি অনুসারে সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থ বছরে বিভিন্ন পণ্য সামগ্রী (পণ্য তালিকা) ক্রয়ের লক্ষ্যে সরবরাহকারী যাচাই-বাছাই অন্তে তালিকাভুক্তি, তালিকা হালনাগাদকরণ এবং সরবরাহকারী তালিকা সংরক্ষনের নিমিত্ত সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট থেকে নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

পণ্য তালিকা: কম্পিউটর মনিটর, সিপিইউ, প্রিন্টার, ইউপিএস, স্ক্যানার, ফটোকপিয়ার মেশিন, ফ্যাক্স মেশিন, কাগজ কাটার মেশিন, কম্পিউটার ব্যবহার্য সামগ্রী, কম্পিউটার, ফটোকপিয়ার, ফ্যাক্স মেশিনের টোনার (কালি), স্টেশনারী মালামাল, কার্পেট, পাপোষ, আসবাবপত্র, ওয়াল কেবিনেট, ফাইল কেবিনেট, ওয়াল ফ্যান, ওয়াল ঘড়ি ইত্যাদি পণ্য সামগ্রী।

শর্তাবলি:

১। আবেদনের জন্য নির্ধারিত 'ফরম' আগামী ১৫/০৮/২০২৪ হতে ০১/০৯/২০২৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন প্রশাসন-২ অধিশাখা, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয় (কক্ষ নং- ৪৩৪, ভবন নং- ৪, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা এবং বিভাগীয় কমিশনার অফিস, ঢাকা বিভাগ, সেগুনবাগিচা, ঢাকা থেকে প্রতি সেট ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা মূল্যমানের (পে অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফ্ট/পোস্টাল অর্ডার অফেরতযোগ্য) মাধ্যমে ক্রয় করা যাবে। আগামী ০১/০৯/২০২৪ তারিখের পর কোনো 'ফরম' বিক্রয় করা হবে না।

২। আবেদনের সাথে নিম্নবর্ণিত হালনাগাদ তথ্যাদিসহ সত্যায়িত কপি দাখিল করতে হবে;
ক) দুই কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবি।
খ) Affidavit of the Fram.
গ) উপসচিব (প্রশাসন- ২ অধিশাখা) এর অনুকূলে ৫০০০/- (পাঁচ হাজার) টাকা নতুন করে তালিকাভুক্ত এবং ২০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকা পূর্বের তালিকাভুক্ত হালনাগাদকরণের জন্য (পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফ/ডিমান্ড ড্রাফ্ট) জমা দিতে হবে (অফেরতযোগ্য)।
ঘ) ২০২৪- ২৫ পর্যন্ত বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স থাকতে হবে;
ঙ) ২০২৩-২৪ পর্যন্ত আয়কর প্রদানের সার্টিফিকেট থাকতে হবে;
চ) ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সার্টিফিকেট থাকতে হবে;
ছ) ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সার্টিফিকেট থাকতে হবে;
জ) পণ্য সরবরাহ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা:- বিগত তিন বছরে সর্বোচ ২টি চুক্তির আওতায় ২০ লক্ষ টাকার বিভিন্ন ধরনের পণ্য সরবরাহের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতার সার্টিফিকেট থাকতে হবে (সরবরাহ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সনদ সরকারি/আধাসরকারি/স্বায়ত্বশাষিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষের স্বাক্ষরিত হতে হবে)।

৩। আবেদনপত্রসমূহ যাচাই-বাছাই পূর্বক যোগ্য প্রতিষ্ঠানের তালিকা প্রস্তুত করে প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহকে তালিকাভুক্ত/তালিকা হালনাগাদ করা হবে।

৪। তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য মনোনীত করার পূর্বে প্রয়োজনে সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠান সরেজমিন পরিদর্শন করা হবে।

৫। চাহিদাকৃত সকল কাগজপত্রসহ নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন আগামী ০২/০৯/২০২৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন প্রশাসন-২ অধিশাখা, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয় (কক্ষ নং-৪৩৪, ভবন নং-৪), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকায় রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে অথবা বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়ের দর্শনার্থী গেইটে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে গ্রহণ করা হবে। এ ছাড়া ডাকযোগে উপসচিব, প্রশাসন-২ অধিশাখা, কক্ষ নং-৪৩৪, ভবন নং-৪, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা ঠিকানায় প্রেরণ করা যাবে; তবে তা ০২/০৯/২০২৪ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ের মধ্যে অবশ্যই পৌঁছাতে হবে। বিলম্বে প্রাপ্তি কোন আবেদন মূল্যায়ন করা হবে না।

৬। কোনোরূপ কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোনো অথবা সকল আবেদনপত্র বাতিল অথবা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।

১৪।৮।২০২৪
ড. মো: হাতেম আলী
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GD-174

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Focal Point
Global Biodiversity Framework-Early Action Support Project
Department of Environment
E-16, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
www.doe.gov.bd

No.22.02.0000.040.14.08.24-**127**

Date: 13/08/2024

Re-Request for Expressions of Interest (Re-EoI)

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
2.	Agency	Executing Partner-Department of Environment (DoE)
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Project Focal Point
4.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5.	Expression of Interest for Selection of	Package No-SD 1: NBSAP Updating Technical Coordinator Package No-SD 2: Economic Valuation Expert Package No-SD 4: NBSAP Updating Gender Integration Expert
6.	EoI No. Ref	22.02.0000.040.14.08.24-**127**
7.	Date	13/08/024
KEY INFORMATION & FUNDING INFORMATION		
8	Procuring Method	Individual Consultant Selection (ICS)
9	Source of Funds	Development Budget
10.	Development Partners	UNEP-GEF
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
11.	Program Code/Project (If applicable)	N/A
12.	Program Name/Project	Global Biodiversity Framework-Early Action Support Project
13.	EoI closing Date and Time	28.08.2024 Time: 5:00 PM
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
14	Brief Description of Assignment	**Package No-SD 1** Deliverables: Documents on (a) Refined National Targets, Means of Implementation, Policy Coherence, and (b) other documents related to submission of the National Targets to CBD Website and finally, Submission to CBD Website. **Package No-SD 2** Deliverables: Documents on (a) estimated value of goods and services of ecosystems and Nature's Contribution to People and (b) Valuation of Subsidies harmful to Biodiversity and (c)Total amount of resources to be mobilized towards implementation of revised NBSAP. **Package No-SD 4** Deliverables: Documents on setting and finalizing Gender Specific targets of KMGBF and Gender integration related text to be formulated and finalized for NBSAP Updating. Please visit www.doe.gov.bd for details Terms of Reference (TOR).
15.	Qualification & Experience	**Package No-SD 1:** Masters in Biological Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Natural Resources Management or pertinent disciplines of Biodiversity. At least 15 years of proven experiences on Implementation of CBD and its protocols with practical experiences on the developments of CBD and KM-GBF thereof. Experiences in development of Biodiversity and Biosafety related Act, Rules and policies and strategies. **Package No-SD 2:** Masters in Environment Economics having specialization on Valuing Biodiversity and Nature's contribution to People. At least 10 years experiences on economic valuation of ecosystem goods and services. Practical experiences on valuing various ecosystems of Bangladesh and the Nature's Contribution to People. **Package No-SD 4:** Masters in Natural and Social Science having specialization on Integration of Gender Studies in environmental management At least 10 years experiences on Gender Integration in the context of the environmental management, biodiversity conservation and Others qualification criteria as per ToR.
16.	**Other Information (If applicable):**	• Interested Applicants are requested to submit their expressions of Interest Application Forms (complete CV with other details as required as per the Application Forms) in accordance with "Request for Application" (RFA) which may be collected during normal office hours. Expression of Interest Application shall be submitted in sealed envelope delivered to Project Focal Point, Global Biodiversity Framework-Early Action Support Project, Department of Environment and be clearly marked "Request for Expression of Interest" and Position Name. Consultant will be selected using the selection of individual consultant sub-method in accordance with Public Procurement Rules 2008 and Request for Application (RFA). • The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all Expression of Interest (EoI). • This advertisement and details Terms of Reference (ToR) is available in the website: www.doe.gov.bd
CLIENT DETAIL		
17.	Name of the Official Inviting EoI	Mohammad Hasan Hasibur Rahman
18.	Designation of Official Inviting EoI	Project Focal Point & Deputy Director (Planning), Department of Environment
19.	Address of Official Inviting EoI	Department of Environment, Head Office, Poribesh Bhaban, E/16, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
20.	Contact details of Official Inviting EoI	Phone: 02-222218293, E-mail: hasanhasibur@doe.gov.bd

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GD-179

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Remembering Bangabandhu

Reflecting on his legacy and the struggle for independence

Today, August 15, marks the 49th anniversary of the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and nearly his entire family. We remember his pivotal role in uniting the people of Bangladesh and leading them towards independence with reverence. Emerging as a major opposition figure in Pakistani politics between 1948 and 1971, he became a key leader who rallied opposition to President Ayub Khan and his oppressive regime. It was Bangabandhu who catalysed public support across the then East Pakistan for the Six-Point Movement, advocating for greater autonomy for the region. As the movement garnered widespread support, it became a crucial milestone on the path to Bangladesh's independence.

Sheikh Mujib's most significant contribution came during the tumultuous period leading up to the Liberation War of 1971. Under his leadership, the people of East Pakistan were inspired to fight for independence when West Pakistani leaders refused to acknowledge and respect their wishes. Through his charismatic leadership, Bangabandhu mobilised the masses—particularly through his historic March 7 speech at the Racecourse Ground in Dhaka—to take up whatever arms they could muster and fight for the nation's liberation. Following his call for resistance, millions of brave Bangladeshis put everything they had on the line to liberate the country from the oppressive Pakistani regime led by the ruthless military leader Muhammad Yahya Khan.

Although Sheikh Mujib was arrested and imprisoned in West Pakistan during the war, his indomitable spirit and the leadership he had instilled in the nation kept the fight for freedom alive. The significance of his role in uniting the people of Bangladesh to both dream of and pursue independence cannot be overstated.

The assassination of Bangabandhu in 1975 was a devastating blow to the country. This tragic event marked a dark chapter in our history, bringing the military into our politics—a major issue that the Bangladeshi people had previously struggled with during the Pakistan era. This shocking turn of events set back his vision of creating a fair and just society where every individual would be equal in the eyes of the law. To this day, Bangladesh has yet to fully establish some of the basic principles that Mujib and other independence leaders had advocated for.

That said, on this day, we must recognise the tremendous contributions of Bangabandhu in our history of independence. Without his leadership, the independence of Bangladesh might have been delayed for much longer and achieved at an even greater cost. While his ideals have yet to be fully realised in the independent Bangladesh, the best way to honour his memory is to work tirelessly to establish the Bangladesh that he and countless others struggled and sacrificed so much for.

Biman can no longer be a law unto itself

Revelation of yet another scandal shows urgency of reforms

The Daily Star's revelation of a syndicate within Biman Bangladesh Airlines that manipulated ticket prices for Malaysia-bound flights in April-May is yet another reminder of the systemic corruption that has been plaguing the national carrier. According to our report, a civil aviation ministry probe found that several Biman officials, including those at the highest levels, were complicit in blocking tickets and inflating prices. What this means is that Biman was directly responsible for the crisis that saw several thousand migrant workers failing to fly before the May 31 deadline, when the Malaysian labour market was closed for Bangladesh. This is totally unacceptable.

Reportedly, between April 15 and May 31, the price of an economy class ticket on Biman flights from Dhaka to Kuala Lumpur soared from Tk 20,475 to an outrageous Tk 73,710. It was the result of a deliberate scheme where the syndicate blocked seats—often all of them on a single plane—for the benefit of 14 travel agencies, depriving other agencies of access to tickets (a total of 480 agencies are registered with Biman). The syndication allowed these companies to sell tickets at exorbitant rates. It also led to flights departing with empty seats, while migrant workers were either forced to pay the high price or left stranded. The failure to go, having already paid enough for it, eventually plunged them into further financial hardship.

For years, this is all Biman has been doing—causing one corruption scandal after another, and getting off scot-free. In this column, we have repeatedly commented on the airline's dysfunction, procurement and recruitment irregularities, operational inefficiencies, etc. Its decisions to purchase aircraft were also frequently criticised. Every decision it made seemed to be affected by parochial interests, while the lack of any functional accountability mechanism allowed unscrupulous officials and dubious entities to commit corruption with impunity.

Such corruption and mismanagement led to repeated financial losses, damaging our credibility and reputation on the global stage. The plight of the migrant workers denied passage in May is but the tip of a huge iceberg of sufferings caused over the years. This has to stop. The air of change brought by the recent mass uprising, which saw almost all government institutions and pillars of power being shaken, must reach Biman, too. The urgency for reforms cannot be overstated. We urge the government to take decisive actions to cleanse Biman of its corrupt elements, ensure accountability at all levels, and implement policies that can meet the demands of the new age.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Omagh Bombing in Ireland

On this day in 1998, a car bomb exploded in Omagh, Northern Ireland, killing 29 people and leaving more than 200 injured. The Real Irish Republican Army (Real IRA), an IRA splinter group, claimed responsibility for the bombing, which was the deadliest attack in Northern Ireland since the eruption of violence there in the late 1960s.

Don't let the new dawn be turned false

STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING

Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan,
ndc, psc (retd)
is a former associate editor of The Daily Star.

SHAHEDUL ANAM KHAN

The end came as it does inevitably to all autocrats and dictators. The five-time prime minister with questionable electoral credentials, who mutated from an elected prime minister in 1996 to the worst autocrat the country has suffered, was forced out of the illegal power she had acquired in the face of a popular uprising, the tide of which no state machinery could stem.

Her deft application of the principles of CMR and her investment in the military in the 15 years of her misrule paid off. She was given a safe exit. Not only that—she, after being ferried to the nearest Indian airport, was eventually deposited in New Delhi, in a BAF C-130, where she is now happily ensconced. Her personally close connection with the Indian authorities and her over-all India policy have paid good dividends, because Delhi is likely to be her next abode for the foreseeable future, a denouement to Hasina's political career that most people had anticipated.

I feel the time is past to dwell on whether she should have left sooner and avoided the killings that she presided on. Enough it is to say that she could have, but drunk in the elixir of power, she suffered from a psychological state that all autocrats and dictators who use the state institutions to validate the usurpation of political power suffer from—a euphoria, a feeling of perpetuity, had engulfed her. She wanted to stay in power on the blood of the youths. No movements in the history of Bangladesh have taken so many lives in so few days as the quota reform movement. Even if one were to take the official count, the numbers will shame even the Kim Ill Sungs and Stalins. What is reprehensible is the attempt by ministers to put the blame on so-called miscreants, washing all responsibilities of the killings off the hand of the law enforcement agencies.

As reports reveal, she wanted sterner action by the army. Providence and good sense helped avoid a catastrophe whose consequence one shudders to think. All credit to the CAS for the subsequent development.

As many had predicted, Hasina's departure came through a mass uprising, the spark provided by a non-political issue that morphed into a political issue, the nine-point demand becoming a single-point demand asking for her departure. As before, this movement was also given the lead by students. No political party was capable of providing the lead, primarily because the Hasina regime over the last 15 years had unleashed such repressive and coercive measures on the opposition that it was all but neutered. However, political opposition was not the only thing that Hasina had neutered; effectively all the state institutions were made completely dysfunctional, becoming an appendage of the ruling party.

The end came in the way it did for the autocrat because of the ham-handed and amateurish way the issue of quota was handled by the advisers surrounding Hasina. Suppressing the demand by force was what they wanted, proving once again that "History is not a teacher but a warden: it does not teach anything but punishes severely for unlearned lessons." Hasina and her close cohorts and confidants didn't learn from the Pakistanis that the Bangalee spirit needs more than bullets to be suppressed.

The mistake not only cost Hasina the throne, but the nation also lost hundreds of young people who fell victim to one person's lust for eternal power that manifested in unchecked police brutality.

Unlike the cliche "the past is past," I say the past is not past. There is a lot to answer for on the part of Hasina, her party and all those elements in society that helped prop her illegal ascendancy to, and repeated usurpation of, power through the help of state agencies. I am confident that the present dispensation will go into the litany of misdeeds of the erstwhile government over the last 15 years and those responsible for the desecration of people's rights, subversion of the country's interest for partisan gains, destruction of the state institutions and machineries, crippling of the country's economy, gross violation of human rights like enforced disappearance and extrajudicial killings, and the overall breakdown of law and order, will be put in the dock. Not only the past regime, but those government functionaries who knowingly participated in persecuting the regime's plan must also be held to account.

VISUAL: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

But now, for the matter at hand.

An interim government is in place, and its members are persons with not only national and international repute but of impeccable character. But in a situation like this, no one will envy their position nor covet their job.

They have a huge task in hand, an Augean stable caused by long years of accretion of muck will have to be cleared. Every single institution will have to be cleansed: the derailed administration, the partisan Election Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission, whose application of the rules, it is alleged, varied depending on who the alleged offender it was dealing with. Standard of application differed, depending on whether one belonged to the ruling party or the opposition.

The police should be a major concern for the interim government. Hardly have I seen, if ever, the police being subjected to such public wrath. But by the same token, hardly have I seen the police act with such impunity, disregard for the rule of law and human rights. That is the inevitable outcome of a political regime's use of the state law enforcement and intelligence agencies to come to and retain power. The police wanted its pound of flesh from the Awami League and got it, even more, by way of a carte blanche for repression and coercion.

But I have a different take on the attack on police stations following the flight of Hasina. I believe it may have been part of a well-constructed conspiracy to destabilise the country.

The job is not done. It is only the beginning. Hostile intelligence agencies are busy spreading propaganda and falsehood about the situation in the country. Creating communal strife was, I believe, an alternative plan by hostile elements to start an internal division in the country to create grounds for reversing the result of the student revolution. I am confident that Bangladesh will never see a Gujarat. All sorts of attempts to undermine the student revolution have been thwarted, but many more attempts may be on the anvil to negate the gains.

The country has witnessed a new dawn, a second independence. We must not let our guard down and allow anyone to negate our new dawn.

Are we ready for Bangladesh 2.0?

Farah Kabir
is the country director of ActionAid Bangladesh.

FARAH KABIR

What just happened in Bangladesh is a revolution led and staged by students with people's support. In this historical moment when Gen Z and reformists are driving Bangladesh, I feel charged and would like to reflect on the call made by Dr Muhammad Yunus for people to come forward and work with him. The Yunus-led interim government along with the student leaders have the task for reform and the establishment of justice cut out for them. So let us take a step in the direction of our action and commitment to materialise this agenda.

Should we call for a new social contract—an agreement among individuals within a social group to abide by rules and laws for collective good—that reflects inclusion and equity? Are we ready to decolonise our minds and refrain from the "fear narrative" across all levels? Can we commit to stop celebrating violence in all possible narratives? If not, can there be a change until we shed old habits and work on our sense of responsible citizenship, moral values, and integrity?

Are we ready to stop discriminating based on gender, class, and caste, responding to the movement's call for an end to discrimination? Will we refrain from oppressing the marginalised? Will society commit to ending patriarchy? Can we commit to ending abuse due to structural causes as well as child abuse, child marriage, domestic violence, harassment, and sexual abuse perpetrated by individuals in both private and public spaces? Would this be possible in a society where 51 percent of girls in the age group of 15-18 yearsin Bangladesh are still being married off?

One way to address these will be by taking legal measures and bringing systemic change. However, these efforts will fail if we do not work to end socially acceptable harmful practices, sustained by society. Arguments put forward for harmful practices have always been about the safety and security of the girls and women in society. Did anyone ask if they need protectors or would rather opt for the end of male dominance? Are we ready to acknowledge the toxic traits of the oppressors that have inadvertently infected everyone even though the nation collectively hate them? I, however, understand that patriarchy and oppression by the powerful will take time to wear off.

Also, are we willing to restrain from arrogance and self-promotion, self-interest, and power aggrandisement? Experts have repeatedly stated that one of the reasons for the fall of the autocrat is her arrogance that grew from a sense of power over others and intolerance to dissent.

Are we ready not to impose our beliefs and thoughts on others and instead work on universal values? Are we ready to rise above our comfort zones and sit at the same table with those with opposing views to be truly inclusive? Can we agree not to force our decisions on children, and respect women and girls? Will we commit not to grab power, business, land, and property? Youth should be aware when the elders try to rationalise these practices as something necessary to secure their future.

No one is safe until all can participate and enjoy their entitlements. Therefore, society's agenda should be: how will we make everyone feel welcome and comfortable to share their thoughts and be heard as a mark of us respecting knowledge leadership, community, women, and youth leadership?

We believe malpractice and exploitation cannot be the foundation of any stable or sustainable future. However, can we expect corporate actors to move away from extractive and exploitative practices and engage in business interests with the environment, ecology, climate change, and climate justice in mind? Will they commit to the transition from fossil fuels to green growth and invest as necessary to make that critical change? Youth engagement in climate justice is increasingly vital for fostering lasting change, particularly in Bangladesh, where recent political shifts have amplified the voices of young people. Their collective demands include accountability and transparency in the management of climate funds, alongside the eradication of corruption in environmental projects. As we rebuild the country, strong advocacy for a green economic recovery emphasising sustainable job creation in renewable energy and eco-friendly industries is needed. Addressing the challenges youth face at the grassroots level is essential, particularly in the context of climate justice. The actions today will shape the future.

No one is safe until all can participate and enjoy their entitlements. Therefore, society's agenda should be: how will we make everyone feel welcome and comfortable to share their thoughts and be heard as a mark of us respecting knowledge leadership, community, women, and youth leadership? Can we be connected to people, thoughts, ambitions, ideas, approaches, and energy in a way that has not been the case before?

Can we commit ourselves to work with women, girls, youth, the discriminated, and the marginalised to build their agency and voice in Bangladesh 2.0?

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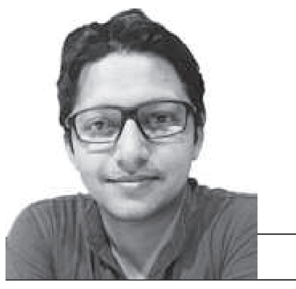
Time for a re-reading of Bangabandhu



OF MAGIC & MADNESS

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BADIUZZAMAN BAY

A historic leader, no matter how great or powerful, needs to be discussed, debated, and learnt from—not blindly followed. That goes for Bangabandhu, too. Until recently, saying this out loud would have been tantamount to sacrilege in an environment of total adulation cultivated over the past 15 years or so. But the sheer, unadulterated disregard shown for the chief architect of our independence soon after the Awami regime's collapse has upended all calculations. Perhaps equally telling has been the relative lack of surprise or even sympathy—at least of the kind you would have expected—which calls for a re-evaluation of Bangabandhu's legacy in this new era of revolution.

An argument can be made about how much of the anger directed at Bangabandhu's statues and murals on August 5 was really aimed at the man himself. Indeed, during the mayhem that followed Sheikh Hasina's escape, many other monuments and landmarks of historical significance were also attacked. Even the parliament building, Gono Bhaban, and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) were not spared, as mobs swarmed and vandalised them, many making off with furniture, bedding, potted plants, etc. However, if there was a common target in this outburst of raw emotion, it was the key symbols of power—and what better symbol of it than the figure that Awami League had so unabashedly exploited to assert its supremacy? Many of the 1,220 statues and murals the party had erected of him across the country were damaged or pulled down. The historic Mujibnagar Memorial Complex in Meherpur, where he stood tall among other sculpted heroes of the Liberation War, lies in ruins. Even his residence-turned-museum in Dhanmondi was looted and burnt down.

Observers have offered various explanations about the men behind this vandalism. One involved angry mobs taking it out on anything associated with Awami League. Another involved a vague reference to the re-rise of anti-liberation forces. Some observers simply blamed unruly elements taking advantage of a fluid security situation. But few acknowledged that Bangabandhu's murals or statues had been destroyed even during Awami League's iron-fisted rule. This suggests that the latest vandalism was not just a momentary madness—any resentment was long in the making. And the fact that the national holiday on August 15 would be cancelled soon after, in a unanimous decision by the Council of Advisers and political parties, further represents the shifting ground beneath the once-inviolable image of Bangabandhu.

How have we come to this point? How has a man who deserves the highest honour for his role in our independence struggle come to be treated with such disrespect? At the risk of sounding clichéd, let's just say this is what happens when respect is imposed, legislated, and weaponised. Over the years, we have seen how the Awami regime and intelligentsia cultivated blind adulation, suppressing any attempt at a nuanced, dispassionate study of the man who led a very eventful life. We have seen how the personality cult around him was continually enhanced through an infinite mix of Bangabandhu-centred monuments, billboards, textbooks, notes and coins, postage stamps, etc. His posters were churned out and plastered everywhere, his portraits hung in every government office. From hospitals to universities to safari parks to planetariums to high-tech centres to bridges and expressways—everything bears his name. His words were turned into catchphrases, his life sainted. And anyone who dared to say anything remotely critical would be silenced through various legal tools.

Bangabandhu commanded respect of the ordinary people, rather than forcing it upon them. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Even Bangabandhu would have found this deification quite distasteful, had he been alive today.

This is unprecedented not just in the subcontinent, but perhaps anywhere in the world. In India, where we saw Congress live off Mahatma Gandhi for decades, he was not subjected to such wholesale deification. In Cuba, you will hardly see any statues of Fidel Castro. While he, too, still lives bathed in absolute adulation, his name is not as ubiquitous. Even the idolatry encouraged by other communist leaders, such as Mao Zedong, Josef Stalin or North Korea's Kim family, would pale in comparison.

For many in today's Bangladesh, Bangabandhu was a story narrated to us through a carefully chosen medley of pictures, historical accounts, audio clips, and video footage. It kept you in awe of the person. It kept you at a distance. We were raised to bow before his altar without really understanding him, and marvel at his greatness without knowing, beyond the highlights of his career, what made him great to his people. He was, for us, not someone we could easily relate to—a mortal man with human triumphs and failings—but one shrouded in reverent mystique.

But the way to appreciate a great leader is not by ignoring his past deeds or his humanness, but by acknowledging how those helped him become the man he was destined to be. A leader doesn't have to be flawless. Englishmen do not deny that millions of Bangalees starved to death in 1943 when Winston Churchill diverted food to British soldiers and other countries while a deadly famine swept through Bengal. In China, Mao-bashing is very much a thing. Even though he and his descendants mounted campaigns that developed the country and simultaneously elevated his cult of personality, many associate his legacy with mass murder and violent class struggle. Similarly, many other leaders who led their nations to their most glorious moments had to face the bitter test of time as their legacy was subjected to harsher interpretations—often as an opposite reaction to their deification.

Coming back to Bangabandhu, he was known for his remarkable affinity with the ordinary people. The ease and candour with which he interacted with them is legendary. He commanded their respect, rather than forcing it upon them. However, like many revolutionaries who later became statesmen, Bangabandhu was not without his fair share of mistakes. Sometimes he learnt from them, sometimes he failed to. Sometimes he made bad judgement calls, distanced himself from trusted aides. Sometimes his decisions had the inadvertent effect of isolating those very people he loved and fought for. Those were not his brightest moments—those were his "human" moments. But this is precisely what makes him relatable for a generation who would like nothing better than to see a role model they can identify with.

The challenge of the post-truth age is that no legacy is innately secure, and truths in politics are invariably partial and contingent. In post-truth politics, you appeal to emotion rather than objective facts to shape public opinion. Emotion excites the mind and lasts for a while, but for a lasting impact, there is no alternative to a narrative based on facts and truths. Bangabandhu as a subject of study should be approached with an openness to embrace truths, however unflattering.

In the new age of revolution, Bangabandhu can be just Bangabandhu—or Sheikh Saheb, or Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, or plain "Mujib"—without the obsessive, cultist praise but also without meaningless criticism along party lines. He will still remain the Father of the Nation, but more human, more relatable, more in alignment with other heroes of our independence. And for that, it is necessary that he be restudied, reimagined, and reinvented by subjecting his life and work to broader interpretations.

> **Like many revolutionaries who later became statesmen, Bangabandhu was not without his fair share of mistakes. Sometimes he learnt from them, sometimes he failed to. Sometimes he made bad judgement calls, distanced himself from trusted aides. Sometimes his decisions had the inadvertent effect of isolating those very people he loved and fought for. Those were not his brightest moments—those were his 'human' moments.**

Can a proportional representation system ensure better democracy?

Kazi Habibul Awal
is the chief election commissioner of Bangladesh.

KAZI HABIBUL AWAL

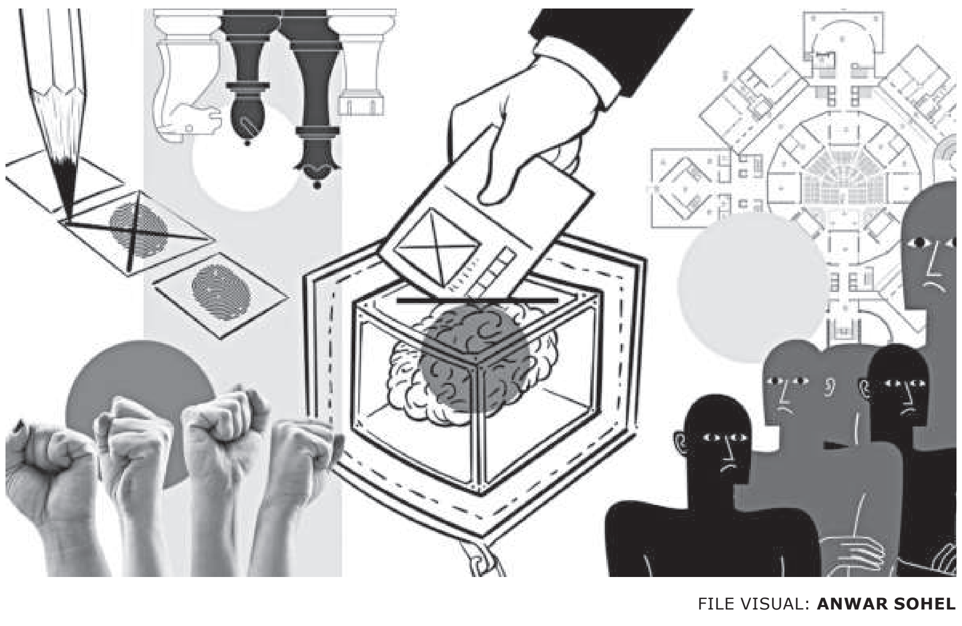
In Bangladesh elections, we practise the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes in a constituency wins a seat in parliament. The political party winning the highest number of seats in parliament forms the government alone, or through coalition. If the FPTP system is changed to the proportional representation (PR) system, in full or in part, it may bring about improvement in the existing political system of the country, providing for peaceful elections and more free, fair and credible representation of voters through their elected representatives in parliament.

In the PR system, an election is among registered political parties. There will no longer be 300 constituencies; the whole country will be one single constituency. Each party may declare names of its candidates well ahead of the day of election (three to six months ahead). In the alternative, for convenience's sake, lists of candidates may be closed ones. Except for a few top members, no one in a party will know the names of nominated candidates, until the results are declared.

In the PR system, each party may be required to pay a certain amount of money as security fee against each of its nominated candidates. A party believing that it may win only 100 seats based on proportion should field 100 candidates or a few more, like 130 candidates. That will help the party save security money. A provision may be there that if a party, for instance, fields 100 candidates but gets 120 seats based on proportion, it will be allowed to give 20 new candidates to be declared elected, subject to payment of higher (as penal) security fees against the additional candidates. In the alternative, a provision may be made that those 20 seats shall stand forfeited to be redistributed by a re-election, or that those 20 seats may be distributed to other winning parties according to the ratio of proportion subject to payment of additional security fees. A provision may be made that a party winning less than 10 seats, as against 100 candidates fielded, shall be deregistered for future elections, and the seats won shall be forfeited so as to be distributed among the remaining qualified parties proportionately. Or, if not, the security fees of those 90 candidates not elected shall be forfeited. That may act as a deterrence to help sensitise parties to field a reasonable number of candidates.

For an easier understanding, the matter may be illustrated as follows in the context of Bangladesh's unicameral legislature. If four parties—namely parties A, B, C and D—contest, each nominating 300 candidates from the centre, and after polling and counting it appears that Party A has received 50 percent of the total votes cast, Party B received 30 percent, Party C 10 percent, and Party D 10 percent, then Party A will take 50x3=150 out of 300 seats, Party B will take 30x3=90 seats, Party C will take 10x3=30 seats and Party D will take 10x3=30 seats. Thus, all 300 seats will be occupied. If a party gets only one percent of the votes cast, it will get three seats in parliament. If a party gets only 0.34 percent votes, it will get one seat in parliament. If the ratio of votes received by a party is less than 0.34 percent, that party may or may not get a seat, based upon an arithmetical formula to be made regarding that. If a party gets fewer than 150 seats, it will have to make a coalition to raise its seats to more than 150. This system is working in many countries, and can be further studied by examining how it works in countries practising the PR system.

No by-election will be necessary in case of deaths, etc of a member of parliament. The party concerned will fill in the position of the demised member from the original list as per the order of precedence for the rest of the tenure. Or in the alternative, that party may be allowed to auto-elect a new candidate as the new MP. This way, the proportional representation system may reduce expenses as well as hassles of holding by-elections. Reserved seats for women may be done away with. To ensure adequate representation of women in parliament, each contesting party may be required to declare two lists, i.e. a general list for all and a reserved list for women only. If 10 percent of the seats should be reserved for women, a provision of law may be that any party nominating candidates shall be required to enlist two women candidates among each 10 candidates. In that case, a party proposing 300 candidates shall propose 60 women candidates. Hence, there shall be 60 women MPs among 300 MPs. A separate election to reserved seats for women shall not be necessary then. That also simplifies the overall electoral process.



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

If a party does not win more than 50 percent of the seats, and a coalition is, therefore, needed to be made and cannot be made readily within a certain specified time, the largest party may be allowed to make government, and its seats in parliament may be declared deemed (by legal fiction) raised to 151 for the formation of the government and all ordinary voting purposes in the legislature. No right-away stalemate in government or parliament will be created in that case. If a coalition can be made, a coalition government can run for a full term of five years or as long as the coalition endures. If a coalition breaks, and no further coalition is made, a fresh election may be held within 90-120 days of that.

If the PR system is introduced, the provision of contest by independent candidates may be repealed. In the present FPTP system, a genuine, strong candidate may field a few fake or dummy independent candidates in order to obtain polling agents for them and to control polling stations by them. Individual candidates in constituencies may resort to multiple malpractices in order to win at any cost, whether voters support them or not. In the PR system, one cannot do that for more than one seat. Originally, one could contest in all 300 seats by virtue of the constitutional provision. Then by the 1984 amendment of the Representation of the People Order (RPO), 1972, it was made five seats. Then by further amending the RPO in 2008, it was made three seats. There was no rationale for it. In the PR system, there will be no scope of that. Constitutional amendments will be necessary to introduce the PR system. Not many amendments—only a few amendments may do.

Such a system, if introduced, will do away with many prevalent malpractices like muscle and money power, bribing, violence in and around polling stations, ballot snatching, ballot stuffing, rigging, etc. The hassle of maintaining 300 constituencies will no longer be there. Delimitation of constituencies will not be necessary. The hassle of contest by independent candidates will be done away with. The hassle of contest in more than one seat by one candidate may also be done away with. Another major advantage of the system will be that the hassles of nomination submissions locally all over the country will be substantially reduced. Nomination will be submitted centrally in Dhaka, the capital, directly or online. All (100 percent) voters will be represented in parliament. Now a party, receiving only 25 percent of the votes cast, may form government. That never happens in the PR system.

Parliamentary elections may be more transparent, free, fair and credible in the PR system. In the existing FPTP system, incidents of false voting, centre-capturing, ballot-snatching and ballot stuffing, rigging, manipulation, influencing the police, administration and polling officers with money or threats, etc are quite many and random. If the proportional representation system is introduced, such incidents will reduce substantially.

More than a hundred countries in the world practise some form of the PR system in national elections. The demographic homogeneity in Bangladesh may be conducive to the introduction of this system. The pros and cons, merits and demerits of the proportional representation system may be studied in the context of Bangladesh, and if found suitable and introduced, the conduct of elections in Bangladesh may become much easier. Elections will be far less expensive. That may help develop a healthy political culture and a better democracy.`

BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

Is the antidote itself a virus?

The constitution of Bangladesh and the rise of autocracy

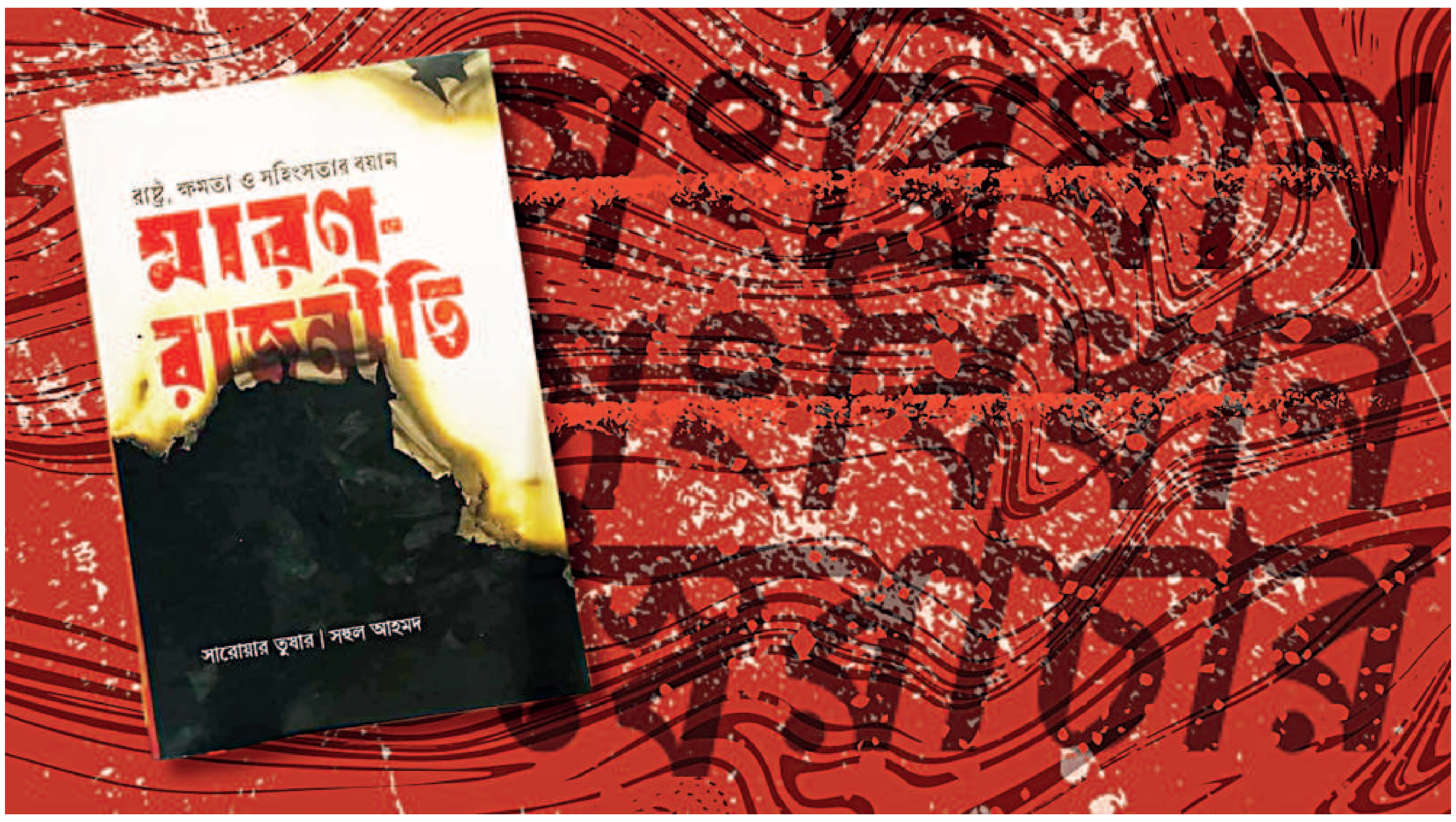


ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

This crisis goes back to the first constitution of 1972. Many critics have pointed out that the process of forming the Constitution of 1972 was unsatisfactory.

SADMAN AHMED SIAM

During the 53 years of Bangladesh's existence, its people have had to endure and take down two autocratic regimes; not only did they oust an autocrat in July 2024 through a mass uprising, but 1991 also saw the downfall of the autocrat, Hussain Muhammad Ershad, through another rebellion. This begs the question: why does this cycle of autocracy continue to repeat itself? Can the Constitution, the highest law of the land, not give us a solution by putting in checks and balances? The book *Maron Rajneeti: Rashtro, Khomota O Shohingshotar Boyan* (Adarsha, 2024) by Sarwar Tushar and Sohul Ahmed Munna explores this question, asking if the antidote we find ourselves seeking is itself a virus.

Broadly speaking, the answer is yes. The book is a collection and modification of different articles the writers had written and published elsewhere, all connected by a common thread: the ways in which the constitution of Bangladesh is itself the source of the problem in the power structure.

This crisis goes back to the first constitution of 1972. Many critics have pointed out that the process of forming the Constitution of 1972 was unsatisfactory. The elected officials of the 1970 election, the first and last fair election in undivided Pakistan, sat down to write the constitution. However, this should not have been the case; in the transformed context of post-Liberation War Bangladesh, all parties and organisations involved with the war should have been consulted in forming the constitution. This lack of representation from different groups was a major flaw in the constituent assembly. It not only led to issues like discrimination against indigenous groups by categorising them as "Bangalis", but also led to the formation of several undemocratic clauses.

As the writers explain, the constitution is supposed to represent the fundamental character of the state and its citizens. As such, the constitution should reflect the wishes of the people in its purest sense. Not only was this principle violated in 1972, but clause 142, which allows the parliament to change the constitution with a two-thirds majority, makes the constitution vulnerable to the whims of whoever is in power. The right to change the constitution should remain with the citizens, not the parliament. This clause has been misused by almost every regime Bangladesh has seen, modifying the constitution according to their need.

But there's more. The notorious clause 70, which restricts parliament members from opposing any decision taken by their party leader, results in the consolidation of power by the party which has the majority. Clauses like these essentially transform the parliament into a constitutionally valid autocracy.

As the writers explain throughout the book, the constitution doesn't guarantee any citizen fundamental rights such as freedom of speech or freedom of association, only mentioning how the state can prohibit them. These loopholes are exploited to create laws such as the Cyber Security Act, which has been protested by all forms of media since its inception. The vague description of the CSA, or its predecessor, the DSA (Digital Security Act), has been heavily criticised both nationally and internationally. However, the government wasn't obligated to scrap it. Why? Because the 39th clause mentions that freedom of speech can be restricted if the security of the state, friendly relations with foreign countries, or decency and morality are threatened. Without qualifications, almost each of these is vulnerable to misuse, which has been the case in forming the CSA.

Another case in point can be extra-judicial killings, which have been justified by using the 32nd clause, which states that life or personal liberty cannot be violated save under the law. This too, has been twisted to justify extra-judicial killing in Bangladesh done by different forces. Like the War On Drugs conducted in the Philippines during the reign of Rodrigo Duterte, the general public may be satisfied that the people being killed are drug peddlers or criminals. But this implies that legal procedures are not being followed, and creates a ground where any dissident may be harmed with the excuse of them being a threat without a proper legal process.

Another fact that the authors show is how the legacies of colonialism are spread throughout the power structure of this country. The bureaucracy and law enforcement agencies in Bangladesh still follow the system which was set up during the British period, when the main motivation of colonial power was to suppress the native people. But a sovereign country, which has fought against colonial powers and defeated them, deserves to have a new formation of the power structure which allows them to have their independence and freedom valued—a system which doesn't treat them as colonial subjects, but as citizens of a democracy.

These flaws in the constitution, bureaucracy, and law enforcement agencies are important to understand certain events, such as how writer Mushtaq Ahmed was detained under DSA and subsequently murdered, or the role of police in the July massacre. Although this particular book was not banned, many books were, in the name of protecting national security. As the generation has changed from being proudly apolitical to starting to learn the intricacies of politics, state, law, and history, books like *Maron Rajneeti* can be a starting point for many to get into discussions about the constitution, how it has been misused, and how it can be rectified. This education is important in order to build a democratic Bangladesh which ensures the rights of everyone.

Sadman Ahmed Siam, *as the name suggests, is indeed a sad man. He was sorted into Hufflepuff on Pottermore and has been sad ever since. Send him happy quotes at: siamahmed09944@gmail.com.*

BOOK REVIEW: TEXTBOOK

It's all crimson inside 'SHAHITTOPATH'

The match grows dirty and the battleground today is covered in wounds and regret. The book also houses the beloved short story, "Raincoat", in which Akhtaruzzaman Elias eloquently paints a damp yet nerve-wracking day of 1971 Dhaka through the eyes of another Nurul—Nurul Huda, a seemingly neutral person in this chess match.

ZARAFET

"Mr Nurul Amin couldn't realise what bureaucracy had dragged him down to". Remember how you needed to absolutely memorise this line with context and underlying meaning for answering comprehension-based questions? Well, that was to earn a couple of marks in exams. Turns out, it is also a 101 guide on how to earn a nation back.

Say, it is like a chess match. The chessboard is a rocky field that is to be conquered for justice. The 11-12th grade National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) textbook on Bangla literature, *Shahittopath* is, in fact, an undying testament to the rebellious hearts that are prescribed to read it. The spirit of rising against injustice and turning up your voice just a tad bit to speak the truth is strong in this book. And you know what? A book that is read by over one and a quarter million blooming hearts every year, every individual's "tad bit" is enough to let the words run over trillions of miles of land.

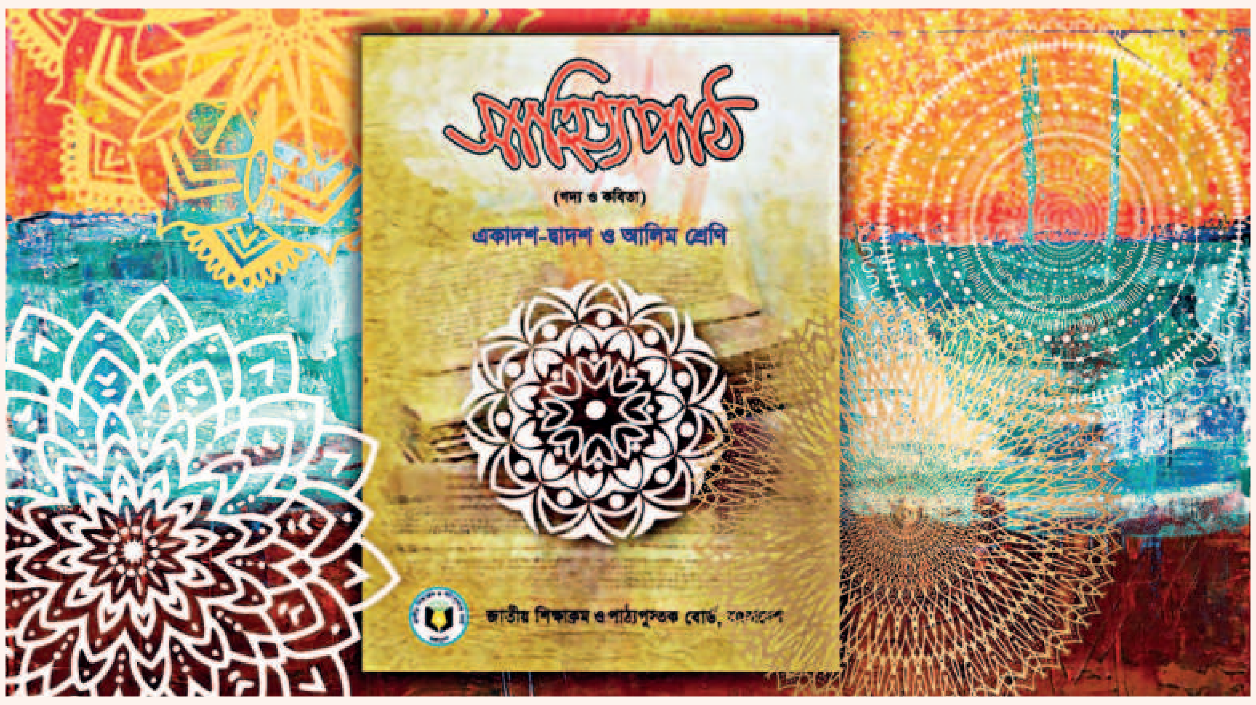
There are several Nuruls in *Shahittopath*. One is Chief Minister Nurul Amin in "Bayannor Dinguli", narrated by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Standing with his dignified corporals, Nurul Amin stands at one side of the chessboard. Nurul Amin fired against the protesting students who wanted a reformation of the state language. Bangabandhu talks about the cowardice that the then-governors showed by shooting the students who ignited the streets with passion.

On the other side stands another Nurul—Nuruldin. In Syed Shamsul Haque's "Nuruldiner Kotha Mone Pore Jay", Nuruldin chants the lore of Bengal's much-awaited freedom with the rhythm of united marching steps against fascism. Let the match begin.

A passion of youth. The time when they want the jury to announce nothing but the verdict of life—the verdict of valid existence. In *Shahittopath*, Shukanto Bhattacharjee depicts the passion soulfully in his poem, "Atharo Bochhor Boyosh". He says,

"This age knows the virtue of
sacrificing blood
As they sprint in the speed of
pressurised vapour,
The pouch containing departed lives
stay unemptied
Sucking the souls with a vigorous
promise."

A compilation of revolutionary literary creations is never complete without the words of the rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. In "Amar Poth", he reminds us about the urgency of embracing one's individuality and unique righteousness, even in the face of certain oppression. "My truth will show my way...One who is certain about their own identity has the spirit of never bowing their head to anyone but the truth"—such words swing in the air like an irreproachable sword. He echoes the words of the brave warrior within him throughout "Bidrohi" by bringing up the age-old mythical and historical legends who raise their heads against injustice. From Bheem to Orpheus, he is reincarnated as the emperor of destruction and the composer of ballads as sweet as honeysuckles. Lastly, he invites many others to be revolutionaries as long as injustice remains.


সাহিত্যপাঠ
(গদ্য ও কবিতা)
একাদশ-দ্বাদশ ও আলিম শ্রেণি
জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড, বাংলাদেশ

DESIGN: **MAISHA SYEDA**

The match grows dirty and the battleground today is covered in wounds and regret. The book also houses the beloved short story, "Raincoat", in which Akhtaruzzaman Elias eloquently paints a damp yet nerve-wracking day of 1971 Dhaka through the eyes of another Nurul—Nurul Huda, a seemingly neutral person in this chess match. Through witty humour and subtle satire, Elias pulls out the cruel culprits of several massacres caused during that time. From Ishak Mia to the college principal Dr Afaz Ahmed, every war criminal has been unveiled by this powerful wordsmith. Nurul's dramatic commute to work through a military-occupied Dhaka is bone-chilling. "An umbrella won't be enough in this rain, honey. You better take Mintu's raincoat with you." "Raincoat" demonstrates the pain and concerns of a teacher and the sheer helplessness he experiences in the face of atrocities.

Shahittopath proudly upholds the legacy of the people who built the foundation of triumph against persecution by grinding down the very shackles binding their hands. In Abu Jafar Obaidullah's "Ami Kingbodontir Kotha Bolchhi", the poet shows the benevolence and strength of the common people, including farmers, fishermen, helpless widows, and tortured slaves—they symbolise the people's freedom.

"I'm speaking of legends
I'm speaking of my ancestors
His palms were fragrant earth
Whose backs had wounds as bright as a rokto joba"

Lastly, "February 1969" by Shamsur Rahman also carries the spirit of "Ami Kingbodontir Kotha Bolchhi". The chess match is escalating at this point. Both sides are struggling to checkmate the other. The rooks of Nuruldin recall the bloodshed of the revolutionaries of 1952 and 1969 as they march straight towards their final nemeses. The scattered bloodstains of '52's Salam and Barkat mingle with that of '69's Shamsuzzoha and Shaheed Asad.

The crusade of *Shahittopath* has come to an end, but the chess match is still ongoing. Nuruldin and his comrades fetch more stories to warm their shattered hearts and move forward to write some themselves. Nurul Huda needs to take a stand before his legs are tied.

There will be a checkmate. The echoes of emancipation have been howled beyond the chess field. Nurul Huda's raincoat has been taken off by the brute pawns, but by now he has learned to rise in spirit. There's only one row of squares left to be conquered by Nuruldin's army—the only row where Nurul Amin is standing.

Checkmate. The game has come to an end. The fascist has fallen.

Now, Nuruldin's people look back at the bloodied chessboard, wretched and adrift. They hum the words of "Manob Kollan" by Abul Fazal and absorb the juvenile spirit in "Aparichita" by Rabindranath Tagore as they mend the field. They bring about a new dawn.

Zarafet *sits by the end of the horizon and hums the tunes of songs sung by the unsung.*

Star
SPORT
DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 15, 2024, SRABAN 31, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

T Sports
The Hundred
Birmingham Phoenix vs
Manchester Originals
Live from 11:30 pm

Can rivals step up the fight against Real?

AGENCIES

After a summer dominated by Spain, with La Roja storming to Euro 2024 triumph and their youngsters claiming gold at the Paris Olympics, the focus now turns to Spain once again as LaLiga kicks off on Thursday.

Athletic Club will begin proceedings by hosting Getafe tonight before Real Betis face Girona at home later on the day.

But the big guns will be back in action a bit later. Barcelona travel to Valencia for their opener on Saturday night while defending champions Real Madrid, who were scheduled to vie for a record sixth UEFA Super Cup against Atalanta in Warsaw last night, will be hosted by Mallorca in exactly 24 hours.

Real the favourites

It will be no surprise that Real, the reigning Champions League winners, are overwhelming favourites for another successful domestic run with Kylian Mbappe boosting Carlo Ancelotti's already enviable squad.

Real will be without Toni Kroos after his retirement. Luka Modric and Federico Valverde are in the squad to plug gaps but don't provide the ability to spread passes and read the game as well as the German midfielder did.

While Real might have a few problems in midfield, the long-awaited arrival of Mbappe to form a deadly forward line alongside established stars like Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo. To add to the firepower, Real will have Brazilian teenage sensation Endrick who will put Real ahead of most teams in the league.

They will also have first-choice goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois and defender Eder Militao, who had missed almost the entirety of the previous season, available from the beginning.

German era at Barca

In a major change at Barcelona, Hansi Flick has taken over the role of head coach from club legend Xavi.

Flick recently had a rough spell as Germany manager and is hoping for a more positive experience as he returns to club football. He had spoken of emulating Pep Guardiola and Johan Cruyff's style but the fact that they lost 3-0 to Monaco in the Joan Gamper Trophy shows the tough task ahead.

Barca have brought in one of Spain's Euro 2024 heroes Dani Olmo from RB Leipzig but the club have not been able to register their £46m signing with LaLiga owing to their financial constraints.

Moreover, Barcelona also have injury issues going into the season. Ronald Araujo, Pedri, Gavi, and Frenkie de Jong are all nursing injuries, meaning Flick will have his work cut out if he plans to overthrow Real from the throne in his debut season for which he might need to depend on 17-year-old Spanish sensation Lamine Yamal to continue his stellar form.

Atletico rebuild to end Real-Barca dominance

After winning the title in 2020-21, Atletico Madrid have finished third, third, and fourth last season -- being pipped by Girona.

But Diego Simeone's men will hope to rectify that and give Real and Barcelona a run for their money as they have made some significant changes in personnel for the season. The headline signing has been the one of Argentine World Cup winner Julian Alvarez from Manchester City in a reported deal worth approximately $104 million.

Upfront with Alvarez, Alexander Sorloth will play a key role after arriving from Villarreal fresh from scoring 23 goals in last league campaign.

They have also bolstered their backline by signing Robin Le Normand from Real Sociedad.

Who could cause a surprise?

Girona did that job last season. Real Betis may do it this time, but maybe not to the extent that Michel's side did. Managed by Manuel Pellegrini, playmakers Isco and Nabil Fekir can help Betis beat anyone on their day.

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan hits one at the nets of the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore during Bangladesh's first practice session in Pakistan yesterday. Shakib flew from Canada to join the team, which started their preparation for the first Test against the hosts, scheduled to be held in Rawalpindi from August 21 to 25.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Is the current BCB board legitimate?

AL-AMIN

The board of directors of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) might face a legitimacy crisis as they were elected under the 2017-amended BCB constitution, which entitled six top-flight Dhaka clubs to nominate two councillors each to vote, instead of the previous one-entity-one-vote system.

This preferential treatment of the clubs could be interpreted to be illegal under the country's constitution, an article which states that all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.

The current 25-member board of directors led by BCB President Nazmul Hassan Papon was elected on October 6, 2021 polls for a four-year term.

Papon was elected as one of the 12 directors from the Club Category, where six clubs -- Abahani, Prime Bank, Prime Doleshwar, Gazi Group, Sheikh Jamal and Mohammedan -- were granted two councillors each in accordance with the 2017 (amended) BCB constitution.

In Section 9, titled 'Formation of General Council', it was stated that the six clubs that make it to the Super League in the Dhaka Premier League will have two councillors each. The aforementioned six clubs had finished among the top six in the Dhaka Premier League in the season that had preceded the October elections.

The allocation of two councillors in the general council was an exception considering other national boards' constitutions, including that of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), it is categorically said that one full member shall have one vote.

Contacted on Tuesday, longstanding BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury acknowledged the exception.

He said he was not aware of the option of such multiple voting in any other national cricket association.

The BCB scrapped the multiple councillors' option in the constitution after the 2021 election in an annual general meeting in 2022.

However, lawyers said,for fairness the anomalies in the 2017 BCB constitution could still be relevant and the legitimacy of an election under it could still be questioned.

According to Supreme Court lawyer Shishir Manir, two votes for one entity is a discrimination and can be challenged in any competent court of the country.

"For the same footing, for the same purpose and in the same breadth, if an entity enjoys more than one vote, it is a discrimination under Article 27 and 28 of the constitution," said Manir.

Article 27 of the constitution, under the headline "Equality before law", states that all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.

The Daily Star tried to communicate Papon for his comment. However, his phone was switched off and he has not showed up at the BCB headquarters in Mirpur ever since the student-led mass upsurge toppled the Awami League government on August 5.

Papon was a lawmaker from the ruling AL and also the Minister for Youth and Sports in former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's cabinet.

FIFA rules out BPL transfer window extension

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) outfits must complete their players' registration formalities by the existing deadline of August 19, as FIFA did not agree to extend the transfer window.

Following the resignation of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the premises of a few clubs like Abahani, Sheikh Jamal DC, and Fortis FC were vandalised by miscreants.

Clubs such as Sheikh Jamal, Sheikh Russel KC, Rahmatganj MFS, and Brothers Union verbally requested Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to extend the players' registration window, citing possible changes to their respective executive committees as well as difficulties in contacting their donors.

BFF thus officially requested the relevant department of FIFA to extend the transfer window but got a negative response.

"They told us that it is not possible to extend the deadline for player transfers once the window has been opened. We have already informed all participating clubs verbally about FIFA's decision," said BFF competition manager Zaber Bin Taher.

The players' registration window for BPL opened on June 1, with only Abahani having officially completed the registration of 14 players as of Wednesday.

Shaheens batter Bangladesh 'A'

SPORTS REPORTER

Pakistan Shaheens' batters made merry against Bangladesh 'A' bowlers on the second day of the opening four-day match as they were 367-4 at stumps at the Islamabad Club Ground on Wednesday.

Umar Amin struck a valiant 177 off 211 balls while skipper Saud Shakeel made 76 off 132 balls as the hosts a first-innings lead of 245 runs after bowling Bangladesh 'A' out for just 122 runs on the opening day.

Saad Khan and Kamran Ghulam remained not out on 31 and 20 runs respectively for the hosts, who resumed the day at two for none.

The Bangladeshi side made a bright start as pacer Tanzim Hasan Sakib dismissed opener Saim Ayub for 11 before Mohammad Huraira and Umar shared a 96-run stand for the second wicket.

Off-spinner Nayeem Hasan then broke the partnership by sending Huraira (39) back but Umar continued to frustrate the Bangladeshi bowlers by adding a 195-run partnership with Saud for the third wicket.

Left-arm spinner Hasan Murad (2-49) removed both batters in quick succession but an unbeaten partnership of 45 runs by Saad and Kamran took their lead close to the 250-run mark.

U-20s eye elusive SAFF trophy

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh have kept their sights on the elusive trophy of the SAFF U-20 Championship, despite having less than a two-week preparation under the guidance of coach Maruful Haque, with the team departing for Nepal on Friday.

Six teams, split into two groups, will take part in the regional youth football extravaganza -- which has been held five times before, involving U-18, U-19, and U-20 age groups -- from August 18 to 28 in Kathmandu.

In previous five editions, Bangladesh had to be content with finishing second three times -- in 2017, 2019, and 2022 -- behind India. In 2023 the boys in red and green exited the race at the group stage after losing to India and Bhutan.

The charges of Maruful will compete against hosts Nepal and Sri Lanka in Group A, beginning their campaign by taking on the hosts on August 20 at the Dasharath Stadium, while Group B comprises India, the Maldives, and Bhutan. The top two teams from each group will progress to the semi-finals, scheduled for August 25 and 26, before the tournament's curtain closes on August 28.

"Though I initially aimed to reach the final, after observing their dedication and focus during nearly two weeks of preparation, I see the hunger in the boys, and I think they will fight for the championship," said UEFA-licensedcoach Maruful at an official press conference at the BFF house yesterday, where team leader Khandokar Rakibul Islam and players Shakil Ahmed Topu and Mirajul Islam also spoke on the occasion..

Maruful began training with around 35 footballers on July 31 at Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur before moving the camp to the Bashundhara Kings Arena, as the Army made the former a temporary camp due to the country's deteriorating situation at the time.

After yesterday's training session, Maruful was expected to select a 23-member squad from the trimmed list of 27 players, most of whom have featured in Bangladesh Premier League. Of the 27 players, only five came from the Bangladesh Championship League, and two from the BFF Elite Academy.

Maruful informed, "As the Bangladesh Premier League ended two months ago, most of the players have been idle. It was challenging to bring the players up to fitness. We had two sessions of fitness and tactical training in the first 10 days, and the remaining days comprised single training sessions.

"I believe the players, most of whom played in the Bangladesh Premier League, are experienced and talented in the context of Bangladesh. The dedication, effort, and energy they have shown in training are positive signs, and I believe we can aim for the championship."

অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা

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AL attempt to create chaos will be resisted

Says student leaders at rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of different student organisations, including the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, declared they would resist any potential chaos by the Awami League leaders and activists centring August 15.

The students made the announcement at a rally titled "Sampriti Samabesh" in the capital's Shahbagh.

"The leaders and activists of the Awami league will try to create chaos on Thursday in the name of observing National Day of Mourning. We will remain on the streets to resist any such attempts," said Sarjis Alam, a key coordinator of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement.

"We will be on the streets until a government elected by the people assumes power," he said.

The rally was organised as a part of a week-long resistance movement as announced by the quota reform platform. It was attended by student activists of different student organisations, including Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

Students of various educational institutions gather at Shahbagh yesterday afternoon demanding formation of a special tribunal to ensure speedy trial of the killings during the mass uprising in July and August. The students later went to Danmondi-27.

NATIONWIDE PROTESTS

'False cases to be withdrawn by August 31'

Says law adviser; cases in Dhaka to be withdrawn by today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government would withdraw by today all "false and harassment" cases filed in Dhaka against students and ordinary people during quota reform protest, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said yesterday.

Similar cases lodged across the country during the student movement, which led to the ouster of Sheikh Hasina-led government, will be withdrawn by August 31, he told a press conference at the secretariat.

The adviser said his ministry officials are working day and night for withdrawal of the cases filed between July 1 and August 5.

He mentioned that they earlier said the ministry would take steps within three working days to withdraw the cases.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

KILLING OF SHOPKEEPER

Salman and Anisul placed on remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and former law minister Anisul Huq on a 10-day remand in a case filed over the death of a shopkeeper in the capital's New Market area on July 16.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mamunur Rashid passed the order in the presence of the duo after investigation officer Sajib Mia, a sub-inspector of New Market Police Station, produced them before the court with a 10-day remand appeal in the evening, said a sub-inspector working in the court.

In the courtroom, pro-BNP-Jamaat lawyers did not allow any lawyers to represent Salman and Anisul.

Two lawyers, who came to represent Salman and Anisul, could not stand inside the courtroom. They were assaulted by some unruly lawyers inside the courtroom, said witnesses.

Chaos inside the courtroom ensued when a man, claiming to be the father of the victim Shahjahan Ali, started shouting and demanding that the accused be hanged.

On the court premises, a group of lawyers even threw eggs at the accused before and after the hearing.

The hearing, where Salman and Anisul were also not allowed to speak to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

BNP focused on getting thousands of cases withdrawn

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The BNP is now focusing on getting the cases against its leaders and activists withdrawn and revamping the party after giving the interim government the time required to create a congenial atmosphere for polls.

Getting the cases withdrawn will be an uphill task since 1,41,633 cases have been filed against around 50 lakh BNP activists between 2009 and September 2023, according to the party.

The BNP believes now is the time to reorganise the party as it could not hold councils and extended meetings at grassroots units for over a decade since most leaders and activists were either in hiding or in jail. It had also been busy waging movements to oust the government.

The party leaders said almost all the cases were "politically motivated" and that most cases were filed by law enforcers, not by Awami League leaders.

"Withdrawal of politically motivated cases against our party leaders and workers is at the top of our agenda as an oppressive regime filed the cases."

AMIR KHASRU MAHMUD CHOWDHURY
BNP Standing Committee member

According to the BNP, in the nine city corporation areas, 35,284 cases had been filed against 8,90,516 BNP leaders and activists until September 2023.

Besides these, 11,461 cases were filed against 7,63,565 leaders and activists in BNP's Rajshahi division; 13,482 cases against 3,72,635 in BNP's Chattogram division; 6,265 cases against 1,15,199 in Cumilla division; 9,704 cases against 3,81,471 in Rangpur division; 15,079 cases against 6,61,553 in Dhaka division; 6,394 cases against 2,51,117 in Mymensingh division; 8,662 cases against 30,35,21 in Barishal division; 26,871 cases against 9,65,173 in Khulna division; and 8,434 cases against 2,21,744 BNP leaders and activists in Sylhet organisational division.

The party also said 513 cases had been filed between November 15, 2023, when the polls schedule was announced, and January 29 this year accusing 13,530 BNP leaders and activists.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

'Our govt mishandled the protests'

Joy says it shouldn't have waited for court to settle quota issue

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
New Delhi

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy has admitted that mistakes were made in handling the recent student protests in Bangladesh.

The government should have engaged with the protesters from the very beginning and spoken out against the quotas much earlier, Joy told The Indian Express in a video interview from Washington DC. The interview was published yesterday.

"I believe our government should have spoken out against the quotas and met with the protesters from the beginning instead of leaving it to the courts... Our government filed an appeal with the Supreme Court to reduce the quotas. I recommended we take a public stance, stating the court made a mistake and we don't want the quotas. But our government chose not to, expecting the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Thai court sacks PM over ethics case

Says Srettha lacked integrity in cabinet appointment

REUTERS, BANGKOK

Thailand's Constitutional Court yesterday dismissed Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin for "grossly" violating ethics by appointing a minister who had served jail time, raising the spectre of political upheaval and a shakeup in the governing alliance.

Real estate tycoon Srettha becomes the fourth Thai premier in 16 years to be removed in verdicts by the same court after its judges ruled 5-4 in favour of dismissing him for failing to perform his duty with integrity.

Srettha's exit after less than a year in power means parliament must convene to choose a new premier, with the prospect of more uncertainty in a country dogged for two decades by coups and court rulings that have brought down multiple governments and political parties.

"The court has found 5-4 that the accused is terminated as prime minister due to his lack of honesty," the judges said, adding his behaviour "grossly breached ethical standards".

The ruling underlines the central role the judiciary has played in Thailand's unrelenting crisis, with the same court last week dissolving the anti-establishment Move Forward Party after ruling its campaign to reform a law against insulting the crown risked undermining the constitutional monarchy.

Move Forward's surviving lawmakers regrouped last Friday under a new party. Parliament will convene tomorrow to vote on a new premier, Srettha's chief of staff, Prommin Lertsuridej, a veteran of the Pheu Thai party, told Reuters without elaborating.

Delhi eager to work with interim govt

Says Indian envoy after meeting with foreign affairs adviser

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India is keen on working with the interim government of Bangladesh led by Prof Muhammad Yunus "to fulfil the shared aspirations of peoples of both countries", said Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma yesterday.

"We are eager to work with the interim government and advance the bilateral relationship," he told the media after paying a courtesy call on newly appointed Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain at the foreign ministry yesterday.

Touhid said Dhaka also wanted to work closely with New Delhi to promote bilateral relations, and stressed more people-centric engagement in future.

He emphasised some key issues like putting an end to border killings, sharing the water of the Teesta river, and ensuring supply of essential commodities.

Touhid, however, accused the Indian media of carrying out a campaign by "highly exaggerating" attacks on

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Workers set up a makeshift structure on a piece of land that was recovered from illegal occupation by Sadeeq Agro near the Ramchandrapur canal in the capital's Mohammadpur on June 27. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

STUDENT PROTEST

UN team to visit Bangladesh to probe killings

Volker Türk tells Prof Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of UN experts will visit Bangladesh soon to investigate the killings during the student-led movement that toppled Sheikh Hasina, UN human rights chief Volker Türk has said.

Türk revealed the information in a phone conversation with Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, according to Shafiqul Alam, press secretary to the head of the interim government.

"The UN rights chief said a UN-led investigation will be launched very soon to probe the killing of the protesters during the Student Revolution. A team of UN experts would soon visit the country to set up an investigation," Shafiqul said on Facebook.

Describing UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres as a "longtime friend", Prof Yunus thanked him and Türk for supporting the students' revolution and championing their rights during unprecedented and devastating killings of student protesters.

The 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner said human rights would be the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

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LOANS FROM JANATA, NBL

S Alam, Nassa got Tk 2,544cr waiver in breach of rules

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Chattogram-based conglomerate S Alam Group and garment manufacturer Nassa Group were given interest waivers amounting to Tk 2,544 crore bypassing banking rules, in a testament to the outsize influence oligarchs had on the banking sector during the Awami League-led government of the past 15 years.

What is more baffling is that the central bank provided the no-objection certificate (NOC) in favour of the two business giants, who are led by individuals with easy access to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, for getting the waiver facility.

> **What is more baffling is that the central bank provided the no-objection certificate (NOC) in favour of the two business giants, who are led by individuals with easy access to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, for getting the waiver facility.**

Founded in 1985 by Saiful Alam, a relative of former AL politician Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu and former Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, S Alam Group has grown into one of the largest conglomerates in Bangladesh. The business giant owns controlling stakes in eight banks.

Nassa Group is led by Nazrul Islam Mazumder, who is the chairman of Exim Bank and the private bank owners' forum Bangladesh Association of Banks since 2008.

As per the central bank rules, banks can waive the partial or whole interest in the case of the death of the borrower or the closure of the project due to natural calamity, pandemic, flood or any other act of God.

Besides, a Bangladesh Bank notice on April 21, 2022 barred the waiver of interest that had already been transferred to their income segment.

But the companies of S Alam Group and Nassa Group that were given the interest waiver facilities were operational; no natural disaster took place in that time.

And the lenders -- National Bank in the case of S Alam Group and Janata in the case of Nassa Group -- waived the interest by halting the income segment, which was a violation of the banking rules.

On December 22, 2021, the central bank provided NOC through seven letters to National Bank for allowing the interest waiver facility to the loans, taken from the bank's Khatunganj branch in Chattogram

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

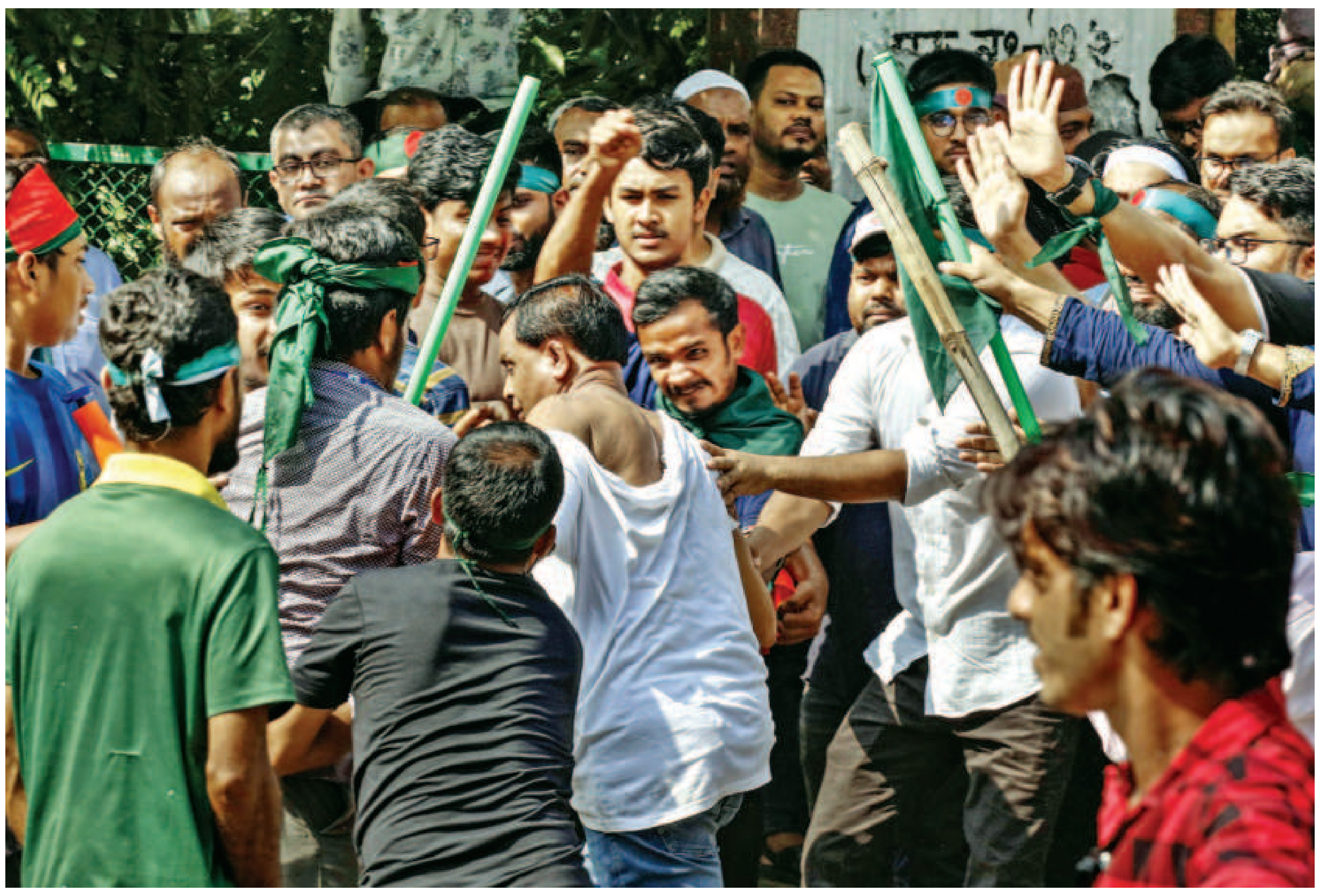

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Students and people beating up a man at Russell Square yesterday. They stopped pedestrians, checked their phones, and beat up people they thought were going to Dhanmondi-32 to pay homage to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Hasina faces another ICT case

2 more murder cases filed against her

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Another complaint was filed with the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina accusing her of committing crimes against humanity and genocide during the people's uprising.

She was also accused in two more murder cases filed yesterday with two Dhaka courts.

The complaint at the International Crimes Tribunal was filed by Muhammad Sanaullah, a resident of Baro Roypara area of Munshiganj's Gazaria.

The complaint said Sanaullah's son Mehedi was killed during student protests near Dhaka-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Provide info on bank accounts of S Alam, family

NBR directs banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has asked for bank account details of Chattogram-based businessman Mohammed Saiful Alam and his family members to check if they have been paying their taxes properly.

The NBR wrote to 91 banks and financial institutions to this effect on Wednesday, said Ahsan Habib, commissioner of taxes, Tax Zone-15, an NBR field office in Dhaka, yesterday, adding that the move was part of their "routine job".

In the letters, information on the bank accounts and credit cards of S Alam, his brother Mohammed Abdullah Hasan, mother Chemon Ara Begum, and wife Farzana Parveen have been requested.

Additionally, details about any personal or business accounts jointly held in the names of S Alam's sister, daughter, or son have been sought.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

More advisers to be sworn in today

Wahiduddin Mahmud, Ali Imam Majumdar, Fouzul Kabir Khan invited to take oath

Wahiduddin Mahmud

Ali Imam Majumdar

Fouzul Kabir Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government's advisory council is set to expand as more advisers will be sworn in today.

The oath-taking will take place at the Darbar Hall of the Bangabhaban at 4:00pm, according to a press release from the Bangabhaban yesterday.

Last night, people close to economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, who was an adviser to caretaker government in 1996, said he got the invitation to take oath as an adviser of this interim government.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus was also an adviser to the 1996 caretaker government.

Sources said Ali Imam Majumdar, former cabinet

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

People beaten up, harassed at Dhanmondi-32

Their phones checked; journos stopped from taking photos; student leaders condemn it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the 49th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, students and people took control of Dhanmondi Road-32 and obstructed those who they believed wanted to pay tribute to the leader.

Hundreds of students and members of the public were at the area. They stopped pedestrians, questioned them, checked their identification documents and phones, and prevented people from taking photos of what they were doing. Several people were beaten up, tied up, and handed over to law enforcers.

The Daily Star reporters and photographers on the spot observed at least 25 people being beaten up by people wielding sticks and rods. Some of them were tied up and dragged around before being handed over to law enforcers.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

FROM QUOTA REFORM TO REGIME CHANGE

Use the QR code to access The Daily Star's timeline chronicling the students' quota movement that led to the end of Sheikh Hasina's 15 year rule.

STUDENT PROTEST

UN team to fly in next week to probe atrocities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations will send a fact-finding team to Bangladesh next week to probe atrocities committed during the student-led protests in July and earlier this month.

UN human rights chief Volker Turk announced the move when he called Chief Adviser (CA) Professor Muhammad Yunus on Wednesday, the press wing of the CA's office said yesterday.

This will be the first UN fact-finding mission to Bangladesh since its independence in 1971 to investigate widespread human rights abuses in the country, according to a UN official.

During the phone conversation, Volker Türk said a UN-led investigation would be launched very soon to probe the killing of the protesters during the "Student Revolution" and that a team of UN experts would soon visit the country to set up the investigation.

Yunus thanked him for supporting the students' revolution and championing their rights during the "unprecedented and devastating killing of student protesters".

The 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner said human rights would be the cornerstone of his administration, and the protection of every citizen is the utmost priority of the interim government.

A man dashes to board a train at Kamalapur Railway Station. After nearly a month of suspension, intercity train services resumed across the country yesterday, providing relief to travellers and bringing back some sense of normalcy. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

DHAKA WASA MD

Never-ending tenure of Taqsem ends!

HELEMUL ALAM

Taqsem A Khan resigned as the managing director of Dhaka Wasa on Wednesday after being at the helm of the state-owned agency for nearly 15 years marked by many allegations of irregularities.

Taqsem resigned over an email, stating that health problems had rendered him unable to work.

The Local Government Division (LGD) yesterday issued an order mentioning that Taqsem's tenure has ended and AKM Sahid Uddin, a senior deputy managing director of Dhaka Wasa, would be the new managing director.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

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AL leader hacked to death in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

An Awami League leader was hacked to death while he was returning home after praying at a local mosque in Sylhet's Bishwanath upazila on Wednesday night.

Md Maniruzzaman Lilu, 50, was the vice president of Awami League's Rampasha union unit in the upazila.

He was also a businessman and a resident of Nawdhar village.

Around 8:30pm, Maniruzzaman was returning home alone after offering Esha prayers in the village mosque when a group of assailants swopped on him with sharp weapons, police and locals said.

Hearing his screams, locals rushed to the spot and took him to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, where the duty doctor declared him dead.

His nephew, Abu Foyez, said, "We do not know whether he had previous enmities, so anyone could have killed him."

Rama Prasad, officer-in-charge of Bishwanath Police Station, said, "The body was handed over to family after an autopsy. We will take the necessary action after a case is filed."

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir addresses a programme in front of the party's Nayapaltan office in the capital yesterday. At the event, he demanded that former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her aides be tried on mass killing charges.

Foreign ministry recalls seven envoys

Five other officials posted overseas also ordered to return

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has called back seven of Bangladesh's ambassadors who are on contractual postings overseas.

In addition, orders to return home have been issued for five other officials who are on contract or deputation abroad.

The development is part of the interim government's decision to make personnel changes in various ministries.

The foreign ministry yesterday issued separate orders in this regard.

The envoys who were asked to return to Dhaka are Mohammad Imran, ambassador to the US; Kamrul Hasan, ambassador to Russia; Rear Admiral SM Abul Kalam Azad, ambassador to the Maldives; Javed Patwary, ambassador to Saudi Arabia; Shahabuddin Ahmed, ambassador to Japan; Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, ambassador to Germany; and Abu Zafar, ambassador to the UAE.

The five other officials who were ordered to return are Wahiduzzaman Noor and Arifa Rahman Ruma, first secretary and counsellor at the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington; Aparna Rani Pal and Mobashira Farzana Mithila, counsellors at the Bangladesh Embassy in Ottawa; and Asib Uddin Ahmed, third secretary at the Bangladesh consulate in New York.

More advisers to be sworn in today

FROM PAGE 1

secretary, who was appointed as special assistant to this interim government's chief adviser on August 12, and Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan, former power secretary, also received the invitation.

Officials of the Cabinet Division and the Bangabhaban could not disclose the number and names of new advisers.

"I don't know the new advisers' names," Joynal Abedin, press secretary of President Mohammed Shahabuddin, told The Daily Star.

However, state-run news agency BSS reported that "four to five more advisers" are set to take oath.

The interim government is going to expand its advisory council a week after its advisers took the oath of office.

Besides Prof Yunus, 16 advisers are now in this government. Prof Yunus and 13 other advisers -- Salehuddin Ahmed, Asif Nazrul, Adilur Rahman, Hassan Ariff, Touhid Hossain, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Sharmeen Murshid, Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hossain, AFM Khalid Hossain, Farida Akhter, Nurjahan Begum, Nahid Islam and Asif Mahmud -- were sworn in on August 8, four days after the fall of Hasina-led government amid an uprising.

Supradeep Chakma and Bidhan Ranjan Roy Poddar took oath as advisers on August 11 and Farooq-e-Azam the next day.

Chief Adviser Prof Yunus himself is overseeing 24 ministries and divisions, including Cabinet Division, and ministries of defence, education, and road transport and bridges.

HIGH TREASON

Russia jails US-Russian woman for 12 years

AFP, *Moscow*

A Russian court yesterday jailed US-Russian citizen Ksenia Karelina for 12 years after she was found guilty of "high treason" for giving about $50 to a pro-Ukraine charity in a case slammed as "vindictive cruelty" by the US presidency.

The 32-year-old ballet dancer and spa worker from Los Angeles was detained in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg in January while visiting family.

S Alam, Nassa

FROM PAGE 1

and Gulshan branch in Dhaka in 2003.

The ailing National Bank waived Tk 2,283 crore as interest on the loans of eight companies of S Alam Group: S Alam Super Edible Oil got Tk 715 crore interest waiver, S Alam and Company got Tk 456 crore, S Alam Vegetable Oil got Tk 322.77 crore, NAF Trading Tk 249.96 crore, Adil Corporation Tk 185.23 crore, Pusti Vegetable Ghee Tk 158 crore; Fairy Trade international Tk 122.87 crore and S Alam Brothers Tk 73.14 crore.

As a result, S Alam Group ended up repaying the principal amount of Tk 4,928 crore and no interest, according to central bank documents.

Some companies of Sikder Group, which held controlling stakes in National Bank then, had loans in three Shariah-based banks controlled by the S Alam Group and National Bank provided the interest waiver facility to S Alam Group on the assurance that Sikder Group would be afforded the same facility in the Islamic banks, The Daily Star has learnt from people with knowledge of the tacit deal.

Thanks to the huge interest waiver to S Alam Group, National Bank, one of the earliest private sector banks in Bangladesh, logged a loss of Tk 3,260 crore for 2022. The lender is yet to recover from this hit, according to National Bank officials informed with the proceedings.

"As far as I know, S Alam Group do not have any loan in our bank," said Touhidul Alam Khan, managing director of National Bank.

The companies have repaid all their loans and closed the accounts with the bank, said Khan, who joined the lender on January 25 this year from Premier Bank.

Similarly, at the 654th board meeting of Janata Bank in 2021, a Tk 261 crore interest waiver facility was approved for two companies of Nassa Group: Nassa Taipei Spinners and Nassa Spinners.

Janata had acquired the Tk 120 crore loans of the two Nassa companies in 2008 from Southeast Bank and Islami Bank.

The state-owned bank gave Nassa Taipei the facility subject to the collection of Tk 156.12 crore by August 31, 2021, as per the meeting minutes.

The central bank in June of 2021 rejected the facility as Janata approved the waiver violating banking norms. BB later walked back on the decision and approved the interest waiver.

Md Abdul Jabbar, current MD of Janata Bank, and Md Abdus Salam Azad, former MD, could not be reached for comment despite repeated attempts.

"The interest waiver facility by violating rules creates a bad example in the banking industry and other borrowers are motivated by the example," said Anis A Khan, the former chairman of the Association of Bankers Bangladesh, a platform of banks' chief executives.

This practice goes against good governance in the banking sector, said Khan, also a former MD of Mutual Trust Bank.

The Daily Star could not reach Alam and Mazumder for comment, while BB declined the request for comment.

People beaten up, harassed at Dhanmondi-32

FROM PAGE 1

The media were also being obstructed from doing their duty. Several journalists, including those of this newspaper, were harassed and made to delete photos they took. A man announced on a loudspeaker, "Do not take photos and videos. Those inside buildings looking down, do not take out your phones."

Kader Siddique Bir Uttam, the president of the Krishak Sramik Janata League, was attacked when he attempted to pay his respects.

Kader Siddique told The Daily Star, "I went to pay respect [to Bangabandhu] at 7 in the morning, but I couldn't. It felt nice that a few people respectfully asked me to go back... I was inside the car. However, some people threw stones and vandalised the car. After that, I left. Today, I saw some people tied up with ropes [near the Dhanmondi 32 area], which is unacceptable."

The officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station, Emran Hossain, said that 16 people were handed over to policemen and some were injured and needed medical attention.

Sohel, 45, was beaten up by the people. He was left reeling with split knuckles and knees, and a swollen left arm he could not move. A rickshaw-puller rescued him.

"I am from Panchagarh. I came to Dhaka because my son just got admitted to Notre Dame College and I wanted to drop him off. I was on the back of a motorcycle with a brother of mine, and I was not going to Dhanmondi-32. I was just passing by," he told this reporter.

Police and army personnel were present there but did not intervene.

Md Azim, a student, said they were holding the ground to prevent the Awami League from using this as an opportunity to organise. "We have been here since morning. If anyone tries to take away the freedom we earned with our blood, we will resist."

The students' platform against discrimination had announced "resistance week" centring the day.

ICT Adviser of the interim government Nahid Islam in a Facebook post yesterday evening condemned the act of checking phones and swooping on unarmed innocent people.

"Our revolution is based on justice and principles. The aim of our student-citizen revolution was to abolish the fascist system, establish security of life and justice in society. We have to continue the resistance, on the other hand we have to uphold our spirit of the rebellion," read his post.

One of the central leaders of the students' platform, Hasnat Abdullah, on his social media page said, "Bangladesh Chhatra League members used to stop us and check our phones to find evidence of resistance. Today we heard that students, claiming to be from the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, had been checking phones and violating the privacy of the people. We protest against this and warn them about repeating this in the future.

"We have also heard that the media have been obstructed from taking photos and filming. We believe in the independence of the press. We criticise those who had harassed journalists."

In past years, Awami League leaders and workers of every level thronged Dhanmondi-32, often with camerapersons in tow, to lay wreaths at the mural in front of the Bangabandhu museum. This visit of homage was mandatory to prove allegiance to the party.

The museum was torched after the fall of the Hasina-led government on August 5.

The interim government on August 13 withdrew the public holiday.

The national flag was at full-mast at Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday, unlike previous years when it was at half-mast.

Even though there were no government programmes to mark the day, there were small events organised by some organisations.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh held a discussion marking the National Day of Mourning at its party office in Paltan.

CPB President Shah Alam presided over the meeting while General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince and economist MM Akash took part in the discussion.

Udichi Shilpigoshthi too organised a discussion at their central office to mark the day.

Metro service

FROM PAGE 16

-- Mirpur-10 and Kazipara -- halting the metro rail operations.

The government directed DMTCL on August 11 to complete necessary technical checks within seven days to resume the service.

However, the operation of the two stations will remain suspended until those are repaired.

On the same day, the advisory council of the interim government decided to resume metro rail service tomorrow.

"But due to unavoidable situation, it was not possible to start necessary technical checks," reads the press release signed by Mohammad Abdur Rouf, company secretary of DMTCL.

"In this situation, it would not be possible to resume metro rail operation as per plan. DMTCL regrets for it cordially," it added.

The Daily Star could not reach DMTCL Managing Director MAN Siddique and Abdur Rouf for comments over phone.

However, sources said the employees of grade 10 to 20 have been on strike since August 6 to press home their six-point demand, including pay hike.

The top officials of DMTCL and even the immediate past secretary of the Road Transport and Highways Division talked to the employees and assured them of meeting the demands, but they refused to call off the strike, the sources said.

"So, the operation is not going to resume from Saturday [tomorrow]," an official said, wishing to be unnamed.

Responding to a query, the official said once the employees withdraw their work abstention, it would take at least five days to complete necessary preparation, so it is not possible to say when the metro rail operation will restart.

Never-ending

FROM PAGE 1

Taqsem was appointed Wasa MD on October 14, 2009. His tenure was extended for the seventh time on October 14, 2023.

There are allegations that Wasa supplied contaminated water and overspent funds on projects that did not bear fruit while Taqsem was at the helm.

Many say that the cost of Dhaka Wasa water increased 16 times because of him.

In May 2023, former Wasa chairman Gholam Mostofa wrote a letter to the LGD, highlighting the irregularities at Wasa.

The ministry then responded by promptly removing Mostafa from his post and keeping Taqsem, a US citizen, as the MD.

Mostafa told this newspaper at that time that Taqsem's monthly salary increased by 421 percent over the years and stood at Tk 6.25 lakh. Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, his salary was bumped by Tk 1.75 lakh.

Talking to reporters at his office yesterday, LGRD Adviser AF Hassan Ariff said, "The stories of his corruption are known to people."

The corrupt individuals who used to surround Taqsem are still active, he said.

"We will take legal action against them," he added.

In 2019, Taqsem caused public outrage after saying that Wasa water was fully safe for drinking.

He made the claim at a press conference arranged to refute allegations made by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB).

TIB, after a year-long study titled "Dhaka Wasa: Challenges of Good Governance and Way Forward", revealed their findings in April 2019, mentioning how 91 percent of the 2,728 service recipients of Dhaka Wasa water had to boil the water to make it drinkable.

In the process, they burnt gas worth Tk 332 crore a year.

But many Dhaka dwellers are still buying dirty and smelly water, facing acute shortage of drinking water, being deprived of access to the sewerage network, and encountering the same old water logging.

Mizanur Rahman, a resident of Jurain's Mistir Dokan area, said many of around two lakh residents of Purba Jurain are still facing similar problems and some do not even have running water.

Mizanur is one of a few hundred residents from Jurain, Shyampur, Madhya Badda, Rampura and Tejgaon who demonstrated in front of the Wasa's Karwan Bazar headquarters on April 23, 2019.

The image of him carrying a jug full of dirty water as a sarcastic gift of "sherbet" to Taqsem is still fresh in the minds of Dhaka residents.

Mizanur and several others held a human chain in front of Wasa yesterday demanding that Taqsem be arrested and punished.

The city dwellers did not get the benefit of Wasa's treatment plants due to absence of a supply network, experts say.

Widespread corruption and delays in project implementation also plagued Wasa, said a report of the Anti-Corruption Commission in July 2019.

The ACC report said Wasa kept extending deadlines and increasing the costs of projects to create room for corruption.

Corruption and irregularities also took place during the selection of consultants and contractors during revenue collection and overtime bill disbursements, said the report.

Manual metre reading is also an area where cartels have been formed to misappropriate money and deny the government its revenue, said the report that identified eight projects and three areas in Dhaka where corruption took place, and made a 12-point recommendation to prevent graft.

Hasina faces another ICT case

FROM PAGE 1

Chittagong highway in Narayanganj on July 20.

Eight others accused in the complaint are Obaidul Quader, Awami League general secretary and former road transport minister; Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, former home minister; Zunaid Ahmed Palak, former state minister for telecommunications and IT; Mohammad Ali Arafat, former state minister for information; Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, former inspector general of police; Harun Or Rashid, former additional commissioner (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP); Habibur Rahman, former DMP commissioner; and Harun Ar Rashid, former director general of Rab.

Investigation of this complaint and the one filed on Wednesday will be held simultaneously, Ataur Rahman, deputy director (admin) of the investigation agency, told The Daily Star last night.

Once the probe is done, the agency will submit the report to the Chief Prosecutor's Office of the tribunal so that the next procedures can begin.

On Wednesday, Supreme Court lawyer Gazi MH Tamim filed a similar complaint on behalf of Bulbul Kabir, father of Alif Ahmed Siam, a 9th grader who, as per the complaint, was shot dead by police in Savar.

The Hasina-led government in March 2010 formed the International Crimes Tribunal to try those who committed crimes in 1971.

One of yesterday's two murder cases against Hasina was filed by Tejgaon resident Abdullah Abu Sayeed Bhuiyan who accused Hasina and 15 other named and several unnamed people of killing Jobaid Hossain Imon, 12, in the capital's Mohammadpur on July 19.

The complaint said the boy was shot dead by police during the protests for reforming quotas in government jobs.

The case was filed with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury.

The other accused are Obaidul Quader, former ministers Asaduzzaman, Anisul, Tajul Islam, Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Hasan Mahmud and Mohammad A Arafat, former private industry affairs adviser to the prime minister Salman F Rahman, former lawmaker Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin, former IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, former Rab DG Harun, former DMP commissioner Habibur, former additional IGP Kh Mahid Uddin, former DB chief Harun, former DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker, and several unnamed Rab members.

After a hearing, the magistrate recorded the complainant's statement and directed the officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station to register the complaint as a first information report (FIR), said Nur Alam, an employee of the court.

Sher-e-Bangla Nagar resident Abul Kalam filed the other case accusing Hasina, 10 named, and several unnamed others of killing Shahabuddin, 35, in the capital's Agargaon on August 5.

The case was filed with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Faraha Diba Chanda.

The other accused are Quader, Asaduzzaman, Anisul, Hasan Mahmud, Arafat, Salman, Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, Habibur Rahman, Harun Or Rashid (DB) and Biplob Kumar Sarker.

The magistrate recorded the complainant's statement and directed the officer-in-charge of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station to register the complaint.

The previous government fell after Hasina on August 5 fled to India amid a mass uprising that began as a student protest for reforming quotas in government jobs.

Over 550 people, including students and law enforcers, were killed in violence during the uprising.

Provide info on bank accounts

FROM PAGE 1

S Alam Group was founded by Saiful Alam in 1985, and has since risen to become one of Bangladesh's largest conglomerates.

The group's business interests range from commodity trade to fishing, building materials to real estate, textiles to media, intercity buses to shipping, and power and energy to banking and insurance.

S Alam's wife Farzana and brother Hasan are directors of S Alam Luxury Chair Coach Service and S Alam Cold Rolled Steel Limited. S Alam's mother, Chemon Ara Begum, on the other hand, is a director of S Alam Luxury Chair Coach Service.

The NBR asked banks that the information be provided as soon as possible.

S Alam he did not pick up our calls yesterday. Subrata Kumar Bhowmick, an executive director of S Alam Group, could not be reached over the phone. He also did not respond to text messages.

The move by the NBR's field office comes in less than two weeks after a mass uprising forced former prime minister Sheikh Hasina to step down, ending her 15-year rule.

There have been various allegations, including money laundering, against S Alam Group, which was one of the industrial groups to benefit during the tenure of the ousted Awami League government.

A year ago, an investigation by The Daily Star found, S Alam built a business empire in Singapore worth at least S$1 billion, although there is no record of him taking any permission from Bangladesh Bank to invest or transfer any funds abroad.

Two days later, on August 6, 2023, the High Court, on a suo motu (voluntary) move, directed the authorities concerned to conduct an inquiry into the allegations against S Alam and submit reports in two months.

However, on August 23, the Supreme Court chamber judge put on hold the inquiry against S Alam.

Later, on February 4, 2024, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court discharged the High Court Division's suo moto rule.

Don't publish or air Hasina's pictures: Dulu

The BNP chief's adviser says media outlets to be set on fire if they do so

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Natore*

If any television channel or newspaper airs or publishes pictures of Sheikh Hasina, those media outlets will be set on fire, said Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu, adviser to the BNP Chairperson, yesterday.

Dulu made the remark while speaking as the chief guest at a sit-in in front of the BNP office in the Alaipur area of Natore town. The district BNP organised the programme.

He said once Tarique Rahman's picture and speech could not be shown or printed on TV or newspapers.

"If Jamaat is banned for genocide, then why shouldn't the Awami League be banned for brutally killing students? We demand that the Awami League is banned as soon as possible," he said.

Dulu claimed that Hasina is plotting a counter-coup. The students and the people of this country will build a resistance once again, he added.

"They have no chance of coming to power," he said.

Intercity train services resume after nearly a month

UNB, *Dhaka*

After nearly a month of suspension, intercity train services resumed across the country yesterday.

The services resumed with the departure of Mohanganj Express from Kamalapur Rail Station in Dhaka around 1:15pm.

Other intercity trains have been departing as per schedule from various destinations for Dhaka.

Passengers expressed satisfaction at the full restoration of train services after the long hiatus.

The Bangladesh Railway suspended operations of passenger trains on July 19 amid the violence centring the quota reform movement.

Although operations of passenger trains resumed on a limited scale on August 1, the authorities on August 3 suspended it for August 4 and later halted the operations of all kinds of trains until further notice.

Students under the banner of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement hold a rally in front of National Museum in Shahbagh yesterday as part of their "Resistance Week" programme.

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

We will resist all counter-revolution attempts: Sarjis

STAR CORRESPONDENT

Sarjis Alam, a key organiser of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, issued a stern warning yesterday against those attempting to launch a counter-revolution, saying their existence will be erased.

"Let us be clear: if anyone dares to do this [mount a counter-revolution] again or if we witness any such attempts, you will not live to see the consequences from the students and people," he declared.

Sarjis further warned, "If you wish to preserve your existence, do not dare to utter a single word against the students and people."

He made these remarks to reporters during a demonstration in front of the National Museum as part of "Resistance Week", which was called for thwarting any potential counter-revolution on August 15.

Sarjis said the government ruled and exploited the people for the last 16 years, and the student and people unitedly made this revolution.

"In these circumstances, if someone mistakenly tries to speak against the revolution, they are declaring themselves against the entire student body and the masses of Bangladesh. We want to make it clear that those who are doing this do not have honest intentions. Their motives are not aligned with the interests of the students and the people of the country, but rather with exploiting the country and its people...

"Their goal is to hand over some of their interests to malevolent forces outside the country, potentially selling this country, either partially or wholly, to them. We understand that," he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

RICE PRICE RISES

So do prices of other essentials; traders point at supply shortage, rising production costs

SUKANTA HALDER

Prices of several daily essentials, including rice, soybean oil, and sugar, have surged in the capital's kitchen markets, causing hardships for the city residents, particularly the lower and middle-income ones.

Apart from those, prices of palm oil, broiler chicken, green chillies, eggplant, and tomatoes have also increased.

During visits to the kitchen markets in Duaripara, Mirpur 1, Karwan Bazar, and Mohammadpur Krishi Market yesterday, The Daily Star found these products to be sold at increased prices.

According to data from Trading Corporation of Bangladesh, the price of medium rice increased by 2.68 percent, coarse rice by 2.88 percent, soybean oil by about 1 percent, and sugar by about 2 percent in the past week.

Traders attributed the price hikes to a supply shortage, rising production costs, and the country's volatile economic situation.

Mohammad Jashim Uddin, a rice wholesaler at Mohammadpur Krishi Market in Dhaka, reported that the price of coarse rice increased by Tk 2-3 per kg last week, citing millers' claims that higher paddy prices were driving up rice costs.

In the retail market, medium rice is being sold at Tk 55-60 per kg, while the price was Tk 54-58 a week ago, said Mehedi Hasan, a retailer at Karwan Bazar kitchen market.

Coarse rice is being sold at Tk 52-55, while the price was Tk 50-54 in the last week, he added.

The vegetable and broiler chicken markets have also witnessed a significant surge in prices.

Abdul Mannan, a vegetable seller at Karwan Bazar kitchen market, said the price of eggplant increased from Tk 30 to Tk 40 per kg over the past week, while green chilli prices rose from Tk 200 to Tk 240, potatoes from Tk 55 to Tk 60, and cabbage from Tk 30 to Tk 50 per piece.

The price of tomatoes increased from Tk 140 to Tk 180 per kg, he added.

Mohammad Zafar, a retailer at Duaripara Bazar in the Rupnagar area, said the price of broiler chicken rose from Tk 160 to Tk 170 per kg within the same period.

Wholesale traders attributed the increase in broiler chicken prices to higher production costs.

Meanwhile, the prices of soybean oil and palm oil increased by Tk 100 per drum (204 litres) over the last week, said Alam Sheikh, a wholesaler at the Mirpur 1 kitchen market.

The prices of potatoes, onions, eggs, garlic, ginger, and pangas fish have decreased, while the price of tilapia remains unchanged.

Amid the situation, consumers are facing severe challenges.

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the consumer price index, which includes food and non-food inflation, rose by 1.94 percentage points to 11.66 percent in July, amid the recent unrest.

Meanwhile, food inflation surpassed 14 percent in July, the highest in 13 years, driven in part by a nationwide supply chain disruption caused by weeks of protests ahead of the fall of Sheikh Hasina.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

AL observes August 15 in three districts

STAR REPORT

Awami League supporters and grassroots yesterday observed National Mourning Day, marking the 49th anniversary of the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in at least three districts.

In Gopalganj, AL men offered prayers in the morning at the mausoleum of Bangabandhu in Tungipara.

They placed floral wreaths at Bangabandhu's portrait, while several hundred partymen held a rally there.

They also vowed to bring Sheikh Hasina -- who fled the country on August 5 -- back home and demanded punishment for the perpetrators who torched the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32 in the capital.

In Narayanganj, city corporation Mayor Salina Hayat Ivy paid homage to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his portrait at the office of Narayanganj district unit AL in the city.

Ivy, senior vice president of the district unit AL, was accompanied by a few party leaders and activists.

In Shariatpur, Jazira upazila AL also observed the day.

The day was observed at a time when most of the AL men across the country have been on the run since the fall of Hasina on August 5.

ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY

Banani ramp opens, Mohakhali to open in a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authority of Dhaka Elevated Expressway yesterday opened the entrance ramp at Banani, around a month after the tollbooth was torched amid violence centring the student movement.

"We opened one of the four tollbooths at the ramp at 5:00pm today and is collecting toll manually," Captain (retd) Hasib Hasan Khan, manager (operations and maintenance) of First Dhaka Elevated Expressway Company Ltd (FDEE), which operates the expressway, told The Daily Star.

He said they will open manual operation of three other booths there within a few days.

Hasib mentioned that they were optimistic

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DHAKA-MOSCOW TIES

Bangladesh needs to follow a safe path

Says foreign affairs adviser

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will have to take a safe path in its cooperation with Russia as it faces many sanctions, said Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain after a meeting with Russian Ambassador to Bangladesh Alexander Mantytskiy yesterday.

UN Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis and Japanese Ambassador Iwama Kiminori also called on the foreign affairs adviser yesterday.

"Our position is that we will not fight any war. I said, as there are sanctions against Russia, we will do whatever interaction and cooperation we can have," said Touhid.

Mantytskiy sought the interim government's support so that the work on Rooppur nuclear

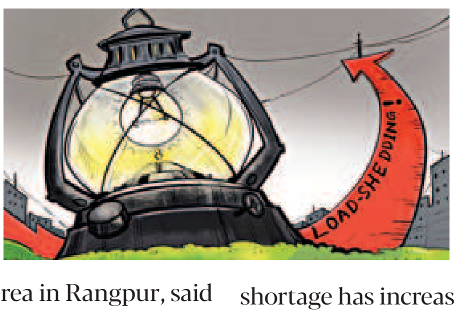
SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Power outage hits rural areas

ASIFUR RAHMAN *and* **SUKANTA HALDER**

The country, especially the rural areas, is experiencing frequent power cuts over the last couple of days due to insufficient electricity production from coal-based power plants, alongside the prolonged delay in increasing LNG regasification facilities.

According to the data of Power Grid Bangladesh PLC, the average generation shortage stood as high as 1,500 megawatts (MW) a day for the last week. The country has been producing around 13,500MW to 14,000MW daily, while the demand is over 15,000MW.


LOAD-SHEDDING!

Shiuly Akhter, a resident of CO Bazar area in Rangpur, said frequent power cuts started there about a week ago after a three-week respite.

"The situation stays normal from midnight till 6:00am. Then the power goes out at one or two-hour intervals throughout the day," she said, adding that it was unbearable amid the sweltering heat.

Ayesha Begum, a resident of Habiganj Sadar area, said the power cut happens every alternate hour for the entire day -- meaning they stay without electricity for six hours during daytime.

It stabilises after 11:00pm. However, power cuts sometimes happen at midnight as well, she added.

Officials said they have been getting insufficient electricity from the coal-based power plants due to various technical issues, while gas shortage became a regular scenario.

At least 10,000MW of generation capacity has been sitting idle due to fuel shortage or maintenance -- 6,100MW for fuel shortage and 3,800MW for maintenance. Compared to last month, idle power capacity due to fuel shortage has increased significantly.

Among the 6,100MW -- at least 4,079MW are caused due to shortage in gas supply, according to data of Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB). The country has a total of 11,428MW installed capacity from gas sources.

The data shows that at least 25 gas-fired power plants remain closed due to gas shortage since May 27, when cyclone

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

গ্রাম পুলিশ বাহিনী বেতন বৈষম্য থে
মুক্তি চাই
বেতন বৈষম্য বিরোধী গ্রাম পুলিশ সমন্ব

Members of Gram Police Bahini (village police force) bring out a procession in front of the Supreme Court yesterday, demanding an end to wage disparity. They also sought a national pay scale for them.

PHOTO: **STAR**

Constable injured on Aug 5 dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A police member, who was beaten and pushed off the rooftop of Shyampur Police Station during clashes with protesters on August 5, died at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday evening.

The deceased was identified as Khalilur Rahman, 53, a constable of the police station.

On the afternoon of August 5, a group of people beat him up and threw him off the roof of the police station. With severe injuries, he was admitted to a private hospital in Dhanmondi, where he breathed his last around 5:00pm, his colleague, Sub-Inspector Torgul Hasan, mentioned in the inquest report.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Along with him, at least 43 police personnel were killed so far during the mass protests, during which many police stations and offices across the country were attacked and looted as law enforcers opened fire indiscriminately, killing many protesters.

Over 500 people, including many students, were killed during the protests, which eventually forced prime minister Sheikh Hasina to resign and flee the country on August 5.

PHOTO: STAR

সরকারি মুরগি প্রজনন ও উন্নয়ন খামার

RAJBARI GOVT POULTRY FARM

28 years of neglect

SUZIT DAS, *from Rajbari*

Established in the 1981-82 fiscal year, the Rajbari Government Poultry Farm, spanning 2.88 acres in the Bhabanipur area of Rajbari town, was once a beacon of hope for the local meat industry.

It aimed to alleviate poverty by encouraging chicken rearing among locals.

However, the farm's hatchery operations have been non-functional since 1996 due to mismanagement, negligence, and a severe shortage of workers.

Now, the farm imports chicks from government hatcheries in Kushtia and neighbouring districts, and sells them to locals after 28-50 days at Tk 80-100 each.

The warehouse, residential quarters, water tank, hatchery shed, and two of the four chicken rearing sheds are in a state of disrepair. The only vehicle available for farm operations has been out of order for a long time.

An official said, "If the sheds are made operational again, the farm could produce 100,000 chicks, rear 18,000-20,000 chickens for meat, and raise 150,000 egg-laying hens annually. However, only two sheds are currently in use, with around 12,000-14,000 Fayoumi and Sonali chicks being reared."

The farm, which requires 13 workers to function smoothly, is currently operating with only four.

Local poultry farmer Jasim Mondal said Sonali chicks from the farm are significantly cheaper than those from private farms, costing Tk 15 per chick compared to Tk 35-50 elsewhere.

However, supply is inconsistent, often leaving buyers empty-handed.

Md Kamal Bashar, the acting manager of the farm, said, "The annual demand for chicken in Rajbari is 20,000, but we receive only 10,000-12,000 chickens yearly. We have requested an increased budgetary allocation to ensure a regular supply of chicks and meet local demand."

Power outage hits rural areas

FROM PAGE 3

Remal hit the coastal areas. One of the country's two floating storage and regasification units (FSRU) was damaged, reducing the LNG regasification capacity to 600 million cubic feet per day (mmcfd) from 1,100 mmcfd.

The affected Summit-run FSRU was repaired later from abroad, but it is yet to start operations due to technical glitches in the subsea landing pad in Cox's Bazar's Moheshkhali area. It was supposed to be completed by July 15, as per the then-government announcement. But still the Summit Group said it will take more time.

Summit Corporation International in a statement told The Daily Star that it may take up to September to resume ship-to-ship transfer.

"Assuming favourable weather and sea conditions, Summit anticipates completing the repositioning and the reconnection of the DTM (Disconnectable Turret Mooring) plug by the end of August 2024 and for the ship-to-ship transfer to be ready in September 2024."

Due to adverse weather conditions at sea and almost zero underwater visibility, the damage identified by the internationally licensed subsea diving team has posed significant obstacles to rectify the issue in July, Summit noted.

"We have contracted 'Oriental Dragon', a Diving Support Vessel (DSV) for a stronger and higher capacity crane to move the DTM, which is expected to reach Moheshkhali from Singapore on August 22," it added.

Besides, the highest single power producer -- 1,500MW Adani Power Plant, located in India's Jharkhand, has shut one of two units due to fresh technical glitches, according to PDB officials.

Khandaker Mokammel Hossain, PDB member (generation), said Adani power plant was shut once due to a leak in a valve of the boiler circulating pump last month.

"It was repaired later and the production increased. But a new leakage was identified on August 13, leaving half of its unit shut," he said.

Contacted, Adani Group shared a statement through a PR agency in Bangladesh, saying, "Adani Power supplied 769MW to Bangladesh today [yesterday] from an alternate unit, as one unit of the Adani Power plant had to be shut down on August 13 for a technical issue."

"We regret any inconvenience caused by this technical fault. We are working hard to fix the issue at the earliest and restore the full capacity of power generation," reads the statement.

Besides, Hossain said the Matarbari power plant, which was under trial run, but providing great support amid the gas shortage, has also stopped production recently. Also, one out of two units of Chattogram's SS power plant is also under maintenance.

The PDB data shows that currently around 2,300MW -- or one third of total coal power capacity of 6,604MW -- remain idle.

The country's total power generation capacity is 26,947MW.

It's radio silence in Khulna

FROM PAGE 5

were destroyed. The scene was chaotic; you can't imagine the fear we felt."

A CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL LOSS

The destruction is not just physical but also cultural.

Nikhil Krishna Majumdar, a renowned flute player and instrument maker, lost his collection of musical instruments, which had been housed in a museum at the station.

"I've been making and playing instruments for Khulna Betar since 1985. The loss of those instruments and documents is heartbreaking. They were not just tools but symbols of our cultural heritage," he said.

Prof Anwarul Kadir, a prominent educationist and civic leader in Khulna, condemned the attack.

"This was not a random act. Many documents and artefacts related to our folk music and history were destroyed. This loss is irreplaceable and deeply disturbing."

THE ROAD AHEAD

The attack has left over 200 staff members, including 16 officers, in disarray. The centre's infrastructure, equipment, and archived data are irreparably damaged, and broadcasts have been suspended for over a week.

Bangladesh Betar Director General Rabindrashri Barua visited the site on August 13, vowing to restore operations as soon as possible. "We are committed to resuming broadcasting, either by renovating the damaged building or setting up operations elsewhere," Barua said.

Netai Kumar Bhattacharje, its regional director, said, "Everything in the centre was reduced to ashes. Our immediate goal is to clean and repair the facility, but it will take time."

Khulna Betar, which began with a modest 10 kW transmitter on December 4, 1970, and expanded to 100 kW by 1981, had earned the affection of listeners not only in Bangladesh but also in West Bengal, India.

It started its journey in the administrative building of Khulna University in Gallamari, a suburb in Khulna city.

Its programmes were a lifeline, offering everything from news to entertainment, and its loss is deeply felt by the community.

Rice price

FROM PAGE 3

Golam Rabbani, a private sector employee shopping at Mirpur-1 kitchen market, said the prices of many essential items have remained high for over a year, as the previous government failed to curb the high prices.

"I am forced to buy less than what we need, as there's no other option," he said.

On Wednesday, Salehuddin Ahmed, finance and planning adviser to the interim government, stated that inflation in Bangladesh is expected to decline within a reasonable timeframe.

On the same day, newly appointed Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur said the burden of rising prices may be reduced to tolerable levels within the next five to six months.

The government will focus on improving supply and production to curb inflation, he said after a meeting at the Secretariat.

Bangladesh needs to follow a safe

FROM PAGE 3

power project can continue without being hampered.

"I said we will definitely continue it. A big investment has been made there. If it is not completed, we will not get its result," Touhid Hossain said.

Mantytskiy also handed over a letter from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to Touhid Hossain, congratulating him on his appointment as foreign adviser.

Meanwhile, the Japanese ambassador told Hossain that under the "Strategic Partnership," Japan will continue its support for Bangladesh's development and prosperity, and stand by its side during the transition process.

He said Japan will keep up with the existing projects related to the Rohingya refugees.

The UN resident coordinator told the media that a UN team of independent experts would visit Dhaka next week to investigate the killings during the students' protest.

"They will assist us so that we can rightly probe the killings and punish those responsible," Hossain told the media.

They also discussed economic cooperation, LDC graduation, climate change, and the ongoing UN humanitarian operations concerning Bangladesh.

We will resist all counter

FROM PAGE 3

"During its tenure, the Awami League did not have the courage to allow any other party to legitimately win 50 seats in Bangladesh. Like thieves and robbers, they have placed their members or candidates in all 300 seats, without any actual election in every constituency. Additionally, they have placed their patrons in the 50 reserved seats as well."

"Those who occupied these 350 seats are fascists and nurturers of a fascist ideology," he said, adding that the AL, Jubo League, and Chhatra League members involved in wrongdoing will also be held accountable.

"They need to answer for the torture inflicted on the people over these 16 years. They must face punishment. Then the people will decide whether AL can vie in the next election or not," he added.

Another key coordinator, Hasnat Abdullah, said members of the AL-led government and its associated bodies have smuggled thousands of crores of taka abroad over the last 16 years, with some portion of the money being used to spread propaganda.

"You [Sajeeb Wazed Joy] don't have the right to make decisions about the country while sitting in the US. Your boat [electoral symbol of the Awami League] leaked a long time ago. You no longer have a boat, so there is no point in finding a baitha [a wooden stick used to steer a boat]. Do not expect that you will run the boat of Bangladesh through Modi's baitha," he added.

Banani ramp

FROM PAGE 3

about opening the Mohakhali entrance ramp within a week. Tolls will be collected manually, he added.

He, however, could not say when the exit ramp at the FDC gate (Karwan Bazar) could be opened as one of the pillars there was torched.

Miscreants torched the Banani toll booth on July 18 and the Mohakhali toll booth the following day amid unrest centring the quota reform movement, causing the suspension of its service.

The authority resumed the operation of the expressway, except for the three ramps, from August 11.

Before the suspension, over 50,000 vehicles used the flyover daily on average, and the number of users remains almost the same now, he said.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 16

	Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-30	4-45	6-38	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-41	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
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ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৭
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ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮

Sylhet City Corporation

Nagar Bhaban, Sylhet
www.scc.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice-01/2023-24 (Electrical)

Memo No. 46.07.0000.021.07.123.24.3109 Dated: 14.08.24

1.	Ministry/ Division	Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives.		
2.	**Agency:**	**Sylhet City Corporation**		**Electrical Department**
3.	**Tender ID No.**	**Type of method**	**Publishing & opening date of tender submission**	**Brief description of work**
	1008725,	NCT, OTM	15-Aug-2024 09:00:00, 02-Sep-2024 15:00:00	Goods, Supplying of Electric goods for Repair and Maintenance of Street lighting System in Sylhet City Corporation.
05	**Name, designation & address of PE**	**Md. Ruhul Alam, Executive Engineer (Electrical), Sylhet City Corporation. 02-996635045 01911-249699**		
06	This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd			
09	The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.			
10	Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).			

(SD/-)
Md. Ruhul Alam
Executive Engineer (Electrical)
Sylhet City Corporation

GD- 185

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Cumilla

www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.1900.000.07.427.2024-7002 Date: 15/08/2024

e-Tender Notice
Tender Notice No: 07/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of Works as stated below:

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of Works	Tender/ Proposal ID No.	Document last selling/ downloading Date and Time	Tender/ Proposal Closing Date and Time	Method of Tender
1.	LGED/Cum/GOBM/ 24-25/RM-On-01	Supply of Materials for Routine Maintenance (On Pavement) under LGED Cumilla.	1008299	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
2.	CCB/C/VR/ W-368	Improvement of Hossaninpur-Padua Road at Ch. 1265-1848m (Road ID: 419095140) under Barura Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007536	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
3.	CCB/C/VR/ W-346	Improvement of Daudkandi - Batakandi Road to (Hasnabad Bridge) - Gonggoproshad GPS via Hasnabar Bazar Road at Ch. 00-1320m (Road ID: 419365075) (Salvage materials cost Tk. 2,32,146/-) under Daudkandi Upazila, District: Cumilla (3rd Call).	1004989	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
4.	CCB/C/VR/ W-357	Improvement of Putia Basra Miyajee NHW- Basra Bridge Road at Ch. 00-736 (Road ID: 419365127) under Daudkandi Upazila, District: Cumilla (3rd Call).	1004993	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
5.	CCB/C/VR/ W-366	(a) Improvement of Baharchar Eidgah - Vazra Govt. Pry School via Baharchar H/School Road at Ch. 907-2000m (Road ID: 419364061); (b) Construction of 86m Protective Work on the same road under Daudkandi Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007534	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
6.	CCB/C/VR/ W-335	(a) Improvement of Sree Nibas Reg. school to Kasipur Road at Ch. 00-572m (Road ID. 419914124) (Salvage materials cost Tk. 1,63,698/-); (b) Construction of 97m Protective Work on the same road under Sadar Dakshin Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call).	1007406	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
7.	LGED/CUM/VR RP/Re-hab/24-25/W-245	Rehabilitation of Eliotgonj NHW-Mohichail GC via Baraiya Krisnapur Bazar Road from Ch: 7560-9160m (Road ID: 419272007) (Salvage Tk. 7,05,437/-) under Chnadina Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1006811	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
8.	CCB/C/VR/ W-362	(a) Improvement of Ombarpur Bazar to Amborpur GPS Road at Ch. 00-1000m (Road ID: 419274104); (b) Construction of 150m Protective Work on the same road; (c) Construction of 1x1.10x1.50m 1 No. Culvert at Ch. 660m on the same road under Chandina Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007530	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
9.	CCB/C/VR/ W-363	(a) Improvement of Mohichail Ombarpur Road- Batabari Pry. School Road at Ch. 00-700m (Road ID: 419275080) (Salvage materials cost Tk. 3,06,213/-); (b) Construction of 92m Protective Work on the same road; (c) Construction of 2x3.50x4.00m 1 No. Culvert at Ch. 478m on the same road under Chandina Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007531	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
10.	CB/C/VR/ W-364	Improvement of Maijkhara pacca road-Alikmora Darul Karan Atimkhana Road at Ch. 00-800m (Road ID: 419274049) under Chandina Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007532	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
11.	CCB/C/VR/ W-365	Improvement of Boxgong Bottali - Tetuya Akkas Mastarer Bari Road at Ch. 00-820m (Road ID: 419874296) (Salvage materials cost Tk. 44,600/-) under Nangalkot Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007533	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
12.	CCB/C/VR/ W-323	a) Improvement of Malipara to Purbadhair road via Nabiabad Madrasha Road at Ch. 00-1000m (Road ID. 419814060); b) Construction of 83m Protective Work on the same road under Muradnagar Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call).	1007405	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
13.	CCB/C/VR/ W-338	Improvement of Khapura-Ulumuria-Chapitola Road (Muktijoddha Mohosin Bhuiyan) Road at Ch. 400-1400m (Road ID: 419814038) under Muradnagar Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call).	1007408	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
14.	CCB/C/VR/ W-371	(a) Improvement of Babutipara to Noapuskurunirpar Road at Ch. 1200-1890m (Road ID: 419816065); (b) Construction of 127m Protective Work on the same road under Muradnagar Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007539	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
15.	CCB/C/VR/ W-372	(a) Improvement of Bahaorkhola South Nabalok Miar Bari Pucca Road - Bahaorkhola South Govt. Primary School Road at Ch. 00-800m (Road ID: 419885090) (Salvage materials cost Tk. 17,23,576/-); (b) Construction of 330m Protective Work on the same road under Meghna Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007540	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	LTM
16.	CCB/C/BW-11	Construction of 27.00m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Charanal -Nagarpar Road at Ch. 2327m (Road ID: 419184058) (Salvage Materials Cost Tk. 1,17,302/-) under Burichong Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1007542	03-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	04-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	OTM
17.	CRMIDP/COM/ W-452/2023-24	Construction of 2-Storied Rural Market Building (With 04-Storied Foundation) at Jhalam Bazar under Upazila: Barura, District: Cumilla.	999487	17-Sep-2024 16:00 BST	18-Sep-2024 12:30 BST	OSTETM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no Off-line/Hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (**http://www.eprocure.gov.bd**) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited through online at any Branches of registered Bank.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (**helpdesk@eprocure.go v.bd.**)

The Tender Notice will be available on the website: **www.lged.gov.bd** and **www.lged.comilla.gov.bd**

(Mohammed Sayeduzzaman Sadek)
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LGED, Cumilla
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GD-192

IT'S RADIO SILENCE IN KHULNA

Arson attack on August 5 leaves Betar centre in ruins

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

In the heart of Khulna, the Bangladesh Betar centre stood as a beacon of community, culture, and information. Established in 1970, it quickly became a cherished institution, bridging gaps between rural life and broader societal developments.

But on the afternoon of August 5, this vibrant hub was devastated by an arson attack that left it in ruins, silencing its broadcasts and disrupting the lives of countless listeners and staff.

A LIFELONG CONNECTION TO RADIO

For Proshad Roy, a farmer from Khalashibunia in Batiaghata upazila, Khulna Betar was more than just a radio station. Since the age of 12, Roy has been an avid listener, following in the footsteps of a family tradition that began with Santosh Radio of India.

This radio tradition has been a cornerstone of Roy's life, offering him and many others vital information on agricultural practices and local affairs.

"I've always been a regular listener to Khulna Betar. Programmes like 'Hridoye Bangladesh,' which delves into our Liberation War history, and 'Unstoppable Agrajatra Bangladesh,' which highlights regional development, have been crucial for my understanding of our community and country," Roy said.

A DEVASTATING BLOW

On August 5, after the fall of Sheikh Hasina, a group of people attacked the centre.

They ransacked the centre, setting fire to the reception room, artists' lounge, research room, officers' lounge, and multiple studios. The fire consumed over 39 rooms, reducing everything from office furniture to musical instruments to ashes. The looting and vandalism left the centre unrecognisable and halted all broadcasting operations.

Sudip Kumar Kundu, an announcer at the station, said, "I was on duty with my colleagues when the attack occurred. We managed to escape, but all our belongings

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

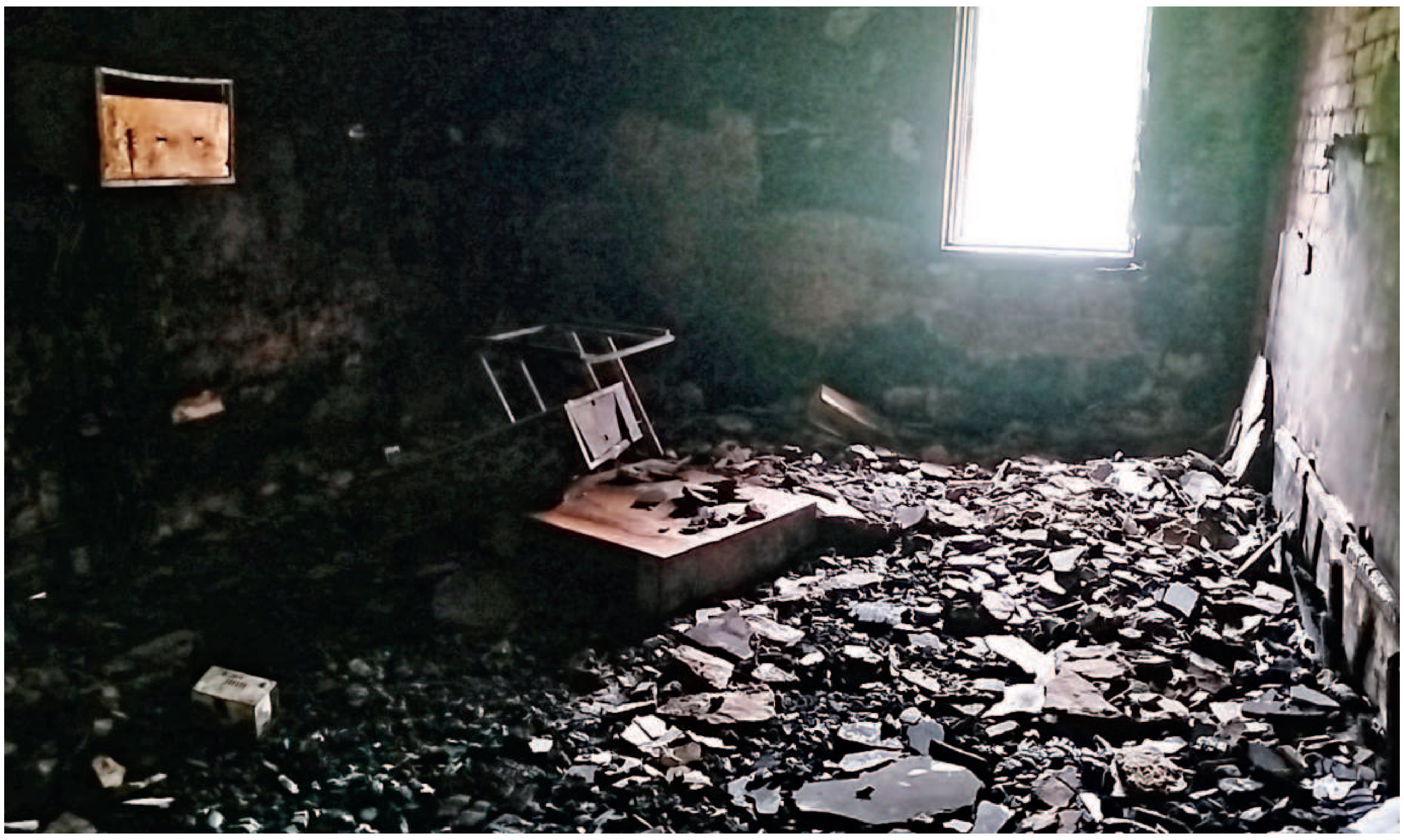


PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Nabiganj's vanishing hills

Illegal razing puts locals at risk, raises environmental concerns

MINTU DESHWARA, *Moulvibazar*

Unabated hill cutting by unscrupulous syndicates has become a serious concern in Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj.

Local communities residing at the base of the hills are also living amid the escalating risk of landslides.

Visiting the upazila's Debpara, Ghaznaipur, Paniumda unions, and the hilly areas of Dinarpur Pargana recently, this correspondent observed that a number of hills are being razed, ignoring a 2017 High Court order to preserve the hills in the district that directed the authorities concerned to take steps to this end.

Locals alleged that soil is being extracted from the razed hills and sold to different companies at high prices.

A contractor named Sohel Mia from Bahubal upazila has been cutting a hill owned by Abdur Rahim of Shatak village on Janata Bazar-Moulvibazar road in Ghaznaipur union, putting residents adjacent to the hill at risk.

The contractor has deployed excavators and trucks to extract soil and transport it to Athangiri in Moulvibazar Sadar upazila.

Contacted, Sohel Mia said Abdur Rahim, owner of the hill, is razing it to build a house at its base. He, however, could not show any documents supporting his claim.

Oli Mia, Mubed Mia, Pabel Ahmed, and Aminur Rahman, residents of Shatak village, said they formally complained to the Nabiganj UNO, requesting immediate administrative intervention to halt the illegal hill cutting.

Tofazzal Sohel, general secretary and central executive member of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon's Habiganj unit, said, "Not only in Nabiganj upazila, but also Bahubal, Chunarughat, and Madhabpur upazilas have been witnessing hill razing over the years, causing irreparable damage to the environment and biodiversity."

Tofazzal called for urgent action to protect the environment and hold those negligent in their duties accountable.

Visiting the upazila's Debpara, Ghaznaipur, Paniumda unions, and the hilly areas of Dinarpur Pargana recently, this correspondent observed that a number of hills are being razed, ignoring a 2017 High Court order to preserve the hills in the district that directed the authorities concerned to take steps to this end.

Contacted, Shaheen Delwar, assistant commissioner (land) in Nabiganj upazila, attributed the matter to the ongoing situation of unrest. He suggested contacting the army for further assistance.

"We are aware of the matter. A patrol team has already visited the site. The owner did not have permission from the DC in this regard... We are looking into the issue," said Major SM Tanvir Islam, commander of Nabiganj camp.

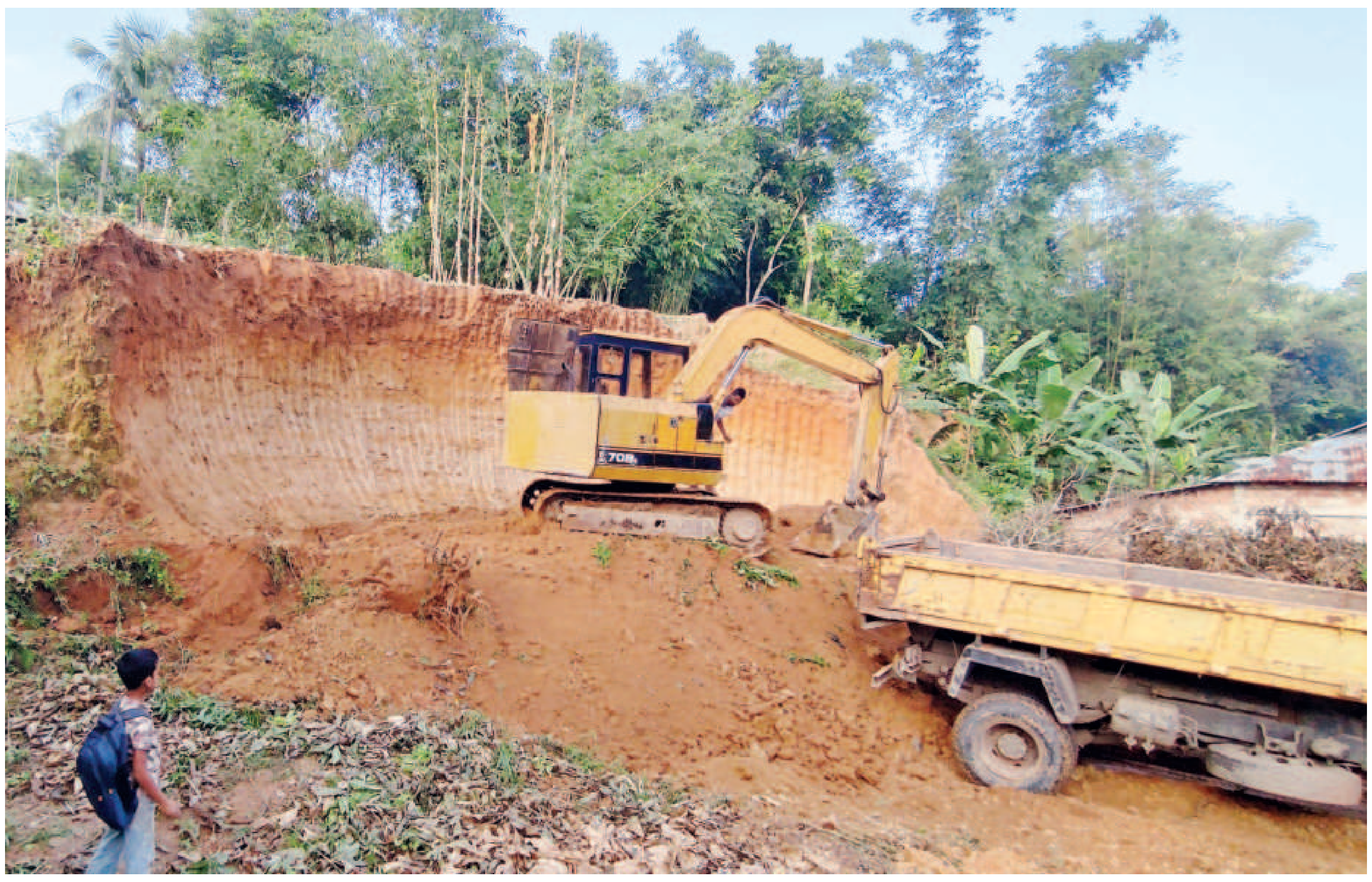


PHOTO: STAR

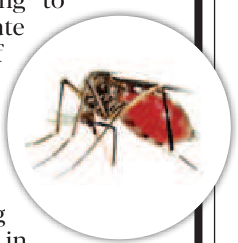
Despite a High Court ban, unabated hill cutting continues in Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj. Locals say some unscrupulous syndicates are involved in this illegal activity. Meanwhile, people residing at the base of the hills are also living amid the escalating risk of landslides.

Three more die of dengue

UNB, *Dhaka*

Three more deaths were reported from dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the number of fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease in Bangladesh to 74 this year.

During the period, 228 more patients were hospitalised with viral fever, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).



Some 881 patients are receiving treatment in different hospitals across the country.

A total of 8,930 dengue cases have been reported since January 1, 2024.

Last year, 1,705 people lost their lives due to dengue, making it the deadliest year on record.

The DGHS recorded 3,21,179 dengue cases and 3,18,749 recoveries last year.

Mother, son die as covered-van hits bike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Cumilla*

A mother and her son were killed and her husband was injured as a motorbike carrying them was hit by a covered-van in Cumilla yesterday.

The incident occurred on Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Sadar South upazila around 1:30pm, said police.

The deceased were identified as Mariam Akter Mitu, 20, of Chauddagram upazila, and her one-year-old son Alvi.

During the incident, the motorbike was crossing the highway near the upazila headquarters, said Iqbal Bahar, officer-in-charge of Mainamati Highway Police Station.

The injured Yeasin, who was driving the motorbike, was admitted to Cumilla Sadar South Upazila Health Complex.

The OC said the bodies were handed over to their family after the legal process.

155 AL activists sued for attacking student protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

A case has been filed against 155 Awami League leaders and activists, including two former lawmakers, and 200 other unidentified individuals in connection with an attack on an anti-discrimination student movement in Moulvibazar on August 4.

Abdul Qadir Talukder, a coordinator of the student movement, filed the complaint with Moulvibazar Police Station on Wednesday night, Officer-in-Charge KM Nazrul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

According to Abdul Qadir, the incident occurred when general students, as part of a central programme, took out a procession in the district town on August 4.

Awami League, Jubo League, and Chhatra League leaders and activists, allegedly acting on instructions from former lawmakers Zillur Rahman and Neshar Ahmad, intercepted the procession.

3 organisers hurt in BCL attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

Three coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement were injured in an attack by Chhatra League activists in Tangail's Mirzapur upazila yesterday.

The injured are Md Mujahid, 18; Imon Siddique, 23; and Md Zakir. 24.

The incident took place on the premises of Shaheed Bhabani Prasad Saha Government College around 12:15pm.

Some students under the banner of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement were on the field since 10:00am in the morning. Later, a group of 15-20 BCL men swooped on them and left the three coordinators injured.

The students detained one BCL activist during the attack and later handed him to over to Mirzapur Police Station.

"We are trying to nab other culprits involved in the attack," said Salah Uddin, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Five hurt in BNP infighting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

At least five people were injured as two rival groups of BNP clashed over previous enmity in Koroitola area of Pabna's Ishwardi upazila yesterday.

The incident took place at around 12:30pm when a group of pro-BNP men and Swechchhasebak Dal activists brought out a procession in the area and a group of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal men suddenly attacked them, ensuing a clash.

Of the five injured, Md Sajal, an activist of Swechchhasebak Dal, was later admitted to the upazila health complex in critical condition.

During the clash, a few motorbikes and shops of pro-BNP men were vandalised in the area.

Police are investigating the incident, said Md Monirul Islam, OC of Ishwardi Police Station.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

What good is fame, if I can't speak for the people: Badhan

PHOTOS: **COLLECTED**

Badhan walked from Mirpur 11/5 to Banani, reaching around 1:30pm. "Upon learning that Sheikh Hasina had fled, I discarded my burka and hijab, wrapped myself in the Bangladeshi flag, and joined my friends in Banani, Kamal Ataturk," she shared.

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

"The state that fires upon innocent civilians and issues arbitrary orders for mass arrests cannot truly embody democracy," her voice trembled as she spoke through the megaphone.

"My daughter might have been among those children killed in the protests; I could have been among those harmed. This government has failed to protect us and must be held accountable. If I take to the streets to assert my rights, no one should use violence against me. I demand my rights. I have no passport to another land; this country is my home. I refuse to live under oppression, and I will not let my children grow up in such a hostile environment. This country is ours, and together we will bring about change," declared Azmeri Haque Badhan as the artistes rallied in demand for justice on August 1.

মোরা
বিধাতার
মতো
নির্ভয়

As the rain soaked her through, cascading like tears from a grieving sky, it did nothing to dampen the searing fury and sorrow that burned deeply in her heart on that day. Adorned in a black salwar kameez with a bright red scarf draped around her neck, her eyes blazed with fierce determination as she denounced the horrific acts sanctioned by the tyrannical regime.

During the protest, many netizens criticised the silence of celebrities. Badhan, tormented by depression, simply couldn't comprehend expressing herself by penning her emotions that time. Yet, the tragic losses of Abu Sayed and Riya Gope profoundly shook her, causing her to overcome her fear and break free from the shackles of oppression.

"Abu Sayed's and Riya Gope's deaths devastated me. Amid the protests, my daughter and father would often loiter around the terrace while we were confined indoors. The helicopters' fires could have claimed their lives, or I might have been the mother who perished at the window. The thought broke my heart, leaving me unable to write or speak during those times," she revealed.

"On July 25, I changed my profile and cover photos to black, replacing a previous image with former prime minister Sheikh Hasina. Many warned me that this act and using a VPN might lead to arrest. On July 26, I posted: 'The accountability system of our democratic country has been shattered. As a Bangladeshi citizen, I am devastated, traumatised, and unsafe.' Despite threats of arrest under the Digital Security Act (DSA), I was determined to speak out," she said.

On July 27, director Akram Khan urged artistes on a WhatsApp group which consisted of 900 people, to support the student protests. While younger actors were eager, many seniors hesitated, fearing arrest if they supported the nine-point demand. The platform, titled "Drissho Madhyam Shilpi Shomaj" (Visual Artiste's Society), decided to protest in front of Sangsad Bhaban.

"When we arrived at Kamarbari, the police forbade us from protesting at the Sangsad Bhaban without permission. When Mamunur Rashid bhai arrived, the DC preferred to negotiate with him, thinking he might be more pliable, but we pressed on and successfully held our procession at Farmgate. Despite being barred from displaying placards and banners, I was supported by Rajib *bhaiya*, Piplu *bhai*, Dhrubo *bhai*, Akram *bhai*, Monem *bhai*, and Lima *apa*.

As the rain soaked her through, cascading like tears from a grieving sky, it did nothing to dampen the searing fury and sorrow that burned deeply in her heart on that day.

On August 3, students consolidated their demands to a single point: the resignation of Sheikh Hasina.

"I received numerous threats, one even threatening to throw acid on my face. When the police tried to block students in Shahbagh, I intervened, standing in their way and insisting that the protest continue. The strict curfew on August 4 deeply distressed me, fearing that the former PM might not resign despite the danger. My family was anxious and begged me to stay home on August 5, but I promised to attend the march disguised in a burka," said the ***Esha Murder*** famed actress.

Badhan walked from Mirpur 11/5 to Banani, reaching around 1:30pm. "Upon learning that Sheikh Hasina had fled, I discarded my burka and hijab, wrapped myself in the Bangladeshi flag, and joined my friends in Banani, Kamal Ataturk," she shared.

On that very day, widespread looting and vandalism targeted Hindu homes and temples. Indian media, however, falsely portrayed the situation as "mass genocide" and "widespread rape of Hindu women" linked to the student protests.

To counter these false claims, Badhan spoke with Kolkata's media to explain the truth. Despite her efforts, manipulated videos of her circulated on X, falsely alleging that Hindu women were being coerced to convert to Islam or leave the country. In response, she posted:

"I must address the blatant lies and propaganda spread by Indian media and far-right groups about Bangladesh. As a proud Bangladeshi, I'm sharing my video from a recent protest where I advocated for student rights and condemned the Hasina regime. Yet, Indian media continues to distort the truth, spreading falsehoods and escalating tensions by manipulating videos like mine."

"In the past few days, I've done my best to present my perspective, talking with various Kolkata-based channels. Despite this, they continue pushing a narrative involving the former PM and her son, likely for political reasons that I'm unaware of. My Indian friends in Kolkata frequently check on me for updates, and Tabu ji has also expressed concern for my safety. I've tried to clarify the situation from my viewpoint," the actress stated.

Regarding the new interim government, Badhan is hopeful for significant reforms, particularly the scrapping of the DSA, which the former PM used to harass journalists, actors, directors, and cartoonists. "The torture Nawshaba faced in 2018 was unjust and horrible. They tried to control artistes by threatening them with similar treatment. I deeply regret the injustice Nawshaba suffered; she was blacklisted and even denied housing. As an artiste, I strongly condemn such acts," affirmed the ***Khufiya*** actress.

NEWS

Dhaka to decide whether to seek

FROM PAGE 16

"That creates an embarrassing situation for the Indian government," he said, adding India "knows this and I am sure they will take care of it". He did not elaborate.

India's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request seeking comment.

Hasina fled the country for India on Aug 5 after a violent uprising against her led to nearly 300 people getting killed, including many students. She has been named in two murder cases already, along with senior members of her cabinet.

Ataur Rahman, deputy director of the investigation cell of International Crimes Tribunal, a domestic court, said it had launched a third case - an investigation against ten people, including Hasina, for murder, torture and genocide during the period of the protests.

At least three of Hasina's former ministers and advisers have already been arrested in Bangladesh.

In her only statement since her ouster, Hasina has demanded a probe into the killings and vandalism during the protests. She has not commented on the charges against her.

Hossain, a retired diplomat, is the adviser on foreign affairs in the interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, which was sworn in last week after Hasina's ouster. The council of advisers includes other retired officials, lawyers, student leaders of the protests and some opposition politicians.

In his first interview to international media since taking over, Hossain said Yunus is "very unhappy about the way the statements are coming from India, from the former prime minister" and he conveyed this to the Indian envoy in a meeting on Wednesday.

He added that Dhaka wants good ties with everyone, including India, China and the US.

Discussing possible elections in Bangladesh, the adviser said that there will be more clarity on the timeline by September.

"Because everyone, all my colleagues in the council of advisers, they are extremely busy with bringing back normalcy" which should be restored by early September, he said.

He said the interim's government priority is to bring "irreversible" reforms, "because our system has been thoroughly corrupted and the institutions have been destroyed and they have to be restored."

Once elections are announced, he said, "we fade away", referring to senior members of the interim government.

"None of us have any political ambitions."

ROHINGYA REFUGEES

Hossain also asked India, and other countries, to take in more Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, as Bangladesh was not in a position to accept any more.

Hossain said other countries need to put pressure on the Arakan Army rebel group in Myanmar to "ensure this does not happen", referring to attacks on Rohingyas in their native Rakhine state.

"The world community has to create a situation that they (the Rohingya) can go back," he said.

"It is a humanitarian issue that involves the entire world, not only Bangladesh. We have done more than our share," Hossain said.

Palak, Tuku

FROM PAGE 16

Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam passed the order after investigation officer Mohammad Yusuf, a sub-inspector of Paltan Model Police Station, produced them before the court with a 10-day remand appeal, said a court staffer.

In the remand application, investigator Yusuf said involvement of the accused in the incident was primarily found. Moreover, as per their directives, the other accused committed such offences.

He said the three need to be question in remand to find out where the other accused are.

The defence lawyers sought bail along with cancellation of the remand appeal.

In the courtroom, pro-BNP-Jamaat lawyers chanted slogans demanding their execution.

Army, BGB, and additional police personnel were deployed on the court premises.

On Wednesday, police arrested Tuku, Palak, and Shaikat from the capital's Nikunja residential area in Khilkhet.

A day after the killing on July 20, the victim's wife Fatema Khatun, 36, lodged the case with Paltan Model Police Station against unidentified assailants.

Kamal, 39, was a resident of Shantinagar,

According to the case statement, Fatema came to know around 7:30pm on July 19 that her husband, who was waiting for passengers near the VIP Road intersection in Paltan, was hit by bullets and lying on the street.

Fatema and her daughter took Kamal to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, but doctors declared him dead around 7:55pm, said the statement.

Fatema later went to the spot and learnt from locals that quota reform protesters gathered at VIP Road intersection on July 19.

At one stage, miscreants opened fire at police personnel and the cops fired shots in the air. As the two sides chased and counter-chased, her husband was hit and he fell on the street, Fatema said in the complaint.

US in touch with India

FROM PAGE 16

"On the topic of Bangladesh, we have been in touch with our Indian partners as well as other countries in the region to discuss recent events," Patel said.

"Our push for an end to violence in Bangladesh as well as for accountability and the respect for rule of law is on," he said.

Asked about the two letters sent by two Indian American congressmen -- Raja Krishnamoorthi and Shri Thanedar -- to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken seeking his intervention in protecting the lives of Hindus in Bangladesh, he said he is aware of them.

"I'm not going to get into specific letters or engagements.... We welcome Dr Yunus's call for calm and an end to the violence... We welcome the new government's focus on restoring security and the protection of members of minority communities as well," he added.

Will back new govt as long as it stands

FROM PAGE 16

"They [the conspirators] should be dismissed from their duties. Those identified as terrorists who have acted in favour of the last government must be arrested and brought to book," he added.

About the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Fakhrul said, "Hasina crossed the line. What arrogance she had! She had to flee back to the place where her roots belong."

"I am telling the Awami League, there is still time; stop stirring up trouble. If you continue like this, you won't survive," he added.

Fakhrul also criticised the attempt by AL leaders to lay flowers at the Dhanmondi-32 residence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

"Even today, you went to Dhanmondi-32 to lay flowers. No one objected, but the students didn't let it happen because no one wants to see that person anymore. People no longer want to see Hasina's face."

Fakhrul said, "Using the minority community as a shield, the Awami League is trying to create instability..."

"Their main goal is to create instability within the country, hoping that if they can secure India's help again, they might be saved."

Fakhrul urged the AL party leader and activists to surrender.

"For your own good, stop causing trouble and surrender. Those of you still outside, hiding here and there, take a look at what happened yesterday. See how the [former] law minister and [former] advisor to [the prime minister] were taken to court," he added.

Demanding that those responsible for human rights violations be brought to justice, he said, "These people must be tried under international laws for crimes against humanity."

BNP Standing Committee member Mirza Abbas, Selima Rahman, and other leaders also spoke at the event.

Ex-home boss faces ACC probe

FROM PAGE 16

Public Relations Officer Akhtarul Islam said a five-member investigation committee was formed yesterday, led by Jahangir Alam, deputy director of the ACC, to investigate the allegations.

According to the complaint, Asaduzzaman Khan and his associates ran a syndicate that used to take bribes. After assuming responsibility of the ministry, he allegedly took bags full of money as bribes. These funds were collected from the police, the Department of Narcotics Control, and the Fire Service.

It says then Harun-ur-Rashid Biswas, additional secretary, led the syndicate. Other members of the syndicate included Joint Secretary Dhananjay Kumar Das, the minister's Assistant Personal Secretary (APS) Monir Hossain, Public Relations Officer Sharif Mahmud Apu, and Administrative Officer Molla Ibrahim Hossain.

Harun played a key role in collecting or withdrawing the money. It is alleged that the Kamal-Harun syndicate embezzled thousands of crores of taka and sent the money abroad, it added.

There are also allegations that the syndicate took bribes for appointments to key positions. A list of candidates used to be sent from the minister's office to respective departments under the home ministry after recruitment circulars, according to the allegations.

Salman used clout to help

FROM PAGE 16

Salman had recommended loans for GJSP from the state-run bank at the height of the coronavirus pandemic. He wrote a letter to the chairman of Janata Bank on August 9, 2020, recommending Tk 250 crore loans as working capital for GJSP.

GJSP is a Bangladeshi conglomerate whose business interests range from construction to engineering, electrical cables, information technology, printing and media.

In the letter, Salman wrote that GJSP was forced to take loans because of the adverse effects of "dishonest political actions".

The loans were not enough to meet GJSP's requirements, a fact that caused the company to default in 2018, he said.

However, the loans were regularised with a low-interest incentive package provided by the government amid the pandemic, according to the letter.

Salman warned that GJSP would collapse if it failed to run its business in full swing because of a lack of funds. Janata Bank then approved the loans, documents show.

The board of directors of the bank was always positive about some influential clients, including Salman, against whom it had not taken any brave move, officials said.

Contacted for comment yesterday, its Chairman SM Mahfuzur Rahman claimed Salman's letter had not influenced the board's decision to approve loans for GJSP.

The board receives thousands of such recommendations for credit but its decisions are not based on these, Mahfuzur told The Daily Star.

Zereen Altaf, chief executive officer of Globe Janakantha Shilpa Paribar, said she did not have any information on Salman's recommendation for the loans.

As Salman is in police custody, The Daily Star contacted Beximco Group which declined the newspaper's request for comment.

UK, Singapore

FROM PAGE 16

will be crucial in navigating the multiple challenges faced by the nation."

Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong also congratulated Yunus in a letter yesterday.

"In this period of transition, your interim government has resolutely undertaken the crucial task of restoring stability," he wrote.

Wong said he is confident that under the leadership of Yunus, Bangladesh will return to a path of peace and prosperity, where all communities co-exist harmoniously.

He wished every success of the government.

Wong said Singapore and Bangladesh enjoy a "warm and longstanding" friendship that spans a wide range of sectors, including trade and investment, labour, renewable energy, infrastructure, and port management.

"I look forward to working with you to further strengthen the close ties between our countries."

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Justice, equal rights vital for minorities

Take stern action so that none can exploit their vulnerability

That there have been a number of attacks, including looting and arson, targeting the homes, businesses, and places of worship of minority communities after the fall of the Awami League government cannot be denied, nor should questions like who orchestrated the attacks or what political motives might be behind them be allowed to overshadow the importance of security, justice, and equal rights for these vulnerable groups. According to the chief of army staff, there were around 30 crimes against minority communities in 20 districts. The number provided by the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (BHBCUC) is much higher. Only a thorough and impartial investigation can clear up the confusion, and lead to justice, which is vitally needed.

In Bangladesh, minorities—religious or ethnic—are often among the first to suffer during political upheavals. Even during normal times, we have seen how dodgy political elements exploited their vulnerability. Many persecuted minority families also had to flee their homes and even leave the country. However, this time, their response has been markedly different. Members of minority communities chose to stand their ground and protest against the violence. The BHBCUC also presented an eight-point demand, vowing to continue their protests until the attacks ceased. Although the protests were later suspended following assurances from Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus, tensions still remain.

True, the sensitivities of the issue under the present circumstance made it something of a political minefield requiring caution, but we should be able to unequivocally denounce any attack on minorities and demand their protection from further assaults. We were heartened by the message given by Dr Yunus—that all people in Bangladesh are members of one family—and the solidarity of student protesters and ordinary citizens who guarded the homes and places of worship of minorities. This show of positivity and solidarity must continue. And the interim government must honour its commitment to provide security to all members of minority communities.

But since the minority question keeps surfacing under new realities, we should also critically think about what we are doing wrong, and what we should do to address it. In the new Bangladesh that we hope to build, minorities must enjoy the same rights and protection as everyone else. Some of the demands forwarded by BHBCUC—including the introduction of a law to protect minority communities, full implementation of the CHT Peace Accord, and greater participation and representation of religious and ethnic minorities in government—deserve immediate consideration. Through these and other sociopolitical reforms, we must eradicate their vulnerability so that no vested groups can ever exploit them.

State bodies must perform better

Govt should take steps to depoliticise them, ensure accountability

Continued poor governance in various sectors has long been a thorn in the side of Bangladesh, and this is where critical focus must be given as we begin a new journey after the recent mass uprising. Experts and business community leaders have also called on the interim government to take comprehensive measures to address the underlying issues in these sectors.

Top among them is the banking sector which has long been plagued by various regulatory and policy failures. Nepotism and political interests weakened the central bank to such an extent that it failed to perform its monitoring role and take actions against the banks ignoring rules and norms to cater to the needs of a select few, often politically connected influentials. Bangladesh Bank also sometimes resorted to whitewashing malpractices by adopting incorrect accounting practices. We witnessed similar shenanigans in the capital market, and hardly anyone was held accountable for committing financial crimes. While default loans and money laundering kept on rising, revenue collection by the National Board of Revenue (NBR) came nowhere near expected levels. Rather, NBR repeatedly came to the limelight for the corruption of its officials.

Apart from the financial sector, there have been damning reports of corruption in various other state institutions including Petrobangla and Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited. The power and energy sector is another industry bedevilled by corruption, irregularities, and mismanagement. While many state-owned power plants lay idle or inoperative, consumers kept paying exorbitantly for power from private rental units. Another sector straining our wallets and pushing many below the poverty line is healthcare. A total disregard for policy and accountability has turned basic healthcare into a luxury for many citizens. Unfortunately, while all this was happening, the oversight bodies responsible for checking corruption and irregularities did little to prevent them. Even institutions in charge of investigation, such as the Anti-Corruption Commission, were themselves bogged down by irregularities.

Under these circumstances, we urge the interim government to take immediate steps to investigate and publish white papers on the actual conditions of all key sectors. The government, with the help of experts, should also try to revive the ailing sectors, particularly banking, ensure transparency and accountability in NBR, build a more business-friendly environment, create a commission to look into the issues of the health sector, and empower oversight bodies so that they can enforce rules and regulations strictly. The government should also take measures to prevent any politicisation of law enforcement agencies and all other public institutions.

Taste of freedom regained

A magnificent opportunity with potential pitfalls

THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam
is the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

MAHFUZ ANAM

The student-led people's movement toppling an autocratic government reminds me of a song by Sabina Yasmin: "*Shob kota janala khule dao na, ami gaibo gaibo bijoyeri gaan*" (Open all windows, I want to sing the song of victory). Though it was in praise of our Liberation War, it resonates in my heart today. Suddenly, we are living in a world without barriers of thought. Many of us had forgotten how to speak freely. We would always either switch off or put our mobile phone in the adjoining room, because of the surveillance regime that we lived under. Self-censorship became embedded in our subconscious. A small minority of print media tried to hold power to account while the rest competed with each other to genuflecting themselves to power. They opted for "lapdog" journalism rather than being the "watchdog." Fear of saying anything other than the koshered version was so prevalent that frank opinions were only expressed in the most intimate of settings. Anybody speaking to us as journalists would preface their comments by saying "not to be quoted."

For the last 10 years or more, nothing could be said against Sheikh Hasina or any member of her family. Expressions like "powers that be," "highest level of decision-making," etc were used while referring to the former prime minister. A law was enacted, under the guise of showing respect to the father of the nation, that made punishable even the slightest criticism of any member of Sheikh Hasina and her family. Throughout her tenure, the use of cartoons of the former PM, her sister, son, daughter, niece and nephew, or any negative comment about them, however well-documented, was not permitted, and harassment including jail term could not be ruled out. Anything but the "family" was the norm in our storytelling.

Rigged elections in 2014, 2018 and 2024, and Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League getting away with it, served to demoralise us the most. In every democracy, however flawed, elections serve to be an occasion for robust expression of the public will. This the people of Bangladesh, save those belonging to the ruling party and its allies, were deprived of. Also, by repeatedly manipulating elections, the Hasina government deprived itself of the vital feedback that free and fair elections usually give, as evidenced by the last election results in India. By manipulating elections, Sheikh Hasina, her government and her party never got the real message and, as such, suddenly found the ground shifted from under their feet when the student-led movement started.

The question that keeps on churning in my mind is: how did we go there? Why couldn't we prevent this from happening? Did we protest as we saw our freedoms being erased? Here comes the issue of moral bankruptcy of our intellectuals in general. As we saw Sheikh Hasina get more and more entrenched in power, we became more and more amenable to compromise.

The Awami League led a group of 14 parties in which some very renowned politicians were involved. These politicians spent their lives in trade union movements, fought for peasants' rights, women's rights, anti-extremism and democracy. But as a part of the then ruling party alliance, they all got sucked into the world of privilege, wealth and power. How could these leaders not see the rot that was setting in?

Over the 15 years of Sheikh Hasina's tenure, we didn't hear of a single resignation from any post within the government or outside. No minister, no MP, no academic, no professor, no vice-chancellor, no judge ever had the moral courage to stand up and say, "Enough. I will not take this anymore and will be guided by my conscience."

The way the highest tier of judges fell in line to oust the then chief justice, Surendra Kumar Sinha, will remain as the most shameful capitulation of the judiciary to the executive in Bangladesh's history. All Appellate Division judges were called by the president, on returning from which the group declared that they would no longer sit in any bench or participate in any deliberations where the chief justice would be present. In effect, all the judges expressed "no confidence" in the chief justice. But on what grounds? No explanation was given.

This one instance in which the mere wish of the prime minister led to the sacking of the highest judge of the highest court, with not even a demur by so many senior judges, sealed, in my view, any chance of independence of the judiciary. But it was brought on by the judges themselves. Couldn't a single judge resign to protect the dignity of the judiciary?

When the judiciary succumbed without clamour, all the other institutions and the people within them lost hope. One by one, most institutions collapsed—and often with our own help.

Judged against the background of total institutional collapse, the crucial significance of the student-led uprising cannot be overestimated. The chief of the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus most appropriately termed the uprising our second "liberation." It is truly so. We now have a genuine chance of undertaking fundamental reforms that we so desperately need.

The student-mass uprising has broken down all structures of oppression. It has opened the door for all of us to dream again. Freedom is in the air and our right to free speech seems to have been regained. What the students have taught us is to never lose hope. When all doors were shut, the students crushed the barriers and opened them all. A fresh wind of change is now blowing through Bangladesh. New hope, new expectations and, most importantly, new possibilities are coming before us.

We must remember that just as we are good at fighting for justice, defeating the autocrats, and driving the military back to the barracks, so also we have a sad record of not being able to reach the goals that inspired us to fight the oppressor.

We missed the opportunity to build Sonar Bangla, first due to Bangabandhu's fatal mistake of launching BAKSAL and then because of his brutal murder along with his family and the consequent entry of the military to run the country.

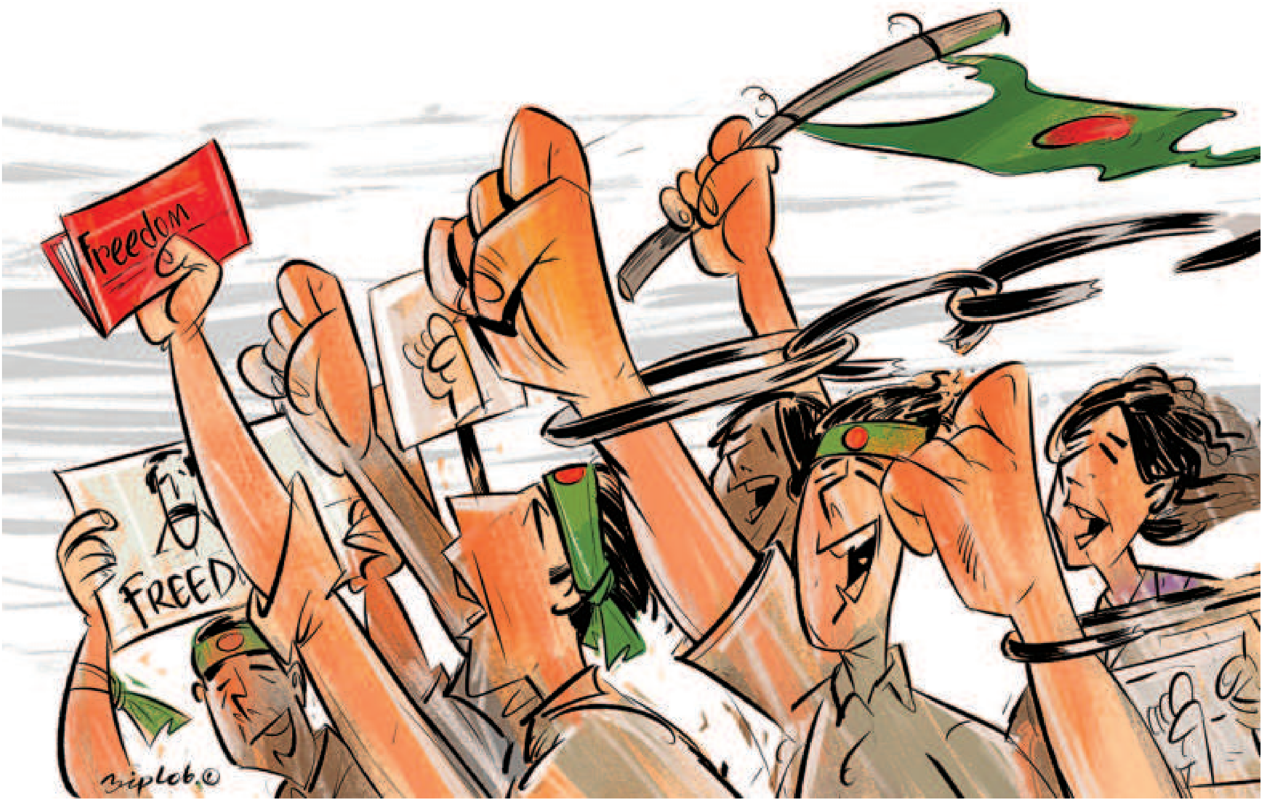


ILLUSTRATION: **BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY**

The second opportunity was missed with the fall of General Ershad and the restoration of an elected and representative government. There was a well-thought-out plan by all the political parties that came together to topple Ershad's autocratic government. But when BNP came to power in 1991, that plan was ignored. When the Awami League came to power in 1996, it did the same. Thus, instead of the politics of unity, development and peace, we entered a phase that *The Economist* termed "the battle of the Begums."

Now we have a third opportunity. Usually, nations are not so lucky. How we make the best use of this occasion will be our biggest challenge. The most urgent task is to unify the nation. We must not lapse into the same destructive culture of relegating the interest of the country behind that of the party and putting the interest of the party behind that of the leader. We have suffered enormously because of it, and it is true for us all.

Proposition for a national youth parliament

Nishat Farzana
recently worked on youth political participation issues in the Asia Pacific as a UN volunteer specialist with UNDP.

NISHAT FARZANA

In July and August, Bangladesh witnessed an incredible demonstration of grit and determination from its youth. Historically, the youth have always been at the forefront of major movements in Bangladesh, such as the Language Movement of 1952. Earlier this month, the youth of this fairly young nation once again changed its course by leading a massive movement against the discrimination in government jobs, which ultimately resulted in the resignation of the former prime minister.

It is now crucial to incorporate the voices of the youth in the country's decision-making processes. Bangladesh can achieve this by establishing its own youth parliament, which would serve as a meaningful policy-making platform solely led by the youth, for the youth.

Bangladesh is experiencing a rise in its youth population. As of 2023, youths account for 28 percent of the country's population. These young people face numerous challenges, including unemployment, poverty, administrative and regulatory barriers to accessing financial services, and difficulties in obtaining quality education. Young people in the underdeveloped and climate-vulnerable regions are the worst victims of the prevailing socio-economic and environmental problems.

To capitalise on the demographic dividend, it is essential to address the problems faced by young people; otherwise, these issues will become problems for the entire country. Policymakers must actively engage with the youth, listen to their concerns sincerely, and establishing a youth parliament is the most systematic way to do so.

On a global scale, date from the Inter Parliamentary Union shows that half the world's population is under 30, yet only 1.74 percent of MPs in South Asia represent this age group. The former National Parliament of Bangladesh did not have any MPs under the age of 30. So, who could have represented the concerns of the youth in the nation's most important legislative body?

In the Asia-Pacific region, many countries have established government-facilitated institutions to enable youth civic engagement in political and decision-making processes. Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Nepal have strong national youth councils. Vietnam and the Philippines have youth councils that also serve as policy-making bodies to the government. Bhutan's National Youth Assembly includes Women, Children, and Youth Standing Committees, while India and Pakistan have temporary National Youth Parliament schemes that provide short-term platforms for debate on timely issues.

These youth structures typically engage in activities such as dialogues, debates, and training on topics like entrepreneurship, innovation, and skill development.

Bangladesh has a Standing Committee in Parliament on the Ministry of Youth and Sports, but the actual presence of youth in this committee has been lacking. We also have a National Youth Council. However, this government-affiliated council has been perceived as inactive and largely absent on youth issues. Additionally, there are a few mock Youth Parliaments organised by social development agencies to enable short-term discussions. However, the policy recommendations from these forums rarely reach decision-makers. The political system needs to be revisited and restructured to accommodate a youth parliament that can serve as a policy-making body on major issues.

Establishing a youth parliament in Bangladesh has always been complex and fraught with technicalities. The current situation presents an opportune moment to establish a national youth parliament as a testament to the power of Bangladeshi youth. A well-structured youth parliament can transform the mindset of the country's young people by equipping them with the knowledge and experience of parliamentary processes. Such a parliament can bridge generations by encouraging veteran leaders to collaborate with the new generation, ensuring that leadership wisdom is passed on.

If a youth parliament is successfully established, it must ensure diversity and inclusivity in participation, sustainability and transparency in the engagement process, and authenticity in its operations. If the country's politicians are unwilling to pass the baton to new faces, the nation will face periodic setbacks in its development journey.

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The legality of the interim government

Analysis from constitutional and international legal perspectives

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MUHAMMAD EKRAMUL HAQUE

The constitutionality of the current interim government of Bangladesh can be analysed from two perspectives: firstly in consonance with Kelsen's Grundnorm theory following a revolution and the drastic change in circumstances that follow, and secondly in light of the present constitution.

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is the supreme law of the land and, as its Article 7 (2) states, it is the solemn expression of the will of the people. Reading as such, along with Kelsen's Grundnorm theory, which enunciates that the law of the land emanates from a *Grundnorm* or the basic rule that births all other rules found in that legal system, it means that the *Grundnorm* is the will of the people. The evolution, or change of a *Grundnorm*, occurs at the instance of a successful revolution. Following the revolutionary events in Bangladesh in the months of July and August in 2024, it is safe to say that both a revolution and a significant shift in the will of the people have occurred.

This shift can be identified through two lenses: i) academic; and ii) political or through the naked eye. From an academic standpoint, the rallying of people against a tyrant regime and the subsequent resignation of the then prime minister is a mark of revolution from a procedural and academic standpoint. In the naked eye, the people flooding the streets in visible jubilation following the fall of the despotic regime as a result of weeks-long mass protests, unrest, and bloodshed is an invariable display of the shift of public will—the mark of a successful revolution and the subsequent shift, in other words the creation of a new *Grundnorm*.

The characterisation of these events as a revolution may be concretised by two key factors: the fact that the prime minister resigned, and that she left for another country in search of refuge. Following her resignation and subsequent departure, the law enforcement agencies, which had done her bidding even till the very last minute of her stay inside the country, were nowhere to be found. Meanwhile the army, which was deployed on the streets, expressed support to the people on the streets. And even more so, as evidence of a successful revolution, two student leaders took seats in the newly formed interim government as representatives of the movement. Furthermore, the formation of the interim government was not based on the will of any particular group of people. It was the collective expression of the representatives of the major political parties in the country, leaders of the student-led mass uprising, key members of the civil society, etc. that led to the formation of the council of advisers of this interim government.

Hence, in tandem with the legality through the shift and stabilisation of the *Grundnorm* towards the interim government, and through the application of the effective control theory where all the state's machineries are under effective control of the interim government, this government is not just legal but also constitutional. A successful revolution may lead to changes in the law of a country ("When and why does the Grundnorm change?"; *The Cambridge Law Journal)*.

Under the present constitution, for the sake of debate, to entertain Article 57 (3) pertaining to the ability of the prime minister, after resigning, to still hold office until the next prime minister takes office, such application would be null and void given the fact that the prime minister is not present in the country, or at her office following her resignation. Hence, the question of whether she holds office till the next prime minister comes is irrelevant, since she left her office invariably for another country, rendering herself unavailable as opposed to the constitutionally prescribed method of resigning. This created a unique situation which neither happened in our history, nor does our constitution explicitly provide for it. The former prime minister's fleeing from Bangladesh made it practically impossible for her to hold the office till the appointment of her successor. In such a unique situation, which seemingly lays outside of the periphery of what exists as constitutional law in Bangladesh, it necessitates the actions of the president, and if need be, the collaboration with the chief justice in conjunction with Article 106 of the constitution, in formulating a new interpretation of constitutional principles that deal with the situation and pave a path forward.

> **The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is the supreme law of the land and, as its Article 7 (2) states, it is the solemn expression of the will of the people. Reading as such, along with Kelsen's Grundnorm theory, which enunciates that the law of the land emanates from a *Grundnorm* or the basic rule that births all other rules found in that legal system, it means that the *Grundnorm* is the will of the people.**

Dr Muhammad Yunus takes oath as the chief adviser of the interim government of Bangladesh on August 8, 2024.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

There is a misconception that following the prime minister's departure from the country either by resignation or otherwise, there was no government in the country, whereas in the absence of the prime minister, the president was still in office, therefore there evidently was a government. The formation of the interim government led by Dr Muhammad Yunus was overseen by the president, which goes in line with the aforementioned constitutional law principle, since the vacuum created by the absence of the prime minister altogether elevates the duties of the president, thus instating this government as legal and *de jure*. Another significant characteristic of this government is that there has been no opposition to the formation and operation of this new government, which clearly shows that the people of Bangladesh including all political parties and the state organs have generally accepted it. Moreover, Articles 57 (3) and 58 (4) of the constitution stipulate that the prime minister and the cabinet of ministers will continue to hold their offices until their successors have entered the offices. The word "successor" is critical as it does not explicitly mandate a new prime minister or a cabinet of ministers to be appointed. From this perspective, their "successors" in the newly formed interim government, which the president appointed after taking the advisory opinion of the Supreme Court, gain legitimacy under the present constitutional scheme too.

In international law, there are two different terms used to describe different governments: *de jure* and de facto. *De jure* is recognition by law and *de facto* is control in fact. The president, with the utmost responsibility of the state, swearing in this interim government gives it legality, enunciating it as a *de jure* government, while consequently the effective control the interim government gained over state machinery—whether it be through the controlling of civil servants, law enforcement agencies or otherwise and through the emphatic and visible support of the people at large—proves this interim government to be the de facto government as well. Moreover, the recognition of the international community—the United Nations as well as various countries—and their willingness to work with this new government is also a very important characteristic of a valid government of a country in this era of modern international law.

This column does not aim to solve all the problems that have arisen out of the current constitutional crisis, but to raise relevant issues in concordance with the current situation so that they may be penultimately pondered over, researched, articulated and then implemented as suitable concrete solutions in the future. There is no one side taken throughout this text, rather multiple analyses made from a bird's eye view of the situation, taking into consideration the plethora of factors and circumstances relevant to it.

The legality of the present interim government is justified based on both Kelsen's theory and the existing constitutional law of Bangladesh. Thus, this government's legality can be established from jurisprudential, constitutional and international legal perspectives.

Can the interim govt make progress with the CHT Accord?

Mangal Kumar Chakma
is information and publicity secretary at Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS).

MANGAL KUMAR CHAKMA

The quota reform protests that turned into the anti-discrimination movement of students, followed by the uprising of students and mass people, has caused the downfall of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government. In its aftermath, an interim government has been formed in Bangladesh. The main spirit of the movement was to bring a reform in the state systems through the eradication of discriminatory functioning of the state.

Needless to say, it is the vulnerable and marginalised communities who fall prey to any form of discrimination. In Bangladesh, the Indigenous people living in plainlands and the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) are no exception. It is especially due to the continuous repression of the Indigenous Jumma people for decades that there has been continuing mass movement in the CHT since the 1960s. To bring resolution, the historic CHT Accord was signed in 1997 to ensure a perennial solution to the CHT crisis through peaceful and political means.

The CHT Accord was signed on December 2, 1997.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

After signing the accord, the then Awami League government implemented some of its provisions, but did not go ahead with the implementation of two-thirds of the accord, including the core issues. The provisions that were left unimplemented include: stepping up lawful and administrative measures to preserve the tribal-inhabited feature of the CHT region; devolving the subjects of general administration, law and order, police (local), land management, forest and environment, development of communication system, etc. to the CHT Regional Council and three hill district councils established under the special governance system within the accord's purview; holding elections to the councils after formulation of election rules and enumeration of the permanent residents of CHT in the electoral roll; formation of a hill police force with the permanent residents of CHT; returning the dispossessed lands of the Jumma people to the owners by settling the land disputes through the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission and formulation of the rules of the commission; and cancellation of all leases of lands given to the non-residents.

They also include withdrawal of all temporary camps, including the "Operation Uttaran"; ensuring proper rehabilitation of the India-returnee Jumma refugees and internally displaced Jumma families after getting back their dispossessed lands; appointment of permanent residents in all available jobs in the CHT with preference to the Jumma people; bringing amendment to all the laws, rules and regulations applicable to CHT in consonance with the CHT Accord; and relocation of Bangalee settlers from the lands and homesteads of the Jumma people.

It is worth mentioning that due to non-implementation of most of the accord, no political and peaceful solution to the CHT crisis has been achieved; rather, discrimination and deprivation of the Jumma people have intensified. The activities of state machineries designed to be anti-accord and counterproductive to the interest of the Jumma people have been strengthened. Consequently, it has become a routine for the Jumma people to witness arbitrary arrests, jailing, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and abduction, forceful occupation of lands, forced eviction of people from their own land and homesteads, false cases, communal attacks, arson in houses, violence against women, etc.

The commitment of ensuring the Jumma people's rights given through the signing of the accord was heinously breached by the Hasina-led government. It was a case of extreme deception with the Jumma people. The institutions of CHT Accord Implementation and Monitoring Committee, CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission, a task force for the rehabilitation of India-returnee Jumma refugees and internally displaced persons, the CHT Regional Council and the three hill district councils were made totally dysfunctional, indeed.

It may be noted that in the case of the CHT Accord's implementation, which was signed without any third party, the CHT Accord Implementation and Monitoring Committee is the the only recognised authority acceptable to both the parties, the decisions and recommendations of which are obligatory to both the Bangladesh government and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samity (PCJSS) as the signatories. But the Hasina-led government didn't undertake any initiative to implement any of the decisions taken in the meetings of the committee. The committee became an institution only in name.

Against this backdrop, for the sake of the implementation of the accord, it is necessary to appoint a competent person for the post of convener of the CHT Accord Implementation and Monitoring Committee by the interim government in consultation with the PCJSS immediately. After the appointment of the convener, the unimplemented provisions of the accord may be identified in the meetings of the committee. It is most urgent that a time-bound roadmap for the implementation of the unimplemented provisions be adopted in the sessions of the committee. Then the interim government can follow the roadmap to fully implement the accord.

In this case, the crucial role of the Ministry of CHT Affairs is undeniable. During the reign of the Sheikh Hasina government, the ministry was never seen playing a positive role in the matter of the accord's implementation, when it was formed under the provision of the accord. It is hoped that the interim government will undertake proper measures to bring the ministry back on track leading to the full implementation of the accord.

Whenever it comes to the issues of democratic and human rights of the people, the Sheikh Hasina-led government would focus on describing how it was going to uplift the country among the ranks of middle-income countries; it used to conceal its autocratic tendencies and lack of rule of law in the country. Similarly, in the case with CHT, the Hasina-led government used to tell the tale of its development programmes and strived to conceal its failure in implementing the accord and its oppressive actions against the Jumma people. The hill people expect that the interim government will be able to set the state systems on the right path, and make them pro-people, eco-friendly, and friendly to the culture of Indigenous peoples.

It is also hoped that the interim government will be able to realise the discrimination and deprivation of the Jumma people in depth and as a part of the reforms in the state systems, it will take firm steps to end the discrimination existent in the CHT region. Ending the plight of the Jumma people lies in the proper, speedy and fullest implementation of the CHT Accord.

Poison Tree of Partition

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NAEEM MOHAIEMEN

In 1953, my grandfather Maulvi Emdad Ali made a point to tell visitors to our Rankin Street home that it was not acquired through a "distress sale." A small *dhvaja-stambha* structure in the garden marked the home's pre-1947 provenance as a Hindu household. There was a residual stigma for new Muslim elites of East Pakistan about gaining property through the despair of departing Hindus. Our family patriarch wanted to mark himself as a fair purchaser of property—hence his additional references to having a British Indian Civil Service job *before* 1947.

Partition literature, from *Toba Tek Singh* (Saadat Hasan Manto, 1955) to *Vatan Aur Desh* (Yashpal Singh, 1960) to *Kalo Borof* (Mahmudul Haque, 1977), has circumnavigated dramatic changes in family fortunes during rupture and collapse (Sayeed Ferdous, 2022). In our encircled geography of intense land scarcity, it has been the property under your neighbour's feet, not the rituals in their temples or mosques, that have been the target of sudden acquisition. Riots, intimidating people into crossing borders or going into hiding were the first steps in this process of land acquisition.

The Government of East Pakistan, after 1947, needed a set of laws to acquire property for accommodation of new government servants and setting up offices. "Requisition of Property Act" (Act XIII of 1948) gave the right to take over property "needful for purposes of the state." This flowed into the "East Bengal Evacuees Act" (1951). In 1964, new riots after the Hazrat Bal incident in Kashmir led to the "East Pakistan Disturbed Persons Rehabilitation Ordinance" (1964). This new regulation restricted the transfer of "immovable property of minority community" without permission of the authorities. This meant that any Bengali Hindu wishing to leave East Bengal for any reason would now face barriers to even the lawful sale of their property.

The 1965 Indo-Pak war ended after 17 days and left behind the poisonous "Enemy Property Order" (1965). This was matched by a reciprocal "Enemy Property Act" (1968) in India. Demonstrating a civilian-military joint project to continue expropriating land, after the pan-Pakistan uprisings of 1969 led to the lifting of military emergency, the government immediately passed the "Enemy Property (Continuance of Emergency Provisions) Ordinance" (1969). Again, following the 1971 liberation of Bangladesh, this law miraculously survived via the "Laws of Continuance Enforcement Order" (1971).

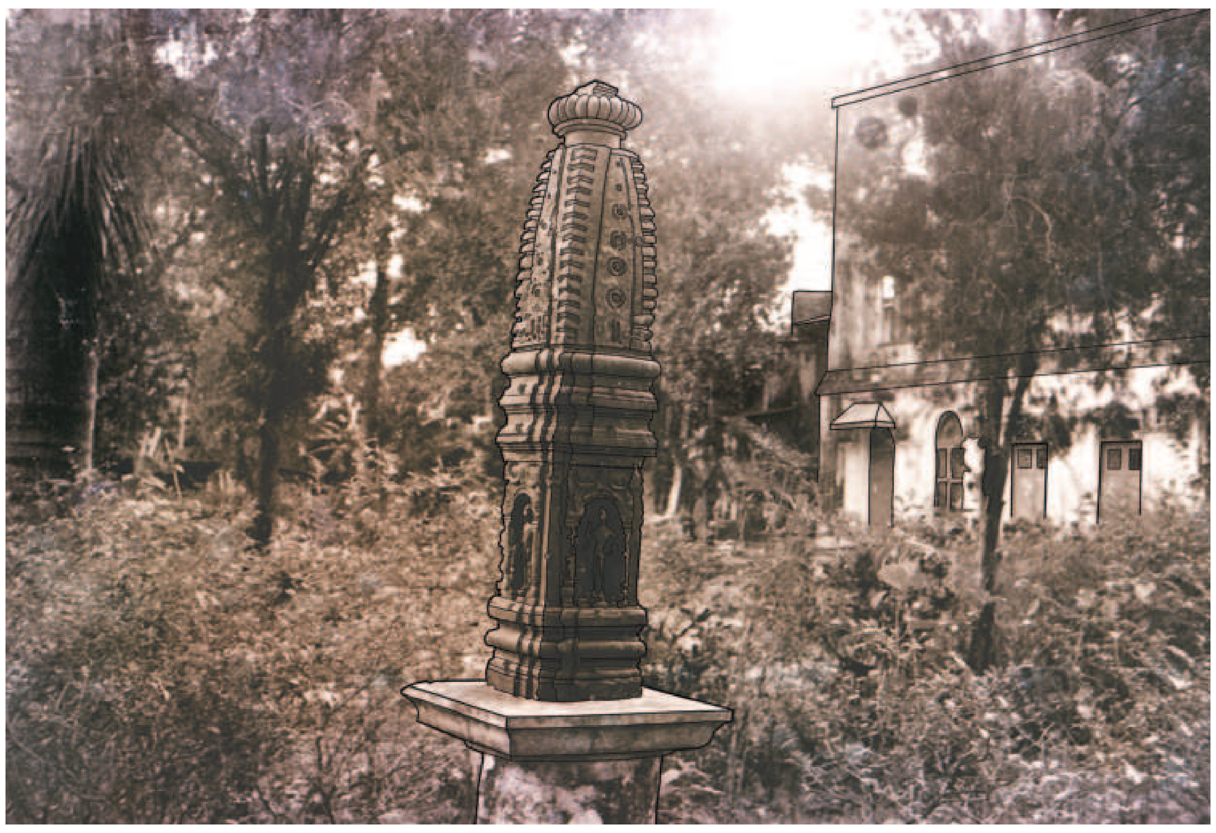
On December 17, 1971, a new enemy population was born, as the Urdu speakers of East Pakistan (former refugees and transplants from India and West Pakistan) were trapped into the geographically inaccurate "Bihari" category and "left behind" by the new Pakistan state (Dina Siddiqi, 2013) . The moment of independence that we commemorate was also accompanied by looting and occupation, this time of Urdu speakers' land (Seuty Sabur, 2020). In 1972, the "Bangladesh Vesting of Property and Assets Order" merged the abandoned property of those who had left for Pakistan with those who had left for India. This was further solidified in the "Vested and Non-Resident Property Act" of 1974. Thus, both Urdu speakers' and Hindu land could be targeted for takeover.

Back in 1965, the Pakistan state had also discovered another vulnerable population whose land could be used for the magic of "development"—the indigenous Adivasi people in southeast Bangladesh who depended on customary rights for land ownership. Supported by American engineering technology, the Kaptai Hydroelectric Dam was built in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, flooding Adivasi villages and the Chakma royal palace. The oral history of this event, a micro-scale "Nakba" for the Adivasi peoples, is recorded in Samari Chakma's *Bor Porong* (2018). The Adivasis saw their crisis as limited to the Pakistan state, but in 1972, they received a new system shock when the constitution of Bangladesh defined only "Bengalis" as the "people" of the nation. The first defiance of the new Bangladesh government was Manabendra Larma's remarks on the Parliament floor: "Under no definition or logic can a Chakma be a Bengali, or a Bengali be a Chakma" (his remarks also erased the many non-Chakma Adivasi peoples).

The Adivasis saw their crisis as limited to the Pakistan state, but in 1972, they received a new system shock when the constitution of Bangladesh defined only "Bengalis" as the "people" of the nation. The first defiance of the new Bangladesh government was Manabendra Larma's remarks on the Parliament floor: "Under no definition or logic can a Chakma be a Bengali, or a Bengali be a Chakma" (his remarks also erased the many non-Chakma Adivasi peoples).

After 1975, the Chittagong Hill Tracts became the site of the Adivasi guerrilla war, led by the Shanti Bahini—met with force by the military and accompanied by Bengali settlers. The equations of 1971 were inverted when India allowed the Shanti Bahini to set up clandestine camps, repeating the Agartala scenario. The huge number of Adivasis who had crossed into India after 1965, and then again with dramatic force after 1976, was the Indian state's *raison d'etre* for interference, just as the tidal wave of Bengali refugees was in 1971. The occupation of non-majority populations' land has been a bipartisan, as well as a civilian-military project for 53 years, no matter what sweet cultural ceremonies are presented to visiting dignitaries. Even the popular slogan of "Tumi Ke? Ami Ke? Bangali, Bangali!" erases Adivasis and Urdu speakers, and privileges "the Bengali sense of victimhood" (Rahnuma Ahmed, 2010).

The saintly aura we invest in our people creates lethal blind spots. The desire to take by force from vulnerable populations exists in all people, and after rupture events, that is what stays in our memory as a collective stain, while the moments of courage and community get forgotten. The media fans the flames, but it is our denial of contradictory histories, and the continuance of unjust laws and practices, that creates the opportunity for hostile eyes. Bengali Hindus, Adivasi Paharis or plainland Indigenous dwellers, Urdu speakers, Ahmadiyyas, Shi'a—all vulnerable communities have faced our wrath, always twinned with a gimlet eye on their land. Underneath are laws with a seventy-five-year legacy, that facilitate "distress" transfer and theft of land. If India and Pakistan are Salman Rushdie's "Midnight's Children" (1981), Bangladesh emerged as what I call "Midnight's Third Child" (Mohaiemen, 2023). Our independent nation-state has survived and grown despite setbacks and interference, but we are yet to escape the forever poison tree of 1947.



VISUAL: **NAEEM MOHAIEMEN**, RANKIN STREET 1953 (BLUEPRINTS), COURTESY OF EXPERIMENTER GALLERY.

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Once I earn the minority tag, my worth is always less than another person who sees themselves as part of the majority.

VISUAL: **ALIZA HRIDULA**

I reject the minority tag. Here is why

Bishakha Devnath
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BISHAKHA DEVNATH

People from all backgrounds stood shoulder to shoulder supporting the students' anti-discrimination movement for the fall of autocracy, absolutism, and totalitarianism, that the just ousted government had established during its 15-year rule. However, as soon as celebrations began, those who stood united started seeking out enemies within; enemies who may look different, and may have different views about things other than the regime that they brought down together.

So, another chapter within a chapter began—where, on one side, celebration went on of the movement's success while, on the other, some people found themselves in another battle for their existence. In other words, some were subject to the very notion of discrimination that they had been up against. And they were labelled a minority.

According to the United Nations, minorities are groups of people who have either religion, language, or culture in common or a combination of those, but they comprise less than half of a country's population. As per the definition, I belong to a minority group. I was born a Hindu in Bangladesh, a country where more than 90 percent of the people adhere to Islam. Hindus make up only about eight percent of the 170 million people living in the country.

But let me be clear what the majority-minority dichotomy means to me. The minority label carries far more weight than just a number. It brings everything—one's hard work, identity, pride, social dignity, and self-esteem—down to nothing but that label; so much significance on the insignificant labelling of a person, a human life!

Once I earn the minority tag, my worth is always less than another person who sees themselves as part of the majority. The quantifiable image elicits a sense of helplessness, vulnerability, and a need for protection. That makes one meek, on the edge of getting down to one's knees for sympathy instead of fighting for rights, equality, and justice. If the approach becomes collective in nature, any community constituting less than 50 percent of a society tends to accept repression by those from the majority.

That's the reason why after each episode of arson, killing, and vandalism carried out against Hindus, Buddhists, or any other "minority" community in Bangladesh, victims have pleaded for support, scrambled to rebuild their lives, or fled the country. But they hardly summoned the courage to fight back and demand actions against the attackers. Bureaucrats and politicians make pledges to heal the wounds, but the repressed know well those are just hollow words. Over time, the absence of justice for attacks on the communities tears up threads of social harmony.

This time around though, I see people from the Hindu community take to the streets in the capital and in other district headquarters, raising their voices against the "reprisal" attacks on them after the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government. The anger of the attackers has supposedly emanated from the predominant perception that the Hindus support the Awami League, and that Hasina had enjoyed all-out support of India, where Hindus are a majority.

These reasons are merely weaponised to justify communal hatred. It would be foolish to believe that Hindus in Bangladesh have any control over India's stance regarding Bangladesh. When it comes to supporting a political party, everyone should have the freedom to choose who they vote for. However, surmising that everyone belonging to a particular religion shares an identical political belief is nothing but preposterous.

The face of the minority keeps changing depending on national borders. The oppressors in Bangladesh become the oppressed in India. Muslims, who account for nearly 15 percent of India's population, are subject to communal attacks, including arson, looting, and vandalism of houses, shops, and mosques by Hindus. The majority, whoever they are, get provoked and emboldened by divisive political campaigns. In India, both Congress and the incumbent Bharatiya Janata Party used political strategies along religious lines to come to power, even though secularism is enshrined in the constitution. The BJP's third consecutive term after its win this year is feared to consolidate further divisions between Hindus and Muslims in India.

The gathering on August 9 and 10 at the Shahbagh intersection calling for minority rights is probably the biggest of its kind in years, if not decades, in Bangladesh. They have put forth an eight-point demand. I, however, find myself opposing the demand for a minority protection commission and a separate ministry for minorities. When humanity is advancing toward equality, the minority label would drag us behind. Equal rights, respect, and justice are imperative for social and economic progress. Those who are small in number would not appear weak if we can sow seeds for an egalitarian society to take root.

If we look back at history, we would realise that it is always the weak who get the minority tag. The number does not count. During the time of serfdom, landlords and kings were few in numbers, yet they were ruling over vast swathes of land. Even today, the richest of the rich are in the top one percent across the globe. They are not called a minority.

The minority tag will only perpetuate violence and discrimination. It is something we need to forgo to forge a Bangladesh where I am no less because of my religious or cultural identity.

সংখ্যালঘু অত্যাচার দায় নেবে কে?
ALL EYES ON BANGLADESH SAVE HINDUS
SAFE HINDUS IN BANGLADESH
দেশটা আমাদের এই দেশ ছেড়ে যাবো না
আমার মন্দিরে হামলা কেন?

I see people from the Hindu community raising their voices against the 'reprisal' attacks on them after the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

PHOTO: **STAR**

The Bangladesh we want

Lessons learnt as we rise from the ashes of our past

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MIR NADIA NIVIN

Every Bangladeshi has a clear understanding of what went wrong in the past 15 years: blatant disregard for basic democratic values and principles, complete dissolution of systemic checks and balances through the decline of democratic institutions, unprecedented levels of kleptocracy leading to economic destabilisation, law enforcement agencies co-opted as ruling party apparatus, violation of human rights and, of course, unparalleled brutality.

Prior to 2009, though not perfect, Bangladeshis had been living with their own brand of democracy. Both major political parties and their coalitions had experienced being voted in and out, with the usual barrage of corruption, cronyism etc. in play during their times. In any case, pre-2009, our expectations from democracy were relatively low to begin with. So how did things get to these unprecedented depths?

The idea here is not so much to rehash the very obvious democratic and institutional failings as stated earlier, which certainly crafted a path for its demise, but to examine from an anthropological perspective, if one may, the deeper contributing factors to see what lessons we can draw from it. As we delve into some of these underlying factors that in effect, served as catalysts for a second independence movement, it appears as though Shiekh Hasina failed to understand the basic socioeconomic DNA of her own people.

The first factor taps into perhaps one of the most defining features of us Bangladeshis as a people—and that is the deep-rooted need for us to be able to express ourselves, our thoughts and our opinions. Freedom of expression is a right close to our hearts, deeply intertwined with the very essence of our identity. History also stands witness to the fact that the 1952 Language Movement led by students, the vehicle for our expression, was the first step towards the formation of Bangladeshi nationalism.

Over the past 15 years, through the enactment of repressive and draconian laws, the use of politicised state institutions and the violent ruling party student wing, extraordinary levels of brutal suppression were perpetrated by the government to curb any form of expression that was not single-minded praise of the prime minister and her regime. People have been indefinitely detained, tortured in custody, falsely accused of crimes just for sharing or liking a social media post. Had Sheikh Hasina been able to learn from history or comprehend the essence of her people (in modern terms we call this emotional intelligence), she may have been able to predict that this would only serve to fuel anger and nationalism in peoples' hearts until the moment it erupts, taking down everything in its path.

The second factor is the PM not really internalising the significance of the national youth demographics vis-a-vis creating a culture and personality cult around her father Shiekh Mujibur Rahman. Bangladesh has a youth bulge of over 28 percent which translates to almost 46 million people between the ages of 15 and 29. This under-30 population has never seen Mujib or been a part of the 1971 independence movement and, as such, does not share the same emotional connection the way the older generation does. Therefore, the "muktijuddher chetona," a concept leveraged by Hasina et al. to evoke and exploit emotions attached to the hard struggle that brought freedom, did not lend itself to the same extent of emotional manipulation of the younger generation. In fact, Bangladeshi youth saw more clearly than its elders did what exactly this "muktijuddher chetona" had devolved into over the past decade—an unspoken password to signal Awami League party allegiance. Anyone not subscribing to muktijuddher chetona was then a razakar or a potential anti-state element needing to be dealt with.

Protesters shout slogans as they vandalise a mural of Sheikh Hasina with paint and mud, demanding her resignation at Teacher Student Center area of University of Dhaka in Dhaka, Bangladesh, August 3, 2024.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

This segues to the third factor, which is Hasina effectively creating a party state. This is largely an aging political strategy whereby the only way to have access to better opportunities is if one is part of the ruling party. The ruling party, also known as the "winner," owns and is entitled to all social and economic perks and the only "easy" way to live a potentially better life is to join the party ranks. Once in, real perks only start to come in when you rise through the ranks; and to do so, the only currency that works in this system is loyalty and the demonstration thereof. Depending on the level, loyalty is demonstrated by carrying out, orchestrating or supervising all manners of nefarious activities that violate human rights, undermine democracy, further kleptocracy etc. Thus continues the vicious cycle: the more you demonstrate loyalty, the higher you rise, and the higher you rise, the more engaged you become in corruption. This eventually results in a society that is split between the haves and the have nots.

Another major factor towards growing frustration and anger amongst people has been Awami League's blatant and continued reuse of political tactics that usually have an expiry date—for obvious reasons—after being deployed a few times. The most notable of these has been the party machinery perpetuating some form of horrific violence themselves and then blaming the opposition or some other targeted rival groups for it. The AL has been known to use this repeatedly and for multiple purposes, such as to divert attention from itself on some issue or other, to evade accountability or most commonly to try and generate an excuse to persecute the opposition. Volumes can be written on it. The loss of lives, waste of national resources and the ensuing violence notwithstanding, the hubris and the condescension demonstrated in assuming that a whole nation of people are completely devoid of being able to read such obvious ploy is inexcusable.

Lastly and possibly the single most deciding factor leading to this mass uprising has been the continued use by the AL leadership of its student wing—the Chhatra and Jubo leagues—as ruthless tools for oppression and suppression. Given immeasurable powers and zero accountability, the student wing was instructed to keep the general grassroots society "in line." The merciless brutality that these groups have perpetuated on the people of Bangladesh over the past decade and a half will not be forgotten from our collective minds anytime soon. Murder, torture, extortion, scams, kidnapping, communal violence—Chhatra and Jubo leagues have openly done it all and never been called to order by its parent party. Given such actions, it was really fate accompli that the people would eventually push back once the proverbial last straw broke the camel's back.

Moving forward, as we grab with relief a chance to rebuild our nation, we must learn from this and take corrective actions to ensure we never ever find ourselves, as a nation, in a remotely similar place again. Starting with the reversal of the draconian laws, we will need to ringfence our freedom of expression and other basic rights in such a way that it cannot be dismantled so easily by any ruling regime.

Almost 53 years on, it is time that we let go of this cult culture around our independence movement, this obsession towards slotting people either as freedom fighters or "razakars" and the weaponisation of "muktijuddher chetona." Let us pay due respect to our history and to those who gave us the gift of independence and focus on restoring our society.

Also moving forward, we can't have any more party states. Guardrails within institutional processes will need to be put in place such that every appointment in the civil service and other state services must be merit-based with rigorous due process followed. All appointed government officials will need to declare (similar to declaration of assets) if they or their immediate relation is a registered member of any political party.

And finally, political party reforms will need to be proposed to abolish the political party affiliated student wings. Our apolitical student movement has shown us that we do not need political student wings to bring about political change. Over the years, political party student wings have only served to politicise education institutions and be instrumentalised by parent parties as necessary.

Like a phoenix, as we rise from the ashes of our past selves, it is important that we take some time for collective introspection to chart a strategic way forward.

Almost 53 years on, it is time that we let go of this cult culture around our independence movement, this obsession towards slotting people either as freedom fighters or "razakars" and the weaponisation of "muktijuddher chetona." Let us pay due respect to our history and to those who gave us the gift of independence and focus on restoring our society.

When will we democratise the political parties of Bangladesh?

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RASHEDUR CHOWDHURY

Revolutions spark dramatic changes, but the real test lies in the reform strategies that can steer a country toward justice. With numerous pressing issues, prioritising the right reforms is crucial. Recent upheavals, such as the Arab Spring, illustrate how popular movements can falter and revert to oppressive practices under new regimes. This makes future protests even more challenging, particularly in poorer nations with less experienced protesters.

Revolutions are rare, and missing the opportunity can mean losing it forever. While a revolution can ignite immense hope, without proper reforms, it risks descending into chaos rather than improving people's lives. Marginalised groups, including workers, farmers, and minorities, have historically been promised the benefits of democracy but have rarely seen these promises fulfilled. Time and again, they have been betrayed by politicians who prioritise self-interest, profiteering, and looting of the state. This has often created distrust and anxiety among the general populace, who lack the means to voice their concerns through legitimate institutional mechanisms.

In Bangladesh, the structure of political parties, characterised by a lack of internal democracy, raises doubts about the long-term success of student-led revolutions. While the student movement has achieved a significant victory, true success remains elusive. Discussing reforms in public institutions like the justice system, law enforcement, and the election commission is insufficient. For lasting justice, peace, and socio-economic well-being, we must prioritise internal democracy within political parties. Internal democracy is a fundamental cornerstone of any democracy, yet Bangladeshi political parties have consistently evaded it, bringing us back to square one repeatedly. For instance, from the fall of the former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad to the fall of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, including the end of the last BNP government, people have been disappointed by autocratic attitudes, governance, and rampant corruption. These parties have often suppressed dissent and alternative voices through intimidation, abductions, and extrajudicial killings, perpetuating a cycle of abuse.

Focusing solely on public institutions while ignoring political party reform risks repeating past mistakes. Without addressing internal party dynamics, the same autocratic and oligarchic behaviours are likely to resurface. Therefore, any reforms initiated by the interim government must prioritise the internal revolutionisation of political parties.

The biggest hurdle is the undue influence that a few families exert over their political parties. They hold undemocratic power and monopolise their parties. Sheikh Hasina had total control of her party, with family members and close associates installed in key positions, thereby protecting her dominance, and avoiding criticism. The lack of internal democracy and dialogue has further silenced dissent through state machinery.

To break free, political parties must democratise. They need to be free from dominant family politics, which often function like mafia operations. Leaders should be elected, not selected, and internal election processes must be genuine and observed by an independent body to prevent them from becoming mere box-ticking exercises. An independent body, through constitutional changes, can rigorously scrutinise whether these parties uphold and practice democratic values, providing all members a fair chance to run for leadership at all levels.

Imposing term limits on party leaders and their families is also necessary to prevent entrenched autocracy. For example, the main leader and their family members should only be allowed to run for office twice. Without such limits, the old guards will find excuses to stifle new leaders and maintain their grip on power. The current political vacuum clearly shows that parties have hardly allowed any members to consider running for leadership, let alone pursue the democratisation of their parties.

Furthermore, separating student politics from party politics is essential for genuine reform. Students should have the freedom to engage politically through student union elections, but this involvement should not be swayed by the direct influence of political parties. So far, students have been used by all political parties to pursue their political agendas, rather than being provided with free and fair spaces for dialogue and education.

Decentralising the abuse of power at the local party level is also crucial. Committees in villages and towns, as well as in major cities, should be elected by grassroots members and local public, rather than being handpicked by central leaders who are often disconnected from local issues. This may help reduce the bribery and nepotism rampant within parties and obstruct internal democratisation. Marginalising alternative voices within the parties prevents those who could contribute to greater democratic rights and values from being heard, both within the party and among the public.

All this may sound radical to the existing parties, especially when they are in a hurry for an election, but they must be honest with themselves before convincing the public that the old ways are acceptable. The old politics of violence and revenge are no longer acceptable. Current acts of vandalism against public and private properties, along with communal violence, all indicate why reform is urgently needed as the transition of power to a democratic party hopefully occurs in due course.

Though the interim government and the spirit of the movement face a tough task, they must ensure political parties undergo necessary radical democratic reforms, just like public institutions. Otherwise, history will repeat itself, and the real freedom and well-being of the people will suffer.

At this critical moment, the revolution must serve every citizen, not just a few politicians or oligarchs who seek to govern without accountability or transparency.

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বিএসএমআর মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি, বাংলাদেশ

১৪/৬-১৪/২৩, পল্লবী, মিরপুর-১২, ঢাকা-১২১৬
ফোন- ০১৭৬৯-৭২১০১০, ফ্যাক্স-০২-৫৮০৫১০১০
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বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর: বিএসএমআরএমইউ/রেজি-৩৩৬/২৪/০৩ — তারিখ: ১৫/০৮/২০২৪

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের ২০১৩ সনের ৪৭ নং আইন দ্বারা প্রতিষ্ঠিত বিএসএমআর মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি, বাংলাদেশ-এর জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত পদসমূহে শিক্ষক নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হইতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে:

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও পদ সংখ্যা	গ্রেড ও বেতনস্কেল	সর্বোচ্চ বয়স	মন্তব্য
ক।	অধ্যাপক নেভাল আর্কিটেকচার এন্ড অফশোর ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং -০১ (এক)	(গ্রেড-০৩, বেতনস্কেল-৫৬,৫০০-৭৪,৪০০/-)	-	১। শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা এবং আবেদনের শর্তাবলি সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত তথ্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে (www.bsmrmu.edu.bd) দেখুন। ২। আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ **১৯ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪** । ৩। বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর বিএসএমআরএমইউ/রেজি-৩৩৬/২৪/০১ তারিখ ০৩/০১/২০২৪-এর স্মারকের আলোকে ইতঃপূর্বে যে সকল প্রার্থী সহযোগী অধ্যাপক (জেনেটিক ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং এন্ড বায়োটেকনোলজি) পদে আবেদন করিয়াছেন, তাহাদের পুনরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নাই। ৪। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের স্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাস চট্টগ্রাম (৫নং মোহরা ওয়ার্ডের হামিদচর এলাকার মৌজা চর রাঙ্গামাটিয়া ও বাকলিয়া, থানা: বন্দর, জেলা চট্টগ্রাম)-এ নির্মাণাধীন।
খ।	সহযোগী অধ্যাপক জেনেটিক ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং এন্ড বায়োটেকনোলজি-০১ (এক)	(গ্রেড-০৪, বেতনস্কেল-৫০,০০০-৭১,২০০/-)	-	
গ।	সহযোগী অধ্যাপক পোর্ট এন্ড শিপিং ম্যানেজমেন্ট-০১ (এক)			
ঘ।	সহযোগী অধ্যাপক মেরিটাইম সায়েন্স-০১ (এক)			
ঙ।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক নেভাল আর্কিটেকচার এন্ড অফশোর ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং -০১ (এক)	(গ্রেড-০৬, বেতনস্কেল-(৩৫,৫০০-৬৭,০১০/-)	-	
চ।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক হারবার এন্ড রিভার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং-০১ (এক)			
ছ।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক মেরিটাইম সায়েন্স-০১ (এক)			
জ।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক ওশানোগ্রাফি এন্ড হাইড্রোগ্রাফি-০১ (এক)			
ঝ।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক একাউন্টিং এন্ড ইনফরমেশন সিস্টেমস -০২ (দুই)			
ঞ।	প্রভাষক মেরিন ফিশারিজ এ্যান্ড এ্যাকুয়াকালচার -০১ (এক)	(গ্রেড-০৯, বেতনস্কেল-২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-)	৩০ বৎসর	
ট।	প্রভাষক পোর্ট এন্ড শিপিং ম্যানেজমেন্ট-০১ (এক)			
ঠ।	প্রভাষক ওশানোগ্রাফি এন্ড হাইড্রোগ্রাফি-০১ (এক)			
ড।	প্রভাষক ব্যবস্থাপনা -০১ (এক)			

রেজিস্ট্রার
বিএসএমআর মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি, বাংলাদেশ

GD- 191

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
MANIKGANJ
eed.manikganj.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice (Open Tendering Method)

Notice No:- EED/Manikganj/Revenue Furniture/SHED/2024-25/01 — Date: 15-08-2024

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for following procurement of the following works:

SL No.	Tender ID	Name of Works	Online Tender Publishing Date (On/After)	Online Tender Opening & Closing (Date & Time)
01	1005267	Manufacturing & Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Hatipara ML High School, Sadar Upazila, Manikganj District.	15-Aug.- 2024	Please visit the Tender Notice on the e-GP Website
02	1005268	Manufacturing & Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Rawan Ibne Ramjan School & College, Shibalaya Upazila, Manikganj District.		
03	1005269	Manufacturing & Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Charigram S. A. Khan High School, Singair Upazila, Manikganj District.		

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following Package from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches.Further information and guidelines are available in the Procuring Entity Office, National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

১৫/৮/২৪
(Mujahidul Islam Alif)
Executive Engineer (a.c.)
Education Engineering Department
Manikganj
ee.mani.eed@gmail.com

GD-188

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ এর কার্যালয়
সড়ক বিভাগ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া
ফোনঃ ০৮৫১-৫৯৬৩২
eebra@rhd.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-৩৫.০১.১২১৩.৪০৬.১৪.৩৩৯.২৪.১৪৪৮ — তারিখঃ ১৩/০৮/২৪

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি/লাইসেন্স নবায়ন বিজ্ঞপ্তি (সংশোধিত)

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া সড়ক বিভাগ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের পরিচালন (রাজস্ব) বাজেটের আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের মাধ্যমে অভ্যন্তরীণ ক্রয়কার্য (NCT-Works) সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরের জন্য ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্ত/নবায়ন করা হবে। সিপিটিইউ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম সড়ক বিভাগ/উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরবরাহ করা হবে। আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকার অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া সড়ক বিভাগ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া এর অনুকূলে জমা প্রদান করে অথবা মানি রিসিটের মাধ্যমে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা পরিশোধ করে আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন। নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সঠিকভাবে পূরণপূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ নিম্নে বর্ণিত (ছক-১) সময়ের মধ্যে ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া সড়ক বিভাগে জমা প্রদান করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর বিধি ৬৩ ও ৬৪ অনুসরণযোগ্য এবং এ তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ দরপত্র আহ্বান/কাজ প্রদানের নিশ্চয়তা বিধান করে না।

উল্লেখ্য যে, ইতিপূর্বে অত্র দপ্তরের তালিকাভুক্ত ঠিকাদারগণ ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ফি বাবদ টাকা ২০০০.০০ (দুই হাজার) মাত্র + ১৫% ভ্যাটসহ নিম্নে বর্ণিত (ছক-২) তারিখের মধ্যে অত্র দপ্তরে জমাপূর্বক লাইসেন্স নবায়ন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

'ছক-১'

বিবরণ	তালিকাভুক্তির ফরমের মূল্য	তালিকাভুক্তির ফরম সংগ্রহ ও জমা প্রদানের সময়সীমা
ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি	১০০০/-	৩০/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৪:০০ঘটিকা

'ছক-২'

বিবরণ	নবায়ন ফি	বিনা জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা	৫০% জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা	১০০% জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা
ঠিকাদার লাইসেন্স নবায়ন	২০০০/- টাকা + ১৫% ভ্যাট	৩০/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত	৩১/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ হতে ১৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত	১৬/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ হতে ১৫/১০/২০২৪খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত

১৩/০৮/2024
মীর নিজাম উদ্দিন আহমেদ
পরিচিতি নং-৬০২১৫৬
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ
সড়ক বিভাগ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া

GD-186

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

বাংলাদেশ
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন

Higher Education Acceleration and Transformation (HEAT) Project
University Grants Commission of Bangladesh
UGC Bhaban, Plot# E-18/A, Agargaon Administrative Area
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Web: www.heat.ugc.gov.bd

HEAT
Higher Education

Ref. No. UGC/HEAT/Procurement (Services-2)/43 — Date: 14/08/2024

University Grant Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has received fund from GoB and loan/ grant from the World Bank, to implement the Higher Education Acceleration and Transformation (HEAT) project with the technical support from the World Bank. A part of the GoB fund will be utilized for payment of individual consultants who will provide specific technical inputs for the effective execution of the project. HEAT Project under UGC now invites eligible Individual National Consultants to submit their Expressions of Interest (EOI) for providing the services mentioned below.

SL No.	Contract Package No.	Name of position	No. of position
1.	S-35	Chief Implementation Officer	01
2.	S-36(A)	Wing Manager: Academic Transformation Fund (ATF) Management Specialist	01
3.	S-36(B)	Wing Manager: Quality Assurance Specialist	01
4.	S-36(C)	Wing Manager: BdREN Technical Specialist	01
5.	S-36(D)	Wing Manager: Faculty Professional Development Specialist	01
6.	S-36(E)	Wing Manager: Research Coordination Specialist	01
7.	S-37(A, B, C)	IT Engineers (Network and Hardware)	03
8.	S-37(D)	IT Engineer (Software)	01
9.	S-40(A)	Junior Procurement Specialist	01

Expression of interest (hard copy or soft copy through email) must be delivered to the address below by **September 09, 2024**. The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the above positions are available in website of HEAT Project (https://heat.ugc.gov.bd) and will provide detailed scope of work and required qualifications and experience.
Address: UGC Bhaban, Plot# E-18/A, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
Telephone: +8801938534828, E-mail: pdheat@ugc.gov.bd

Project Director
HEAT Project

GD- 187

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Inspector General
Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka

Invitation for e-Tender

Memo No. 44.01.0000.453.07.410.24/3222 — Date: 15 August 2024

For the financial year 2024-2025, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following items.

SL	Description	Tender ID No.	Online tender notice publication date & time	Online tender closing date & time
1.	**Stick (Cane)**	**1008637**	18 Aug-2024 11:00:00	05-Sep-2024 14:00:00
2.	**Search Light (Medium)**	**1008639**	18 Aug-2024 11:00:00	05-Sep-2024 14:00:00
3.	**Police Baton (Rubber)**	**1008641**	18 Aug-2024 11:00:00	05-Sep-2024 14:00:00
4.	**Hand Held Metal Detector**	**1008642**	18 Aug-2024 11:00:00	05-Sep-2024 14:00:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

15.08.24
Muhammad Ullah, BPM, PPM
BP-7605116336
AIG (Equipment)
Additional DIG, Bangladesh Police
For Inspector General, Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka
Tel: 9585304, Fax: 55101641
E-mail: aige_t@police.gov.bd

GD-189

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Chief Adviser's Office
Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority
Dhaka Export Processing Zone
Ashulia, Savar, Dhaka-1349.
(www.bepza.gov.bd)

BEPZA

Ref. No. 03.06.2672.333.18.072.23-974 — Date: 11-08-2024

Auction Notice (3rd Call)

Sealed auctions are hereby invited from the interested National/Foreign Buyers/Companies in order to sell Inventoried & Valuated Machinery, Equipment & other Assets by auction "as and where basis" of terminated Woven and Non-Woven Interlining, Tag Pin items manufacturing industry named M/s. SBC Garments Accessories Mfg. (BD) Ltd., FS-SFB # 05 (Ground and 1st Floor-East Wing) (Ext. Zone) or to operate the enterprise. To participate in the auction the terms & conditions are stated below:

Terms & Conditions:

1. Interested Persons/Organizations/ Existing enterprises of EPZ(s) (Local/Joint Venture/Foreign) or any other interested persons/organizations from outside EPZ can take part in this auction who are interested to purchase the Machinery, Equipment & other Assets "as and where basis" of the company by observing the existing rules and regulations in this regard.
2. Successful bidder will have to pay VAT, TAX and other payable fees as per custom rules for the duty free imported Assets of existing Assets of industry to be taken out to the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA).
3. Auction documents attached with a single pay order/bank draft/FDD or any other means approved by Bangladesh Government from any schedule bank of an amount of 15% as earnest money (non-refundable for successful bidder & refundable for unsuccessful bidder) must be submitted in favour of BEPZA. Auction documents without earnest money will be treated as rejected.
4. Inventoried Machineries, Equipment & other Assets under the inventory list may be seen on 12.09.2024, 15.09.2024 & 17.09.2024 from 10.00 AM to 4.00 PM. Information regarding the visit and the list of Assets may be collected by contacting with the Executive Director, Dhaka EPZ directly.
5. If the auction is accepted by the Authority, the successful bidder will have to pay the remaining 85% amount of the quoted price along with applicable TAX & VAT within 15 days to BEPZA through Pay Order/Bank Draft/FDD or any other means approved by Bangladesh Government. Accordingly, the delivery of Machineries, Equipment & other Assets will have to be taken as per Customs & BEPZA rules.
6. Auction Schedule may be bought by paying Tk. 5,000.00 (non-refundable) within 17.09.2024 during office hours from the Accounts Department of Dhaka EPZ, Chattogram EPZ, Adamjee EPZ, Mongla EPZ, Cumilla EPZ, Karnaphuli EPZ, Ishwardi EPZ, Uttara EPZ & Accounts Department of BEPZA Executive Office, Dhaka.
7. Auction schedule may be dropped into the auction box kept at the office of Executive Director, Dhaka EPZ on 25.09.2024 from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm and Submitted Auction documents will be opened in the same date at 12:30 pm at the office of Executive Director, Dhaka EPZ in presence of the bidders (If any). Updated copy of VAT, TIN and Trade License shall have to be attached with the Auction schedule; but this condition may be relaxed by the Authority in case of fully new 100% foreign owned company interested to invest in the EPZ.
8. Persons/Organizations/Investors who are interested to operate the closed industry will get priority in auction.
9. Successful bidder will have to take permission to operate the industrial unit in the EPZ by following the project sanctioning procedure of BEPZA as per rules.
10. The Authority reserves the right to accept any auction or reject any or all of the submitted auctions without showing any reason. The Authority also reserves the right to cancel the Auction and accordingly take next action if the desired rates are not obtained.

A-Kabir 11.8.24
(Md. Ahsan Kabir)
Executive Director
Phone: 02-224498238
E-Mail: ed.depz@bepza.gov.bd

GD-190

China promises aid for polls in Myanmar

REUTERS

China has promised technical support and aid to military-run Myanmar for conducting a census, followed by an election, state media said yesterday, signalling Beijing's backing to a junta cornered by an armed rebellion.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met junta leader Min Aung Hlaing on Wednesday during a visit to the capital Naypyitaw where they held discussions to conduct an "all-inclusive election", Global New Light of Myanmar said.

"Necessary technological assistance will be provided for Myanmar to conduct the census-taking process," the state-run publication said. "Moreover, essential aid will be given for the election."

Myanmar's generals last month extended emergency rule for another six months to allow more time to put together census data for voter lists.

Palestinians react as they wait to receive food cooked by a charity kitchen, amid a hunger crisis in the northern Gaza Strip on Wednesday. An estimated 495,000 people in Gaza – or 22 percent of the population – are "experiencing an extreme lack of food," according to an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Indian protests over medic's murder grow

PM demands swift justice

AFP, *Kolkata*

Thousands took to the streets of Kolkata early yesterday morning to condemn the rape and murder of a medic that has triggered protests across India demanding better safety for women.

The discovery of the 31-year-old's brutalised body last week at a state-run hospital has sparked widespread outrage, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding swift punishment for those who commit "monstrous deeds" against women

Large crowds marched through the streets of Kolkata in West Bengal to condemn the killing, with a candlelight rally at midnight coinciding with the start of India's independence day celebrations yesterday.

The protesters in Kolkata, who marched under the slogan "reclaim the night", called for a wider tackling of violence against women and held up handwritten signs demanding action.

"We want justice," read one sign at the rally. "Hang the rapist, save the women," read another.

"The atrocities against women do not stop," midnight marcher Monalisa Guha told Kolkata's The Telegraph newspaper. "We face harassment almost on a daily basis," another marcher, Sangeeta Halder, told the daily. "But not stepping out because of fear is not the solution."

Doctors in government hospitals across several states on Monday halted elective services "indefinitely", demanding speedy justice and better workplace security.

Protests have since occurred in several other hospitals across the country, including in the capital.

WHO declares mpox a global emergency

AFP, *Geneva*

The World Health Organization on Wednesday declared the mpox surge in Africa a global public health emergency, sounding its highest possible alarm over the worsening situation.

Worried by the rise in cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the spread to nearby countries, the WHO hastily convened a meeting of experts to study the outbreak.

"Today, the emergency committee met and advised me that in its view, the situation constitutes a public health emergency of international concern. I have accepted that advice," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a press conference.

A PHEIC is the highest level of alarm under the International Health Regulations, which are legally binding on 196 countries.

"The detection and rapid spread of a new clade of mpox in eastern DRC, its detection in neighbouring countries that had not previously reported mpox, and the potential for further spread within Africa and beyond is very worrying," said Tedros.

"It's clear that a coordinated international response is essential to stop these outbreaks and save lives.

Israel intensifying attacks on Gaza schools

Says UN as data shows 564 schools have been directly hit or damaged since the offensive began

AGENCIES

Last week more than 100 people were killed after Israel hit a school in Gaza City sheltering displaced Palestinians, as the United Nations accused Israel of intensifying attacks on schools.

The targeting of al-Talbin School on Saturday during dawn prayers triggered global outrage.

Paramedics at the scene described the carnage as horrific, with "bodies ripped to pieces". Israel claimed that Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad fighters were operating from the school – a claim that was rejected by Hamas.

Israel has repeatedly attacked Gaza's schools, hospitals and universities, claiming the buildings were used for military purposes without providing any proof.

According to data compiled by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), up to July 6, 564 schools in the Gaza Strip have been directly hit or damaged by Israeli attacks.

With numerous evacuation orders since the offensive in Gaza began on October 7, schools have often been used to shelter nearly two million displaced Palestinians in the besieged enclave.

Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, schools are considered civilian objects and should be protected from attacks. However, within a 10-day period in August, Israeli forces struck five schools in Gaza City, killing more than 179 people and injuring scores more.

At least 15 people were killed and more than 29 injured in an Israeli strike on the Dalal al-Mughrabi School on August 1, according to officials.

Two days later, strikes on Hamama and al-Huda schools killed 17 and injured more than 60 people, reports Al Jazeera online.

On August 4, at least 30 people were killed and 19 others injured after Israel struck Nassr and Hassan Salameh schools in the Nassr neighbourhood in Gaza City.

Israel bombed Abdul Fattah Hamouda and az-Zahra schools, killing 17 and injuring dozens more on August 8.

The worst attack in recent weeks was on al-Tabin School, which Al Jazeera's Hind Khoudary said was hit by at least three missile attacks.

The UN's special rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory, Francesca Albanese, condemned the attack.

"Israel is genociding the Palestinians, one neighbourhood at the time, one hospital at the time, one school at the time, one refugee camp at the time, one 'safe zone' at the time. With US and European weapons," she posted on X.

In July, a similar cluster campaign targeting school shelters across the Gaza Strip killed nearly 50 people within a week.

Almost 85 percent of school buildings in Gaza have been damaged, with nearly all schools in North Gaza either being "directly hit" or damaged. This is followed by Gaza City, where more than 90 percent of the schools have been damaged or destroyed.

GRAFT CASE

Pakistan's army arrests three more ex-officers

REUTERS, *Islamabad*

Pakistan's military said yesterday it had arrested three more retired officers following the arrest of former spy chief Faiz Hameed, who faces a court martial on charges of corruption and misuse of power.

The arrests were in connection with the proceedings against Hameed, who formerly led premier spy agency Inter-services Intelligence (ISI), for "actions prejudicial to military discipline", the military said.

In a statement, it added that the military continued to investigate some retired officers and their accomplices for "fomenting instability at the behest of, and in collusion with, vested political interests".

Political parties and critics often accuse that the spy agency interferes in politics and government. Hameed, a general, served as the ISI chief from 2019 to 2021 during the tenure of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is now in jail.

Khan has said he did not want to relieve Hameed of his role at the spy agency after he was transferred elsewhere by his army chief, Qamar Javed Bajwa.

SRI LANKA ELECTION

Polls panel approves Wickremesinghe for presidential race

REUTERS, *Colombo*

Sri Lanka's election panel yesterday gave approval for President Ranil Wickremesinghe to contest a presidential poll set for September 21 in the Indian Ocean nation, grappling with the fallout of its worst financial crisis in decades.

Wickremesinghe was among 39 candidates to submit nominations for the vote, key to charting Sri Lanka's way out of a crisis unleashed after exhausting its foreign reserves, sending the economy into freefall and defaulting on foreign debt in 2022.

"We have to stabilise the economy," Wickremesinghe told reporters after his candidacy was announced.

"What we are saying is, 'Let's go ahead and finish this job.' That's why I'm asking for your support."

Two Buddhist monks were among those who registered, in one of the highest such figures on record, to contest the vote, in which about 17 million Sri Lankans are eligible to cast ballots.

Wickremesinghe, opposition leader Sajith Premadasa and Marxist-leaning parliamentarian Anura Kumara Dissanayake are seen as frontrunners.

"This is an opportunity for the people to bring about genuine change and create a new political culture," Dissanayake, whom analysts consider a dark horse contender, said while leaving the Election Commission after it approved his candidacy.

"That is our aim and I'm confident we can win."

After being elected by parliament in July 2022, Wickremesinghe, 75, has shepherded the island through the crisis, which triggered widespread protests and forced his predecessor, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, to resign.

Antarctica winter experiences prolonged heatwave

AFP, *Paris*

Antarctica, the world's coldest continent, is experiencing an exceptionally long heatwave during its winter, according to Britain's national polar research institute.

Temperature anomalies are not unusual on the continent known as "The Ice" but "the longevity of the warm period is unusual", Thomas Caton Harrison, Polar Climate Scientist at British Antarctic Survey, said to AFP this week.

Provisional figures indicate the Antarctic-wide July 2024 average near-surface temperature was 3.1 degrees Celsius above normal for the month.

Calculated over land and land ice, this makes it the second warmest July in Antarctica since records began in 1979 -- the warmest was in July 1981.

Average daily temperatures ranged from -34.68C on July 15 to -28.12C on July 31, according to data posted online by the University of Maine.

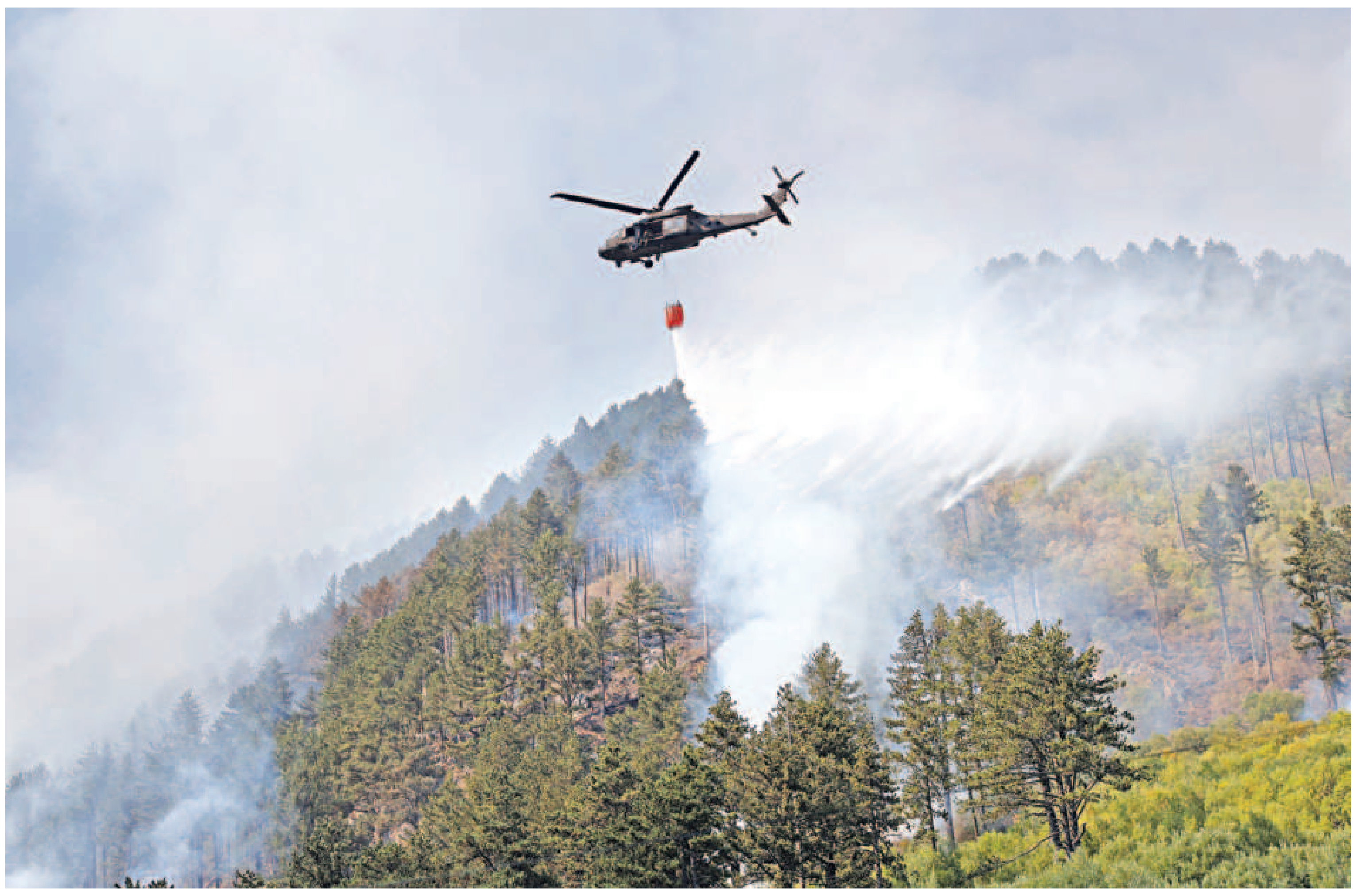
It was -26.6C on average on the continent on August 7, the latest date available.

The July average temperature anomaly even reached 9-10C over limited parts of Dronning Maud Land and part of the eastern Weddell Sea offshore.

Daily temperature anomalies often occur during the Antarctica's winter, but "what is remarkable is prolonged high temperatures", said Caton Harrison.

"Very early figures suggest it could be on track to be an exceptionally warm Antarctic winter," he added.

"The Ice" is the coldest, windiest, and least populated continent on the planet, but it too is impacted by global warming.



A US helicopter, part of a Nato peacekeeping mission makes a water drop, as a wildfire burns in Prevalle, Kosovo on Wednesday. The challenge is to stop slow burning trees which can ignite again with a more destructive fire.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

FALSE CONVICTION

US man gets $7m after 48 years in jail

AFP, *Washington*

A 71-year-old man who spent nearly five decades in prison for a murder he did not commit is to receive a $7.15 million settlement from the US city that convicted him.

Glynn Simmons, who is Black, served more time behind bars before being exonerated than any other inmate in US history.

Simmons was released last year after serving a total of 48 years, one month and 18 days in prison.

On Monday, councillors in Edmond, Oklahoma, voted to proceed with a settlement for Simmons to resolve claims against the city and one of the detectives who helped put him away.

Lawyers for Simmons said the payment represented a "partial settlement" of his lawsuit "against the cities and police who falsified evidence... to frame him for murder."

I-DAY SPEECH

India's Modi renews push for common civil code

AFP, *New Delhi*

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said yesterday he wanted to press ahead with a national common civil code of law, a proposal bitterly opposed by Muslim activists as an attack on their faith.

India's 1.4 billion people are subject to a common criminal law but rules vary on personal matters.

The proposed civil code would standardise laws across all religious communities but has been bitterly opposed by Muslim activists and liberals as an attack on the largest religious minority.

However, Modi said during an annual Independence Day address: "Those laws that divide the country on the basis of religion, that become reason for inequality, should have no place in a modern society."

War-displaced people receive humanitarian aid at a Russian Red Cross distribution point in Kursk yesterday, following Ukraine's offensive into Russia's western Kursk region.

PHOTO: AFP

1.4m girls banned from Afghan schools since Taliban return

Says Unesco

AFP, *Paris*

At least 1.4 million girls in Afghanistan have been denied access to secondary education since the Taliban returned to power in 2021, with the future of an entire generation now "in jeopardy", the United Nations' cultural agency said yesterday.

Access to primary education has also fallen sharply, with 1.1 million fewer girls and boys attending school, Unesco said in a statement as the Taliban authorities marked three years since retaking Afghanistan on August 15, 2021.

"Unesco is alarmed by the harmful consequences of this increasingly massive drop-out rate, which could lead to a rise in child labour and early marriage," the agency said.

"In just three years, the de facto authorities have almost wiped out two decades of steady progress for education in Afghanistan, and the future of an entire generation is now in jeopardy."

There are now nearly 2.5 million girls deprived of their right to education, representing 80 percent of Afghan school-age girls, the UN agency said.

The Taliban administration, which is not recognised by any other country, has imposed restrictions on women that the UN has described as "gender apartheid."

UN report on vote 'rife with lies'

Says Venezuelan electoral council

AFP, *Caracas*

Venezuela's CNE electoral council, under fire after declaring a widely rejected election victory for President Nicolas Maduro, on Wednesday described a UN report disputing the outcome as "rife with lies."

The CNE proclaimed Maduro the winner with 52 percent of votes cast in a July 28 poll, without providing a detailed breakdown.

Maduro's victory has been rejected by the opposition, the United States, European Union and several Latin American countries.

Anti-Maduro protests in Venezuela have claimed 25 lives so far, with dozens injured and more than 2,400 arrested.

A preliminary report published Tuesday by a panel of UN elections experts found the CNE "fell short of the basic transparency and integrity measures."

The CNE hit back Wednesday, saying the UN report was "rife with lies and contradictions" and insisting a "cyber terrorist attack" has prevented it from disclosing a full breakdown of polling-station-level results after what it termed an "impeccable and transparent electoral process."

Ukraine's forces pushing along border front

Says Russia; Kyiv creates buffer zone to protect population

REUTERS, *Moscow*

A senior Russian commander said yesterday that Ukrainian forces had been pushed out of one village in Russia's border region but that Kyiv's forces were still probing along the front more than nine days since the lightning incursion into Russia.

The biggest foreign attack on sovereign Russian territory since World War Two unfurled on August 6 when thousands of Ukrainian troops smashed through Russia's western border in an embarrassment for the Russian top military brass.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Wednesday that his forces had advanced a few kilometers and that the goal of replenishing an 'exchange fund' of prisoners of war was being achieved. One Ukrainian official said Kyiv was carving out a buffer zone to protect its population against attack.

Major General Apti Alaudinov, who commands Chechnya's Akhmat special forces who are fighting in Kursk, said that Russian forces had forced out Ukraine from Martynovka about 18 km (11 miles) from the border.

"We have burned everything that moves, everything that we have been able to find," Alaudinov told Russian state television from Kursk region, reminding viewers of Russia's defeat of Napoleon's 1812 invasion of Russia.

Alaudinov, a close ally of Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, said that Ukraine was sending in more forces into the Russian region but that the shift in resources was weakening Ukrainian forces at other parts of the front.

"The enemy is pushing, he is trying to get through from everywhere, push through," Alaudinov said, admitting that initiative was still with Ukraine. "But every day the enemy's forces are melting."

The Russian town of Sudzha, a transhipment hub for Russian natural gas flowing to Europe via Ukraine, was not under full Ukrainian control, he said. Ukraine on Wednesday said it was fully under Ukrainian control.

Alaudinov also spoke of the chaotic battlefield situation in the region when his forces arrived shortly after the incursion, with forests teaming with Ukrainian forces and a lack of clarity on whose forces were where.

Ukraine's incursion appeared aimed at forcing Moscow to slow its advance along the rest of the front inside Ukraine, though the Russian defence ministry also reported intense battles along the Ukraine front and said that its troops had taken better positions at several points.

Ukraine said there was no sign Russian military pressure was receding along the eastern front inside its borders yesterday and reported the heaviest fighting in weeks near Pokrovsk. Supported by swarms of drones, heavy artillery and tanks, Ukrainian units have since carved out a sliver of the world's biggest nuclear power and battles were ongoing along a front about 18 km inside Russian territory yesterday.

Colonel dies after coalition strike in Syria

Says Iran

AFP, *Tehran*

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps yesterday said one of its colonels has died of wounds suffered in an air strike it blamed on the US-led coalition in Syria.

Ahmadreza Afshari of the IRGC's "aerospace advisory forces" in Syria was "martyred because of injuries caused by aerial bombardment", Guards' chief Hossein Salami said in a statement carried by state news agency IRNA.

The colonel was transferred from Syria to Iran for treatment following the air strike, the statement said, indicating the incident occurred two to three weeks ago.

In late July, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said an air strike killed three pro-Iran fighters in Syria's Deir Ezzor province, where Iran wields significant influence.

The area is regularly targeted by Israel and sometimes by the United States. Responsibility for the strike was not immediately claimed.

A spokesman for the US-led military coalition formed in 2014 to fight the Islamic State jihadist group said at the time that "neither the coalition nor US forces carried out overnight strikes in Deir Ezzor".

THAI POLITICAL CRISIS

Pheu Thai party chooses Shinawatra as PM candidate

AFP, *Bangkok*

Thailand's Pheu Thai party has chosen 37-year-old Paetongtarn Shinawatra, the daughter of billionaire ex-PM Thaksin Shinawatra, as its candidate for prime minister, it announced yesterday, a day after a court dismissed the incumbent premier in an ethics case.

"We decide to nominate Paetongtarn Shinawatra," party secretary general Sorawong Thienthong told a press conference in Bangkok.

Lawmakers will vote today in parliament -- where Pheu Thai heads a governing coalition -- on whether to approve Paetongtarn as prime minister.

The vote comes after Thailand's Constitutional Court sacked premier Srettha Thavisin on Wednesday after ruling he had breached regulations by appointing a cabinet minister with a criminal conviction.

Srettha was the third prime minister from Pheu Thai to be kicked out by the Constitutional Court and leaves office after less than a year.

Thai politics has endured two decades of chronic instability marked by coups, street protests and court orders.

Much of it has been fuelled by the long-running battle by the military and pro-royalist establishment against progressive parties linked to Thaksin.

Iran hackers target Harris, Trump campaigns: Google

AFP, *San Francisco*

Google has confirmed that hackers backed by Iran are targeting the campaigns of US presidential rivals Kamala Harris and Donald Trump.

A hacker group known as "APT42" linked to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps went after high-profile individuals and organizations in Israel and the United States, including government officials and political campaigns, according to a threat report released by Google on Tuesday.

Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris's campaign said Tuesday it had been targeted by foreign hackers, days after rival Donald Trump's campaign suggested that it had been hacked by Iran.

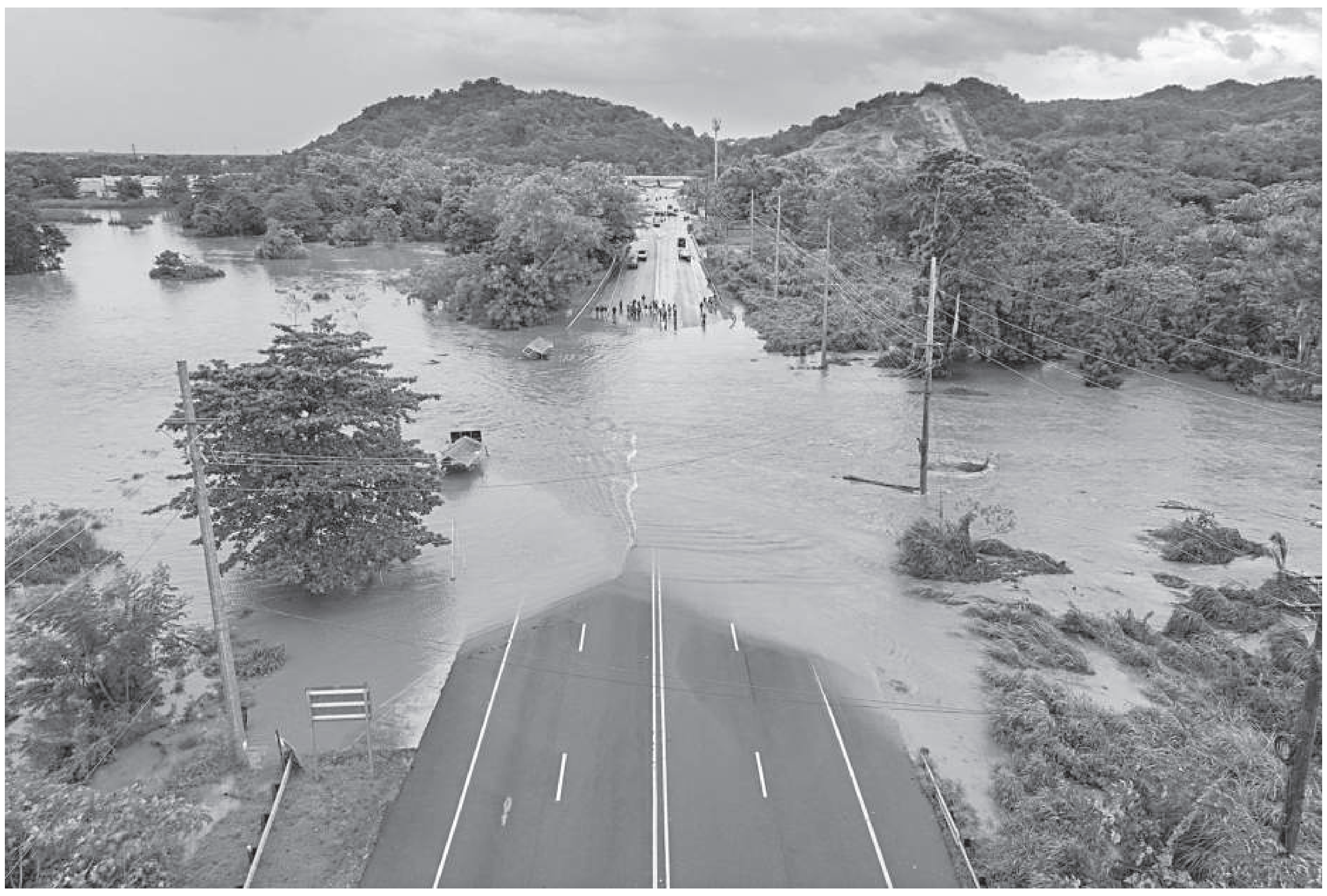
"In July, the campaign legal and security teams were notified by the FBI that we were targeted by a foreign actor influence operation," a Harris campaign official told AFP.

"We have robust cybersecurity measures in place and are not aware of any security breaches of our systems resulting from those efforts."

Google's threat analysis group continues to see unsuccessful attempts from APT42 to compromise personal accounts of individuals affiliated with President Joe Biden, Vice President Harris and Trump, the report said.

The hacking group works by gleaning information about targets and tailoring "phishing" efforts to dupe victims into revealing log-in information for accounts like Gmail.

Examples given in the report included posing as a think tank or other credible contact to lure victims to fake video meeting landing pages, where log-in credentials are needed to take part.



A drone view shows a bridge submerged by the flooded La Plata River in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Ernesto in Toa Baja, Puerto Rico on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Record number of forest fires in Brazil Amazon

AFP, *Manaus*

The Brazilian Amazon has recorded more than 37,000 forest fires so far this year, the worst number in nearly two decades, according to satellite data released Wednesday.

The number was 111 percent higher than in the same period of 2023, said Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

Since the INPE started collecting data in 1998, more fires were recorded in the same period only in 2005, 2004 and 2003.

From January 1 to August 13, a total of 37,835 fires were noted in the Brazilian Amazon this year.

The Amazon suffered a historic drought between June and November last year, conducive to fires that have also affected the Pantanal, one of the world's largest tropical wetlands which lies south of the rainforest.

LAW OPINION

Bangladesh's Interim Government: What should be its tenure?

Although government tenure is a political issue, it must be examined from the constitutional perspective because the Constitution determines the terms and conditions of political appointments. More importantly, the BIG's terms and conditions are particularly critical as it was formed through a mass revolution. Therefore, materialising the revolution's mission and vision critically depends on the public perception about BIG's role and functions.

KHANDAKAR QUDRAT-I ELAHI

We. the people
We. the people
We. the people

How long can the Bangladesh Interim Government (BIG) led by Dr. Muhammad Yunus, stay in office? Several political parties, including BNP, have demanded that the 13th parliamentary elections be held as soon as possible, preferably within three months. This political attitude is nothing to be surprised about.

Although government tenure is a political issue, it must be examined from the constitutional perspective because the Constitution determines the terms and conditions of political appointments. More importantly, the BIG's terms and conditions are particularly critical as it was formed through a revolution. Therefore, materialising the revolution's mission and vision critically depends on the public perception about BIG's role and functions.

Bangladesh has a parliamentary system of democracy. According to the Constitution, an independent election commission conducts general elections every five years to determine the political leadership of the government. The 12th parliament was sworn in on 9 January 2024, meaning the 13th parliamentary elections must be held within three months of January 9, 2029. AL could not stay in power mostly because its administrative policy and its leaders' attitude angered the general student community. They eventually succeeded in toppling Prime Minister Hasina's government. The president dissolved the Parliament and administered oaths to an interim government as recommended by the student leaders.

The Constitution does not contain any provision for the formation of this type of government. This is a constitutional vacuum that has sparked significant confusion and controversy in some circles about the BIG's tenure and its constitutional legitimacy. In my view, the said confusion has resulted from our failure to distinguish between an *ordinary* interim government and the *current* Interim Government. An ordinary interim government, variously called a caretaker, provisional, or transitional government, refers to a temporary public administration system that operates between two regular governments appointed through general elections. Thus, an interim government is part and parcel of a democratic system of government.

The current interim government, however, is a very interesting legal and political phenomenon. On the one hand, its tenure cannot be restricted to three months because it is different. On the other hand, our constitution does not contain any provision by which it can be rendered constitutionality. To resolve this paradox, we need to look at the Constitution's Preamble, whose first paragraph reads: *We, the people of Bangladesh, having proclaimed our independence on March 26, 1971 and through a historic struggle for national liberation, established the independent, sovereign People's Republic of Bangladesh.*

The Preamble is the most fundamental part of our Constitution for two reasons. First, it ordains the democratic nature of our Constitution: The people are collectively the owners of the sovereign republic of Bangladesh. This sovereign power is vested in the political organisation called government. The modern government is a complex service-giving public institution equipped with different kinds of professionals recruited, trained, and promoted. Because the people own this institution, they choose its leadership through general elections. Indeed, the meaning and the message conveyed by the Preamble, cannot be changed if the constitution's democratic nature is to be retained.

Bangladeshi citizens exercised this citizenship right on January 7 and gave AL a mandate to rule for five years. Unfortunately, the people had to force it to resign only after six months and appoint an interim government. The truth most of us overlook is that people have made both government leadership changes, one through election and the other through revolution. If we describe the BIG as unconstitutional, then it would suggest that general elections are the only civic method by which people can exercise their sovereign authority. In other words, Bangladesh's Constitution does not permit people's revolution to change the government leadership no matter how it behaves. Alternately, the student force which caused the revolution is not part of Bangladeshi voters. On the contrary, if we accept the BIG's legitimacy, then in my view, it is supposed to enjoy the same tenurial status the Constitution prescribes for an elected government.

The intellectual issue before the nation is abundantly apparent. We must convince ourselves about the nature of the July Revolution, which was led by our ordinary student community: Did the mass join this movement voluntarily? If the answer is affirmative, then the BIG is *constitutionally legitimate*. In that case, it will enjoy most, if not all, of the powers and privileges that an elected government is entitled to. It is constitutionally constrained to arrange the 13th parliamentary elections from 09 November 2028 to 08 January 2029. However, like any elected government, it will have the freedom to decide whether to hold elections before this deadline.

The writer is retired faculty member of Bangladesh Agricultural University.

LAW VISION

Rethinking our parliamentary accountability

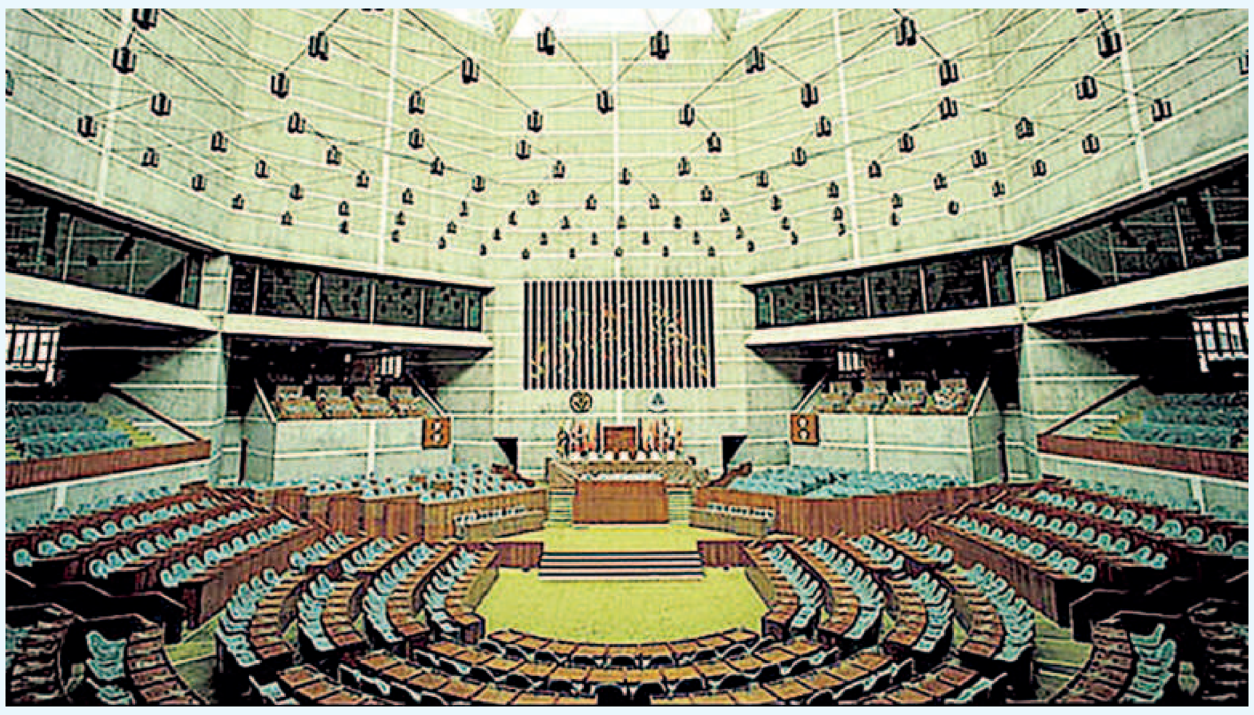
A sustainable parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh requires an accountable government and a performance-oriented, impartial civil service, both of which can only be achieved through reforming the present system of parliamentary accountability.

MEHER NIGAR

Bangladesh is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional mandate for responsible government. Responsible government is a conception of a system that embodies the principle of parliamentary accountability. Theoretically, Bangladesh is able to practice collective responsibility by deploying 'no confidence motion'. Article 55 of the Constitution of Bangladesh (COB) clearly states that the Cabinet shall be collectively responsible to the Parliament, which implies that if any matters go against their constitutional promise, the Parliament has the authority to move a motion of no confidence and force the Prime Minister, and even the entire regime, to resign from office. To pass the 'no confidence motion', a majority vote from the Parliament is required. But, here article 70 of the COB remains a bar to obtain the necessary majority votes and ultimately renders the concept of collective responsibility ineffective.

Article 70 of the Constitution states that if a member of Parliament belonging to a political party resigns or votes against the party under which he is elected, he shall vacate his seat. Because of this article, the lawmakers belonging to the ruling party, who usually tend to be the majority in number, are prevented from casting their votes against their party in the 'no confidence motion.' Consequently, it is not possible to hold the Cabinet accountable to the Parliament.

One may argue that Parliament may hold the administration accountable through the parliamentary standing committees. It is mandated in rule 246 of the Rules of Procedure of Bangladesh Parliament that every Ministry must have a standing committee. Article 76 of the COB states that the committee shall investigate or inquire into the activities or administration of a Ministry and may require it to furnish, through an authorised representative, relevant information and to answer questions, orally or in writing. Based on its investigation, it will prepare a report to submit to the Parliament. The idea behind it is the Parliament will consider the report and will take action as the report suggests, ranging from making the minister resign or taking action against concerned officials and thereby holding them accountable. Unfortunately, this report does not have any binding effect, and ultimately it is rare in the history of Bangladesh that any significant action has ever been taken against anyone based on such report.



The Constitution strategised many mechanisms which in the end creates a space for the Parliament to hold the ministers answerable but not accountable in the true sense. An effective accountability mechanism requires the guarantee of two elements— answerability and consequences, and here, in Bangladesh the answerability element is in place but there is no mechanism to make them face consequences. Consequently, we see that our democratic system gets compromised.

It is imperative to give these concerns priority. In this case, powerful standing committees with the ability to make binding decisions would be useful. Article 70 of the Bangladesh Constitution ought to be changed to allow parliamentarians to vote against their party. Only then would it be possible to pass a "no confidence motion" against the ruling government, which would hold them accountable for their actions. Side by side, mechanisms should be developed to hold the ministers personally accountable for any actions in their ministry. In sum, a sustainable parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh requires an accountable government and a performance-oriented, impartial civil service, both of which can only be achieved through reforming the present system of parliamentary accountability.

The writer is Assistant Professor, Premier University, Chittagong.

LAW REVIEW

A critical look into our Ombudsman law

MD. NAFIS ANOWAR SANTO

'Ombudsman' is a Swedish term meaning 'representative of the people'. The Swedish parliamentary Ombudsman was instituted in 1809. Since then, the Ombudsman function has taken many different forms and various purposes. 'Ombudsman', in terms of utility, means a 'watchdog of the administration'. The Ombudsman is an officer of the parliament, having as his/her primary function, the duty of acting as an agent for the parliament, to safeguard citizens against abuse or misuse of administrative power by the Executive.

The framers of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh made the constitutional framework for the establishment of the office of the ombudsman in the country under article 77. The expression "may" used in clause (1) of the article indicates that the Constitution did not make it mandatory for the Parliament to establish the office of the Ombudsman but left it to the wisdom and discretion of Parliament. As per the provisions of the article, the Ombudsman shall exercise such powers and perform such functions as enshrined in the law, including the power to investigate any action taken by a Ministry, a public officer, or a statutory public authority. The office shall also prepare an annual report concerning the discharge of functions, and such report shall be laid before Parliament.

Following the constitutional provision, the relevant provisions of the Ombudsman Act 1980 empowers the state to establish the office of the Ombudsman to investigate complaints of maladministration against public authorities. The Act is insufficient and so the Law Commission published a report on 9 July 2000 recommending some amendments to the existing Act. The Commission also prepared another report on the law relating to the forfeiture of illegally acquired properties of public functionaries termed as the Corrupt Public Functionaries (Forfeiture of Property) Act 2000 which is an enactment supplementary to the Ombudsman Act.

There is a widespread public suspicion of administrative corruption in Bangladesh which has very much undermined public confidence in the administration. Therefore, if the administrator knows that the decisions taken are subject to scrutiny by an independent authority, he/she will be more careful in making decisions and be less tempted to misuse powers and show undue favours to anyone. Pertinently however, the "acts of corruption" and "illegal acquisition of property" are kept out of the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.

Section 3(2) of the Act provides that the Ombudsman shall be a person of known legal or administrative ability and conspicuous integrity. But in reality, the Ombudsman must have legal as well as administrative expertise. The fact that this provision does not mandate both the requirements is a problem with the provision.

Section 13 of the Act provides that if a person obstructs the Ombudsman from carrying out his duties without lawful excuse, the Ombudsman shall have the power to punish that person with simple imprisonment which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to two thousand Taka, or with both. According to the current scenario, consideration should be made to review the extent of punishment.

Moreover, according to section 15 of the Act, the Government may exempt any public officer or class of public officers from the operation of all or any of the provisions of the Act. This provision empowers the Government to limit the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman. The Act also does not clarify financial independence to the Ombudsman.

Despite many limitations, the Ombudsman Act 1980 came into effect on 6 January 2002. However, no Ombudsman has been appointed yet. Necessary measures should be taken to amend the Ombudsman Act so that the Ombudsman can serve as a bridge between the Government and its citizens, ensuring that public institutions operate in the best interests of the people.

The writer is student of law, University of Dhaka.

Star
SPORT
DHAKA FRIDAY AUGUST 16, 2024, BHADRA 1, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

Star Sports Select HD1
English Premier League
Manchester United vs
Fulham
Live from 1:00 am
(Saturday)

United in action as Premier League kicks off

AGENCIES

Manchester United kick-off the 2024/25 Premier League season at home to Fulham on Friday as United boss Erik ten Hag looks to make the best use of another year at the helm.

Ten Hag failed to capitalise on the assured strides he had made in his first season at United and looked likely to be sacked after the end of last season before an impressive 2-1 FA Cup win over Manchester City gave the Dutch coach a lifeline.

The Dutchman has been backed by United's new football operations hierarchy, led by British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe, and was handed a contract extension to 2026.

Leny Yoro, Joshua Zirkzee, Matthijs De Ligt and Noussair Mazraoui have arrived to strengthen Ten Hag's squad for around £150 million.

But after finishing eighth last season -- United's worst-ever Premier League finish -- Ten Hag needs a fast start to the new campaign to dispel doubts he is the man to lead the club forward.

Fulham won at Old Trafford for the first time in 20 years in February.

Any repeat on Friday will have United fans fearing another season to forget.

Injuries have yet again started to haunt United, with left-back Luke Shaw being the latest name added to the list of forced absentees ahead of their league opener. Meanwhile, Yoro is set to return to action in about three months following successful surgery on his foot injury. This adds to United's defensive worries, which were one of the main concerns last season.

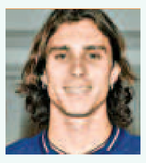
United faced the second most shots (667) of all top-flight teams in 2023-24, with only rock-bottom Sheffield United (678) – widely considered one of the worst sides in Premier League history – conceding more.

New signings De Ligt and Mazraoui might have to start from the onset and Argentine centre-back Lisandro Martinez, who arrived late to training following the competition of his Copa America duties, may also start.

At the attacking front, United have several big names ready to go but quite a few of them are on a mission to rescue their United careers at United. Exhibit A in this regard is Marcus Rashford who failed to build on his best individual season and is back in the corner where he finds the likes of Jadon Sancho and Antony, who are trying to rediscover their form and fighting for their futures at the club.

Five new signings to watch

Riccardo Calafiori (Arsenal)

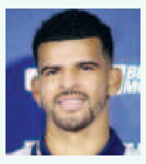


The Gunners beat off stiff competition from Serie A giants Juventus to land the Italian defender following his impressive 2023/24 season for Bologna.

Calafiori was also a shining light in Italy's otherwise pitiful defence of the European Championship in June.

The 22-year's arrival, for a reported £42 million ($53 million), certainly boosts Arteta's wealth of defensive options as Arsenal aim to end a 21-year wait to win the title.

Dominic Solanke (Tottenham)



Spurs are hoping Solanke, who could be the club's record signing as his deal could rise to £65m with add-ons, can fire them back into the Champions League and maybe even end a 16-year trophy drought.

Spurs did not sign a replacement when Harry Kane departed a year ago. Now the pressure is on Solanke, who comes fresh from his best-ever scoring season at Bournemouth last season in which he scored 19 times.

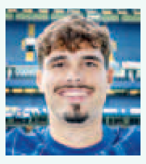
Matthijs de Ligt (Manchester United)

Dutch international De Ligt has been reunited with Erik ten Hag, who helped the centre-back rise to fame at Ajax as a teenager. Manchester United have signed Bayern Munich pair De Ligt and Noussair Mazraoui in a move that could cost nearly £60m.

After big money moves to Juventus and then Bayern Munich, De Ligt's career has stalled as he fell out of favour for both club and country over the past year.

His arrival is just part of a defensive overhaul as United have also recruited French teenager Leny Yoro and De Ligt's Bayern team-mate Mazraoui.

Pedro Neto (Chelsea)



Neto is so far the standout signing from another chaotic window at Stamford Bridge. The Portugal winger has joined from Wolves for a fee of £54 million.

Yet he faces stiff competition just to get into the side with Raheem Sterling, Mykhailo Mudryk Noni Madueke, and Chelsea's best player last season Cole Palmer among the other wingers available to Enzo Maresca.

Niclas Fuellkrug (West Ham)

The signing of German international Fuellkrug from Borussia Dortmund for £27m has been the highlight of a busy summer for West Ham.

After spending his peak years rising through the ranks of German football at Hannover and Werder Bremen, Fuellkrug scored 16 goals in his sole season at Borussia Dortmund to help them reach last season's Champions League final.

ICC to continue talks after Aug 15 deadline

SPORTS REPORTER

The International Cricket Council (ICC) will continue assessing the situation in Bangladesh before making a decision on the Women's T20 World Cup. The sport's governing body had initially set a deadline of 15th August to choose a host country, following unrest in the region, according to a Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) official.

The BCB are understood to have requested the ICC to keep assessing the situation and have been granted additional time.

"There was a deadline today [from the ICC], but they are continuing with communications, hoping to resolve it as quickly as possible. The Bangladesh Army has assured that they will provide security for the World Cup, which was one of the major hurdles the tournament had to overcome," a BCB official told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

T20
ICC
WOMEN'S T20
WORLD CUP
BANGLADESH 2024

BCB sources relayed that the board has sought guidelines from relevant authorities on how to operate with many directors absent. They are also understood to be in talks with Bangladesh's interim government regarding the current travel restrictions from several countries.

BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury conveyed that discussions with the ICC are ongoing.

"Yes, there was a date [for discussion] on 15th August [with the ICC], and they are possibly going to look into it further. We are still in communication, and it's being done in a positive way," Nizamuddin said.

Meanwhile, reports have surfaced that the ICC are considering the UAE, India, and Sri Lanka as back-up venues to host the World Cup in case they are forced to move the tournament from Bangladesh.

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah told TOI yesterday that they have informed the ICC of their unwillingness to host the tournament.

"They had asked the BCCI if we could host the event, but I flatly refused," the BCCI secretary was quoted as saying.

'Focus is on cricket'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh spin bowling coach Mushtaq Ahmed on Thursday said that the players have recovered from the effects of the chaotic situation in the country and are focusing on cricket.

The Tigers completed their second day of practice in Lahore yesterday, preparing for the first of the two Tests against Pakistan, set to start in Rawalpindi on August 21.

The national team players have had a difficult build up to the Pakistan tour, as their preparation camp was hampered by the political unrest in Bangladesh.

"I think all the boys are happy and very excited to play the first Test in Rawalpindi... I credit the management who have been very good with the players."

But Mushtaq relayed that the senior players have revived the mood inside the dressing room since the team arrived in Pakistan on Tuesday.

"I think all the boys are happy and very excited to play the first Test in Rawalpindi. The effect of the situation has been removed quite a bit. I credit the management who have been very good with the players.

"Players like Shakib [Al Hasan] are playing a good positive role. Senior players such as Mushy [Mushfiqur Rahim], Taskin [Ahmed] are playing a good positive role. When you come to play a series, focus is on cricket," Mushtaq told the reporters during a press conference on Thursday.

Mushtaq also credited the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for proposing and then helping the Bangladesh team arrive in Pakistan earlier than scheduled to prepare adequately.

"There were security issues and also concerns over what pitches we will get. PCB has to be credited and it's a great relationship [between PCB and BCB], if they keep looking out for one another," he said, hoping to see more collaboration in grass-root programmes between the two boards.

What the condition would be like in the first Test in Rawalpindi is already a major point of discussion in Pakistan.

Bangladesh are no longer a side overtly dependent on their spinners as the ongoing pace revolution has given them the belief that they can do well in away tours with their fast bowlers.

However, Mushtaq feels that spinners will play a key role even if the Rawalpindi surface ends up being more conducive to pacers.

"You always need spinners in Tests. It's not only about taking wickets because apart from wickets, you also need to give your fast bowlers some rest. In Tests, spinners dry up runs at one end and give the main strike bowler rest. So, their [spinners'] role is important whether they take two-three wickets or six.

"With the experience that Taijul [Islam] and Mehedi [Hasan Miraz] possess, they are match winners and have won Bangladesh many games. They are very good guys and they are coachable people, meaning they are good listeners. Hopefully I can make a difference with them."

Bangladesh have four fast bowlers and fours spinners, including Shakib, in their squad for the Rawalpindi Test. The Tigers are likely to go in with three pacers in the match, however, Mushtaq said the management will take the final call after seeing the wicket. "Firstly, you have to see the condition first and then make your mind. We will get an idea of the condition after we go there [Rawalpindi]. We will see the pitch and then we will be able to tell the combination."

HP pick up second win in Top End T20

SPORTS REPORTER

Ripon Mondol picked up three wickets and Jishan Alam hit a half-century as the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) High Performance Unit defeated Australian Capital Territory (ACT) by six wickets, notching up their second win in the Top End T20 series at the TIO Stadium in Darwin, Australia yesterday.

Sent to field, HP Unit restricted ACT to 124-9 with Ripon finishing with 3-26 and Abu Hider Rony picking up 2-26. Left-arm spinners Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby and Rakibul Hasan claimed one wicket each while conceding just 14 and 21 runs respectively in their four overs.

For ACT, Mikey McNamara was the lone batter to get into the 30s, making 36 off 26 balls before getting stumped off Rabby.

In reply, opener Jishan's 36-ball 50 catapulted the HP Unit to 125-4 in just 16.3 overs.

Jishan formed two important partnerships for the first two wickets, a 51-run opening stand off 31 balls with Tanzid Tamim (18 off 15 balls) and a then a 44-run partnership off 38 balls with Parvez Hossain Emon (23 off 24 balls), to set up the easy win.

Jishan, who hit two sixes and a four, departed in the 14th over when the HP Unit were 19 runs away from victory. Skipper Akbar Ali and Shamim Hossain remained unbeaten on five and one respectively to complete the chase.

Earlier, the HP Unit thrashed the Melbourne Renegades by 88 runs in their opening game, before suffering a five-wicket defeat to Tasmania and an eight-wicket drubbing against Adelaide Strikers. They will next face Pakistan 'A' at the same venue on today.

PSG prepare for post Mbappe era

AFP, *Paris*

Paris Saint-Germain are beginning a new era following the departure of Kylian Mbappe and the reigning French champions have so far kept a low profile as they prepare for life without the superstar forward.

Mbappe moved to Real Madrid when his contract expired in June, ending a prolific seven-year association with the Qatar-owned club in which he struck a remarkable 256 goals to become their all-time top scorer.

The France captain therefore leaves an enormous void, so big that PSG appear to have decided there is no one player who could possibly fill it adequately.

"He is obviously a different player and we can't replace him with one single player. Forget it. There is no substitute for Kylian Mbappe," coach Luis Enrique admitted in May.

Enrique takes his team to Normandy to face Le Havre on Friday on the opening night of the new Ligue 1 campaign without any glitzy new signing having arrived to directly replace Mbappe.

Meanwhile, when Enrique spoke at the pre-match press conference on Thursday, he accepted that his side will have to adjust after losing their all-time record goalscorer, but pointed to the wealth of attacking options in his squad.

"We will have to change things compared to last season. Before, we went towards goal and we all looked for the same player, Kylian, who had a natural ability to score. Now a range of possibilities are open," he said.

PSG have nevertheless spent money in Europe's summer transfer window, with an estimated 125 million euros ($132.2m) invested on three players -- 19-year-old Portuguese midfield prodigy Joao Neves, 22-year-old centre-back Willian Pacho and Russian goalkeeper Matvey Safonov, 25. And they may still move for a top-class striker before the deadline at the end of the month.

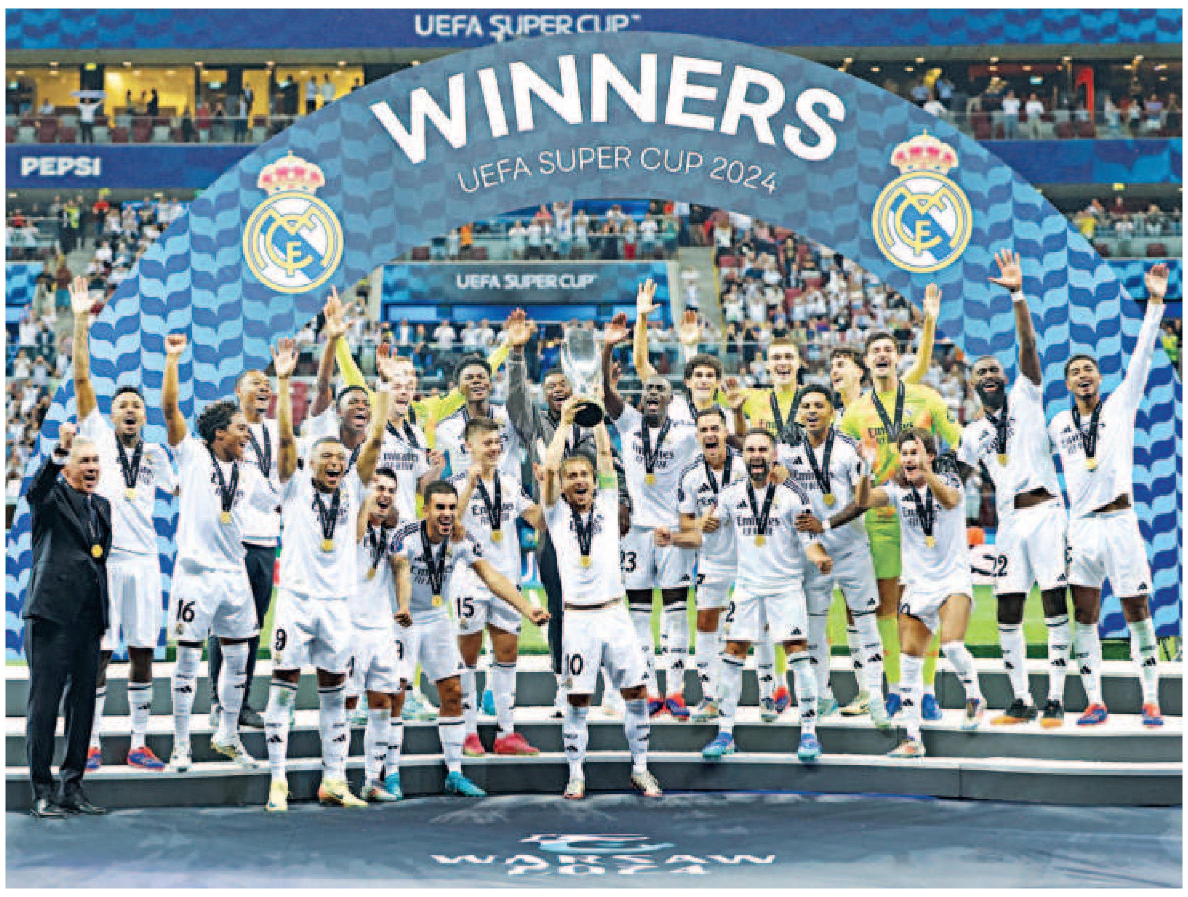
Napoli's Victor Osimhen, who previously starred in Ligue 1 for Lille, has been linked with a move to the French capital, although it is unclear whether he would fit in with Luis Enrique's preferred style of football.

Meanwhile, Mbappe apart, the Parisians have kept hold of the spine of their team from last season and have also incorporated teenage Brazilian midfielder Gabriel Moscardo after signing him from Corinthians in January but allowing him to stay there on loan for six more months.

French wingers Ousmane Dembele and Bradley Barcola will be expected to build on impressive performances last season, while the hope is that Randal Kolo Muani and Goncalo Ramos -- scorers of 23 goals between them in the last campaign -- will step up to help fans forget Mbappe.

The days of signing veteran stars like Lionel Messi and Sergio Ramos are a thing of the past, and captain Marquinhos, 30, is likely to be the oldest member of the starting line-up this season.

Enrique's aim will be to get his side in peak condition by the time the Champions League begins in September, by which time a new attacking option may have been added.



On a memorable night for Real Madrid and their star signing Kylian Mbappe, Los Blancos claimed a record sixth UEFA Super Cup with a 2-0 win over Atalanta on Wednesday in Warsaw. After Federico Valverde broke the deadlock from close range for the Champions League holders in the 59th minute, Mbappe, on his debut, sealed the game when he rifled home in the 68th minute from a Jude Bellingham pass. The win also meant that 38-year-old Croatian midfielder Luka Modric, who came from the bench in the second half, has now won 27 titles at the club to become the most decorated player in Real Madrid history.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

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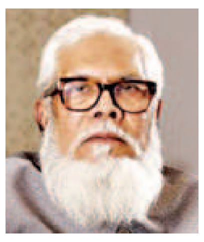
Salman used clout to help businesses secure loans

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Salman F Rahman is known for using his influence to get bank loans for Beximco Group by bending rules, but documents seen by this newspaper have revealed how he helped others secure credit, or at least tried to.

The Beximco boss who worked for Sheikh Hasina as one of her trusted advisers until the downfall of the Awami League government was overly influential in the financial sector of Bangladesh.



His clout grew so large in the 15 years of Hasina's regime that his recommendations were difficult for anyone to disobey, said current and former chief executives of three commercial banks who sought anonymity in fear of reprisal.

Salman is now a disgraced suspect held in police custody over the killing of a shop employee during the violent student-led protests that toppled the Hasina government.

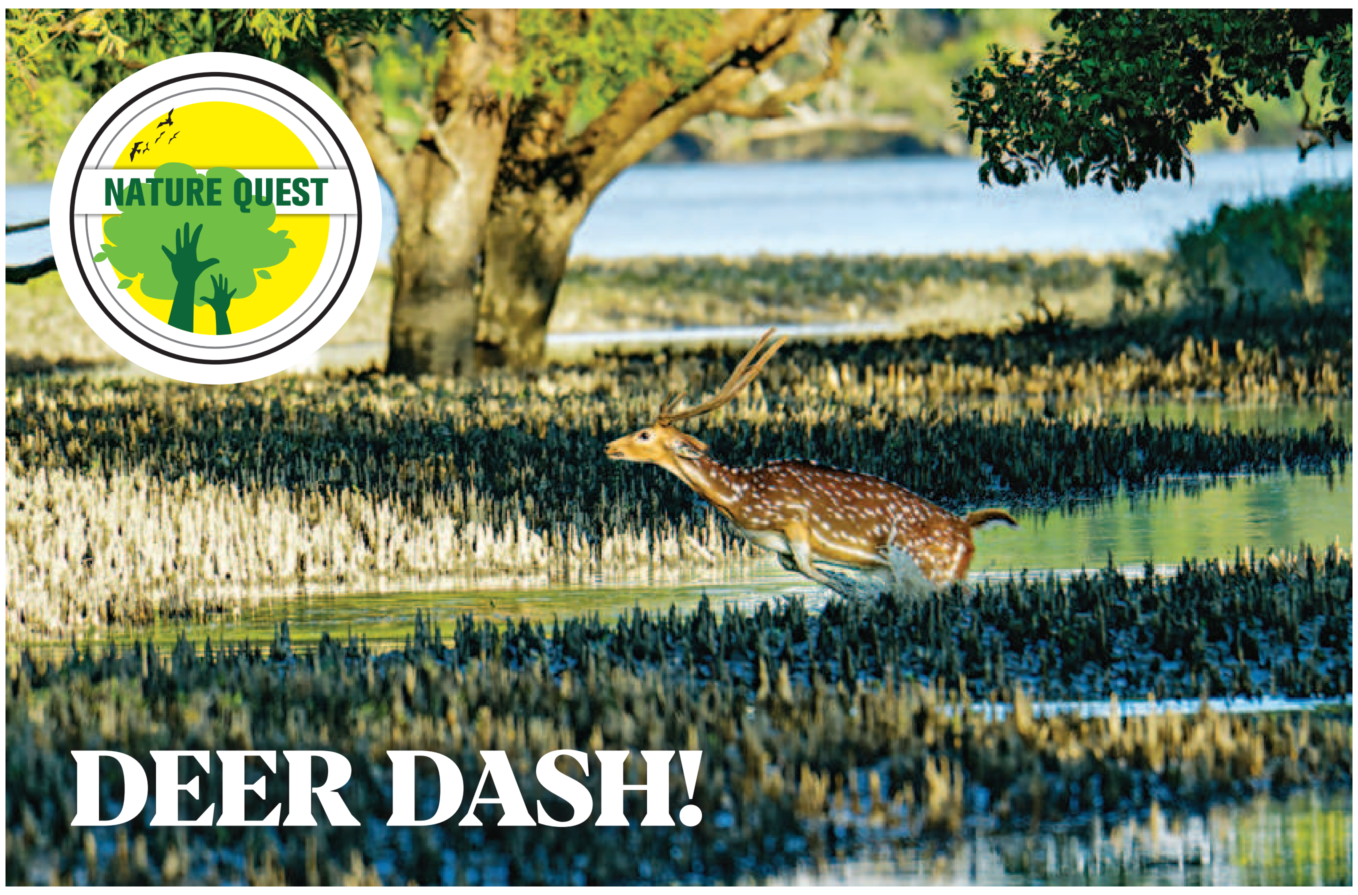
The current administration has not yet charged him with financial misconduct linked to Beximco, for which he has long been known.

Having been the chairman of the privately owned IFIC Bank, Salman had mostly picked state-run banks for his endeavour to facilitate loans for other companies.

One such company Salman had helped, or tried to help, is Globe Janakantha Shilpa Paribar (GJSP), which sought and secured loans from scam-hit Janata Bank.

A document obtained by The Daily Star shows that

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

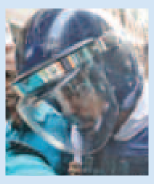


A male axis deer or spotted deer, locally known as Chittra horin, dashes through a waterbody in the Sundarbans. Known to be one of the gems of the Sundarbans, axis deer are beloved to all Bangladeshis, so much so, that their local name is often used as a complement for beauty. Globally too, they are considered the most beautiful deer species. The timid mammals prefer to live in territories with woody vegetation for cover and open grasslands for food – grass, plants, fruits and flowers. As they are not as nocturnal as other deer species, they usually feed after sunrise and then a few hours before sunset. Matriarchal herds are common among Axis deer and, like the males, females can engage in aggressive behaviour when there is over-crowding at feeding sites.

PHOTO: **TIMU HOSSAIN**

Palak, Tuku placed on 10-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT



Palak

A Dhaka court yesterday placed three people, including former deputy speaker Shamsul Haque Tuku and ex-state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak, on a 10-day remand in a case filed over the death of rickshaw-puller Kamal Mia in the city's Paltan area on July 19.

The other accused is Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, Dhaka University Chhatra League general secretary.

Dhaka Metropolitan

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

BRIBERY ALLEGATION

Ex-home boss faces ACC probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has launched an investigation into the allegations of bribery against former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan and his aides.

According to a complaint submitted to the ACC, they have been accused of taking millions of takas in bribes through a syndicate for transfers, promotions, and recruitment within various departments under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

ACC's Deputy Director and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Dhaka to decide whether to seek Hasina's extradition

Says foreign adviser as cases against the ousted leader mount

REUTERS, *Dhaka*

As cases rise against her, including murder accusations, Bangladesh will decide whether to ask India to extradite former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who resigned and fled to New Delhi last week, the country's Foreign Affairs Adviser Mohammad Touhid Hossain said yesterday.

Hossain, in an interview, said he did not want to speculate, but noted that Hasina was facing "so many cases".

If the country's home and law ministries decide, "we have to ask for her... return to Bangladesh", he said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Gaza death toll tops 40,000

Says Hamas-run health ministry as new round of ceasefire talks begin in Qatar

AGENCIES

Israel's military offensive in the Gaza Strip has killed at least 40,005 Palestinians since October 7, the Palestinian enclave's health ministry said yesterday, as there was no let-up in Israeli strikes across the enclave.

A total of 40 Palestinians have been killed and 107 wounded in the past 24 hours, the ministry said in a statement.

Pressure built for a ceasefire to be agreed at talks which resumed yesterday in Qatar to avert a wider war involving Iran, after months of fighting between Israel and Hamas.

In a veiled warning to Iran, Hamas and Israel, United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani on Wednesday said "no party in the region should take actions that would undermine efforts to reach a deal," the US State Department said.

In a telephone call, the two discussed "efforts to calm tensions in the region and the importance of finalising a ceasefire in Gaza," it said.

Israel's delegation includes spy chief David Barnea, head of the domestic security service Ronen Bar, and the military's hostages chief Nitzan Alon, defence officials said on Wednesday.

CIA Director Bill Burns and US Middle East envoy Brett McGurk represented Washington at the talks, convened by Qatari prime minister, with Egypt's intelligence chief Abbas Kamel also in Doha.

Hamas officials, who have accused Israel of stalling, did not join yesterday's talks. However, mediators planned to consult with Hamas' Doha-based negotiating team after the meeting, the official briefed on the talks told Reuters.

In Gaza, where almost the entire population is displaced and much of the territory's housing and other infrastructure destroyed, rescuers said air strikes killed three people.

An Israeli air strike on a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank killed two Palestinians yesterday as Jewish worshippers visited a nearby disputed holy site, Palestinian sources and Israeli army said.

India will always help Bangladesh's growth: Modi

AGENCIES

Amid reports of attacks on Hindus and minorities in Bangladesh, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking from the ramparts of the Red Fort on the 78th Independence Day of India yesterday, called for peace.

"I hope things will soon be normal in Bangladesh. 140-crore people want that Hindus, and minorities there be safe. We want that our neighbouring countries tread the path of peace and happiness," Modi said.

Modi added that India will always be supportive of Bangladesh's growth and development.

According to Indian Express, Hindus have faced more than 200 attacks in 50-odd districts since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government on August 5.

According to Bangladesh's 2022 census, a little more than 13.1 million Hindus reside in the country, making up for 7.96 percent of the country's population. Other minorities (Buddhists, Christians, etc.) together constituted less than 1 percent.

'Will back new govt as long as it stands for democracy'

Says Mirza Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday that the interim government would have the party's continued support as long as it stood for democracy and handed over power in a democratic manner.

"This government is the result of our movement. We will assist them as long as they stay in favour of democracy and transfer power through a democratic process," Fakhrul said during a sit-in programme in front of the party's Nayapaltan office in the capital.

BNP organised the programme as part of its two-day event demanding that former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her aides be tried on charges of carrying out a mass killing during the recent student protests.

Fakhrul said, "We want a change in government through elections. [For which] we are also willing to give a reasonable time to the interim government.

"Let me be clear, there is no alternative to democracy. There is no alternative to voting. We are fighting for that democracy."

Expressing gratitude to the interim government, the BNP leader hoped that the interim government would hold a free and fair election and that people would vote in the polls to form the government.

He called for the removal of the "conspirators within the government," who he claimed are working against country people.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

US in touch with India on developments in Bangladesh

Says US State Dept

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States is in touch with India and other countries in the region regarding the recent developments in Bangladesh and is seeking an end to the violence there, said a State Department official.

Vedant Patel, principal deputy spokesperson of the department, said this at a briefing yesterday when he was asked on the security situation, human rights issues, and the process of restoration of democracy in Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

UK, Singapore pledge support to interim govt

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

British Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has assured Bangladesh's interim government of supporting its efforts to restore law and order for a peaceful transition to democracy.

"The British government wants to support you as you work to restore peace, law and order, and prosperity to Bangladesh," Starmer wrote in a letter to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

"We look forward to working with you and the interim government as it creates a peaceful transition to an inclusive, democratic future," the British PM added in the letter dated August 14, according to the chief adviser's press wing.

The UK values its "strong and enduring" relationship with Bangladesh, cemented by "deep" people-to-people ties and shared Commonwealth values, Starmer said.

"As friends, we have been deeply saddened by the violence and loss of life in recent weeks. We recognise the bravery of the students and many others who, through peaceful protest, called for a different future for Bangladesh," said the UK prime minister.

"I warmly welcome your appointment as chief adviser to the interim government in Bangladesh. At such a pivotal moment in Bangladesh's history, your leadership

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

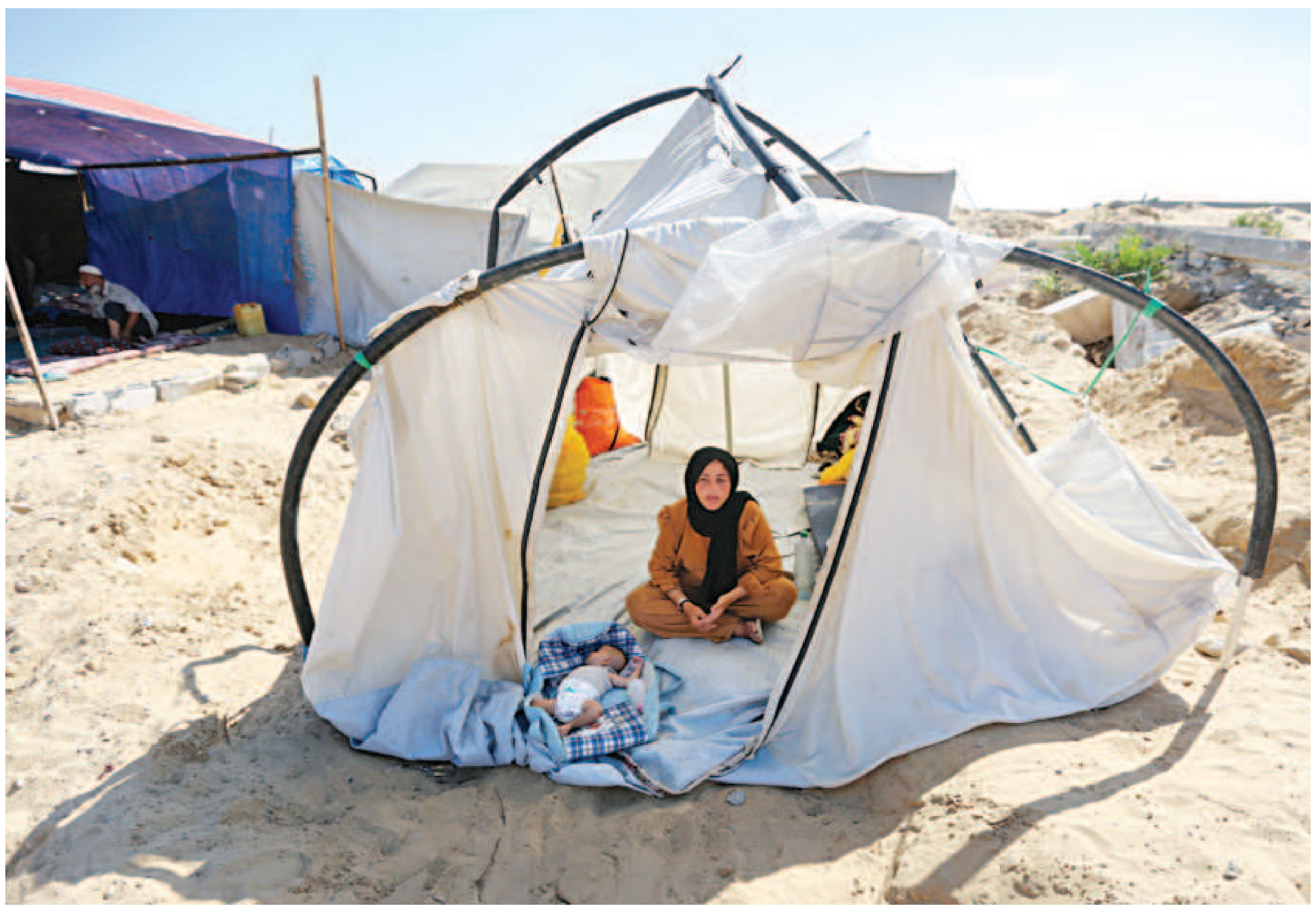


PHOTO: **REUTERS**

A displaced Palestinian woman and a child take shelter in a cemetery in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

Metro service won't resume tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Metro rail operation will not resume tomorrow, as per the earlier announcement, as the authorities could not complete necessary technical tests.

Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), the operating agency of metro rail, issued a press release in the regard last night.

It, however, did not mention when the service will resume.

Although the DMTCL did not state any reason, sources said the authorities failed to start the trial runs due to the ongoing work abstention by a group of DMTCL employees.

Operations of metro rail have remained suspended since July 18 amid violence centring the quota reform protest, which later turned into an uprising that toppled the Hasina-led government on August 5.

On July 19, attackers vandalised two metro stations

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

WALTON Smart Fridge ১ নম্বর রেফ্রিজারেটর ব্র্যান্ড

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Women's role in toppling the government
WR1

Mob justice goes against the spirit of the student movement
P8

Students protest removal of graffiti in the hills
P5

'BNP-linked' group now after control of slums, footpaths
P3

Tk 45,000cr stuck in shady loans

Eight banks provide loans to directors of other banks in a murky practice, bringing significant risks to the entire sector

AHSAN HABIB

Directors of eight private banks borrowed heavily from each other's banks in reciprocal lending practices fraught with serious risks. Some banks went one step further and lent thousands of crores to relatives of these banks' chairmen or directors.

The loans going in and out of these eight banks for directors amounted to Tk 25,000 crore at the end of 2023, according to their financial reports analysed by The Daily Star. Apart from this, four of these lenders provided around Tk 20,000 crore to the relatives of the bank directors. That means the total reciprocal loans sanctioned for these directors and their relatives amounted to Tk 45,000 crore. Most of these loans changed hands in the last five years.

Over the last three months, The Daily Star analysed the financial reports of the 51 scheduled banks currently operating in Bangladesh and found that no other banks except these eight were engaged in such lending practices.

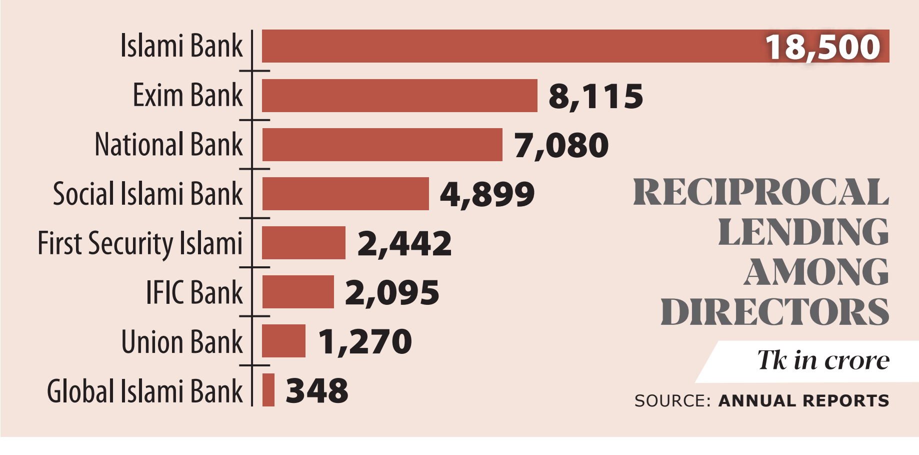
The banks are Exim Bank, Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank, National Bank, IFIC Bank, First Security Islami Bank, Union Bank and Global Islami Bank.

These banks are known for their questionable banking practices and were allegedly linked with the just-ousted Awami League government. During Sheikh Hasina's 15-year rule, powerful business groups with banking assets, including S Alam, Beximco, Nassa and Sikder Group, thrived on murky politics and bent rules, exposing the entire financial sector to serious risks.

The combined contribution of the eight bank directors in question to the lenders' paid-up capital is TK 2,400 crore, or about 5 percent of the Tk 45,000 crore loans they have taken from each other.

Most of these groups were not capable of getting loans if their business practices and financial health were taken into account, and so they lent reciprocally.

As the central bank rules prohibit the lending of a bank to its own directors, the directors deployed this cunning method.



SOURCE: ANNUAL REPORTS

This trend is not new, but it spread in the banking sector in the last seven to eight years, officials said.

"As most of the bank owners are also successful in their own businesses, the central bank cannot prevent banks from lending to the owners of other banks," a banking analyst said.

According to a 2014 central bank circular, commercial banks can lend to their directors' firms up to 50 percent of their contribution to the paid-up capital.

Four of these banks declined to comment for this story, and two others said the loans were sanctioned under relevant laws. The Daily Star could not reach the two other banks.

Bankers say such reciprocal lending is risky for the relevant banks and the banking sector as a whole.

This type of borrowing indicates that these directors helped each other out with depositors' money as they would find it difficult to secure loans from other banks, they add.

Most of the loans were approved

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Raiyan Mehezad Kazi, a second grader, paints graffiti on the wall portraying the quota reform protest, while his mother looks on. Students across the capital are covering walls with graffiti that convey messages of protest, patriotism, and equality. The photo was taken in the capital's Central Shaheed Minar area yesterday.

Prof Yunus assures Modi of protecting minorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday assured Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the interim government's commitment to safeguarding every citizen of Bangladesh, including minorities.

In the first call between the two leaders, he assured the Indian PM of the "protection, safety and security" of Hindus in the country.

He invited Indian journalists to visit Bangladesh and make reports on the issues of minority safety and protection, saying that the "reports of attacks on

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Jahangir new home adviser

Replaces Sakhawat; 4 advisers take oath; 4 ordinances on local govt bodies on the cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain was replaced as home adviser by Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury last night, hours after four new advisers, including Jahangir, were sworn into office.

Sakhawat was given the charge of the textiles and jute ministry as the interim government redistributed the portfolios of eight advisers, according to the chief adviser's press wing.

The other new advisers are noted economist Wahiduddin Mahmud, former cabinet secretary Ali Imam Majumdar and former power secretary Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin administered the oath to the four advisers at the Bangabhaban around 4:15pm. With them, the number of advisers to the interim government rose to 21.

In another development, the advisory council in a meeting yesterday approved the drafts of four ordinances, seeking to empower the government to remove the elected representatives of four local

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

PREMIER cemeNT ঢালাইয়ের রাজা

Law enforcers used unnecessary force on protesters: UN

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN Human Rights Office has said that there are strong indications that the security forces resorted to unnecessary and disproportionate use of force and extrajudicial killings during the mass uprising that led to the ouster of the Awami League government.

"According to available public reports by media and the protest movement itself, between July 16 and August 11, more than 600 people were killed. Of these, nearly 400 deaths were reported from July 16 to August 4, while around 250 people were reportedly killed following the new wave of protests between August 5 and 6," reads a report by the UN agency.

The reported death toll is likely an underestimate, as information collection has been hindered by restrictions on movement due to the curfew and the internet shutdown, it says.

The report titled "Preliminary Analysis of Recent Protests and Unrest in Bangladesh" was released yesterday by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

It comes a week ahead of a UN team's visit to Dhaka to discuss the modalities for an investigation into human rights violations.

The report details the background of how the students' peaceful protests eventually turned into a mass upsurge and the law enforcers used disproportionate force to quell the demonstrators.

"The police and paramilitary forces appear to have frequently used force indiscriminately against both peaceful protests as well as those with elements of violence, employing rubber bullets, sound grenades and firearms with live lethal ammunition, including birdshot pellets and bullets.

"Additional, alleged violations, that also warrant thorough, impartial and transparent investigations, included extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, and severe restrictions on exercise of freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly."

One of the recommendations made by the UN was to ensure accountability for those who applied or ordered the unnecessary and disproportionate use of force.

"Considering that certain individuals among the protesters were seen typically using sticks, bricks or similar types of makeshift weapons, the security forces' recurring and persistent use of firearms, including pellet shotguns, handguns and rifles, would have regularly involved unnecessary and disproportionate force.

"Reports indicate that security forces also used helicopters to fire on protesters,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

UN calls for protection of peaceful assembly

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UN has called for the security forces to ensure that people can hold peaceful assemblies in Bangladesh.

"...we encourage the right to peaceful protest to be respected by all. And we call on security forces to ensure that no one engaging in peaceful protest is harmed," UN Secretary-General's Deputy Spokesperson Farhan Haq said during a routine press briefing on Thursday.

He was answering a question about the obstruction of people wishing to pay respect to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Dhanmondi-32 on the 49th anniversary of his murder.

Haq said the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Bangladesh's interim government chief, Muhammad Yunus, discussed the UN's potential support for the interim government, particularly on accountability issues, ahead of the UN fact-finding mission's visit to investigate recent killings and atrocities in Bangladesh.

Next week, a team will arrive in Dhaka to discuss the potential areas of support and the specific modalities for

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Four new advisers to the interim government take oath of office at the Bangabhaban's Darbar Hall yesterday. President Mohammed Shahabuddin, *not in picture,* administered the oath.

PHOTO: PID

Ex-Padma Bank chairman faces ACC probe

He allegedly embezzled Tk 800cr from share market

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nafeez Sarafat

The Anti-Corruption Commission has launched an investigation into alleged embezzlement of Tk 800 crore by ex-banker Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat.

An ACC director, requesting anonymity, said Nafeez took control of Padma Bank, formerly Farmers Bank, with the help of top officers of an intelligence agency and police.

There are allegations that he embezzled around Tk 800 crore from the stock market, said the director, adding, "We sent letters to Bangladesh Bank and some other authorities, asking for information regarding his irregularities."

Nafeez hogged headlines because of his involvement with Farmers Bank, which became a hotbed for irregularities in less than three years of its establishment in 2013.

According to a Bangladesh Bank report, over Tk 3,500 crore was syphoned out of the bank.

To rescue the bank, state enterprises Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, Sonali Bank, Janata Bank, Agrani Bank and Rupali Bank bought 60 percent stake in the bank for Tk 715 crore.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

MY DHAKA

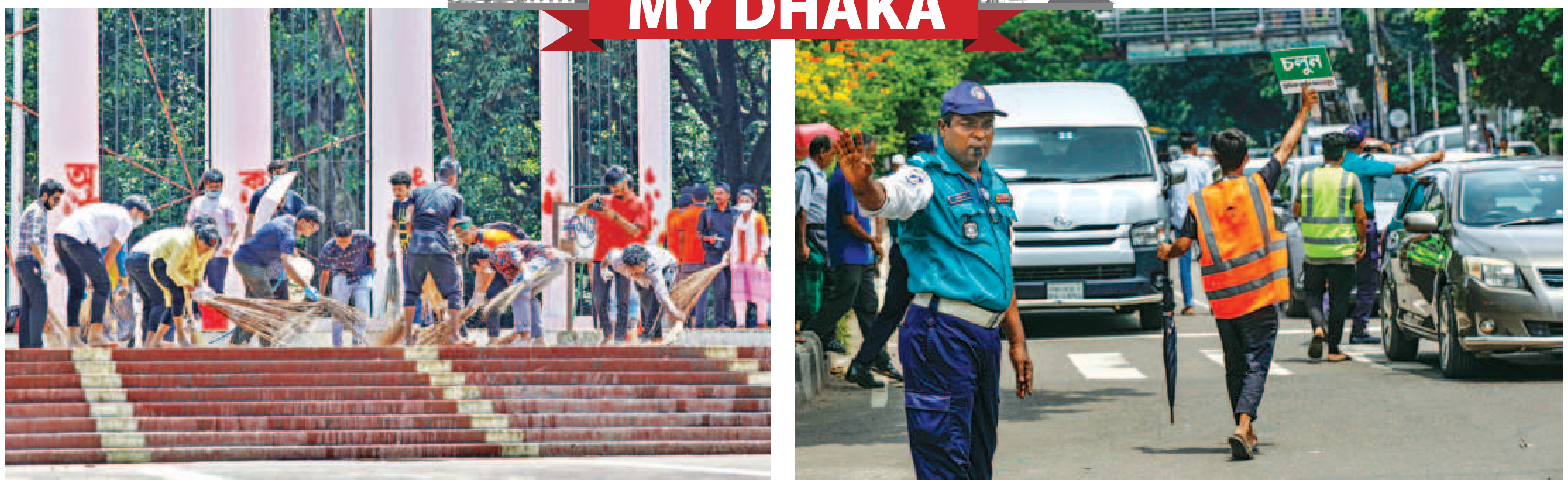


PHOTO: STAR

DHAKA'S UNEXPECTED TRANSFORMATION

From chaos to community

RBR

During the recent protests, the amount of people demanding to rebuild our country again were many. For good and bad, a lot has changed for Dhaka and its residents since then, and a new chapter in history was written. Just as the nature of any revolution, it was achieved through bloodshed and mindless atrocity.

Even as the dust settles, with an interim government in place, we are witnessing a renaissance, regarding societal, and mindset change.

We are no longer accepting autocracy or extremism in any form. Dhakaites now know who their neighbours are, and find strength in unity.

Let's see how Dhaka is now a better place because of it.

Our men in uniform

These men obey orders; however, there is no reason to forget their early actions against protesters, or forgive them for it. Then again, I realised the importance of our police force. The minute they went on strike, I felt defenceless and exposed to a hoard of serious crimes that had put my security at stake. I never thought I would say this, but when I saw police officers back in active duty on their bikes and standing at street corners, I was genuinely relieved.

Citizens did a laudable job in protecting their own, but in all seriousness, the job of a police officer cannot be undertaken by ordinary citizens.

Traffic woes sorted

You know, I have always seen that when our ordinary public vehicles and personal cars enter the cantonment area, they instinctively abide by traffic rules, for the fear of fines and punishments that are in place there.

Unfortunately, out in the real world, things are different. Even my car, on any other road, would change lanes without indicators, block the left lane, and take a U-turn just like that. Motorbikes would dance through the traffic chaos, rickshaws would stick out their front wheel in front of a moving car, or a pedestrian would lift a hand and start crossing a busy road. We have been at it for so long that this kind of behaviour felt as the norm.

However, it was our students who showed us how bad our traffic mannerisms are. They made sure foot-over bridge and zebra crossings were used, lanes were maintained and if anyone broke the rules, they put the guilty on traffic duty as a punishment. What an ingenious way to teach them traffic rules!

Clean Dhaka

When we travel abroad, we keep their cities clean, but do not show the same care when in Dhaka. But we have seen that the students have cleaned Dhaka's alleys, thoroughfares, debris, and garbage. Just the other day, I wanted to throw my banana peel on the island as plant food, but refrained from doing so for fear of being chewed out by youngsters!

I loved how the kids placed garbage boxes, and dustbins at road corners, how they picked up trash and kept Dhaka clean. I hope these basic civic duties are carried forward by the rest of the populous.

Without the Internet: Dhaka's unplugged resilience

If nothing else, the forced detox from our obnoxious online addiction did us good. Young and old, rich or poor, we were all stuck to posts/reels on our social media profiles. We were in a toxic relationship with social media.

Having said that, we do need the internet for work and all sorts of financial transactions. The pre-paid electric meter conundrum was very real for many of us. The fear of our electric connection from DESCO being cut off, our meter showing bills in the minuses, the DESCO office being closed, and online money transfer services being disabled was exasperating. ATM booths had their shutters down and banks were closed, so life with no cash at hand and with no cashless card service, was upsettingly dreadful.

Now that internet has been restored, if nothing else, it has taught us to always keep physical cash on hand at home in case of emergencies like this.

The show of patriotism from Gen Z

Hats off to these spirited young individuals who proved how much they love Bangladesh and its future. Their movement, which started from demands of quota reforms, are now trying to reform the culture of our bad politics. We, who always say that we saw the War of Liberation or we fought for our country, actually believed that we were the sole saviours of the state. We have always stayed silent when we saw the misuse of power by any political party. We were stuck in a vicious cycle of political corruption practised by all political parties; we turned a blind eye to their aggression, and remained a pawn to their ruinous policies. We never demanded clean politics.

With a fair election on the cards, I plead that no undeserving person stand up as our future leader. These students have lit the fire of patriotism in us. So, now, someone with a good heart and true love for the country should give this nationalism and loyalty a real chance. Let no one encash this spirit for personal gain.

Prof Yunus assures Modi

FROM PAGE 1

the minorities have been exaggerated", according to a press release of the chief adviser's press wing.

"The chief adviser has told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that his government is committed to safeguarding every citizen of the country including the minorities when the Indian prime minister raised the issue of the protection of the minorities," said the release.

"Prof Muhammad Yunus said the situation in Bangladesh has been brought under control and life is becoming normal across the country," it said.

The chief adviser told the Indian PM that his government is committed to making all state apparatus fully functional and effective and ensuring human rights for every citizen of the country.

During the conversation, Modi felicitated Prof Yunus on his new role. He also expressed his desire to work closely with the interim government, said the release.

The Indian PM said he had known him for a long time. He hoped that Prof Yunus' vast experience and leadership qualities would bring positive results to the people of Bangladesh.

The Indian PM also invited Prof Yunus to join the "Third Voice of Global South Summit" to be hosted virtually by New Delhi on August 17. The chief adviser agreed to join the summit virtually from Dhaka.

Prof Yunus told the Indian premier that his interim government took over as a result of the student movement. "This is the second revolution in Bangladesh and his government will fulfil the desire of the democratic aspirations of the students and people," said the press release.

The chief adviser thanked Modi for the telephone conversation and the tweet he posted immediately after he was sworn in. He also congratulated the Indian leader and the Indian people on the country's Independence Day, celebrated on August 15.

According to a readout issued by the Indian PMO on the conversation, Modi conveyed India's commitment to supporting the people of Bangladesh through various development initiatives.

During the call, Modi "reaffirmed India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful and progressive Bangladesh. He emphasised India's commitment to supporting the people of Bangladesh through various development initiatives," according to the readout.

The two leaders also discussed ways to take the bilateral relationship forward in line with the respective national priorities, said the readout.

Sharing the information on social media handle X (previously known as Twitter), PM Modi said they exchanged views on the prevailing situation.

"Received a telephone call from Professor Muhammad Yunus, @ChiefAdviserGoB. Exchanged views on the prevailing situation. Reiterated India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful and progressive Bangladesh. He assured protection, safety and security of Hindus and all minorities in Bangladesh," Modi tweeted.

Hindus constitute about 8 percent of Bangladesh's 170 million people.

UN calls for protection

FROM PAGE 1

investigating human rights violations amid the recent violence and unrest.

Haq said, "The high commissioner is deeply committed to aiding the interim government and the people of Bangladesh in a successful transition that enhances the protection of human rights.

"I can certainly confirm that we remain willing to support the government and people of Bangladesh as needed," he added.

Tk 45,000cr stuck in shady loans

FROM PAGE 1

following the orders of the directors, and bank officials had nothing to do, according to three mid-level bankers at Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank and Exim Bank.

Requesting anonymity, they said several banks lent some companies large sums, in many cases multiple times their annual sales.

"So how will they repay the loans?" said one of the three bankers. His view was echoed by the two others.

'UNDUE BENEFITS'

Data show Islami Bank and Social Islami Bank started engaging in reciprocal lending in 2016 when these two banks were taken over by S Alam Group.

Exim Bank, National Bank, and IFIC Bank have already been involved in such lending practices for years, but on a limited scale. The size of such loans multiplied over the last 10 years.

When banks lend to relatives of their directors, they put the banks at risk since the financial strength of the borrowers is not seriously considered while sanctioning these loans, experts say.

These borrowers usually get undue benefits in taking loans, and repayment. Several banks are already facing risks because of such lending.

The financial statements of the companies in question should be analysed to see whether their assets and liabilities support the lending, Bangladesh Bank spokesman Mezbaul Haque told The Daily Star.

"If it is over-lending, the central bank will take action," he said.

EXIM BANK

Exim Bank provided Tk 8,115 crore, the highest amount of reciprocal loans, to several firms owned by directors of other banks. Of the amount, Tk 3,982 crore went to three companies owned by S Alam Group, whose chairman is Mohammed Saiful Alam, also chairman of First Security Islami Bank.

For its part, First Security Islami Bank lent Nassa Group, whose outstanding loan at the bank was Tk 734 crore at the end of 2023.

Nazrul Islam Mazumder, chairman of Exim Bank, himself took loans from most of these banks in the name of Nassa Group, which he owns. Nassa Group also secured loans from Islami Bank, where S Alam's son Ahsanul Alam is the chairman.

Exim Bank lent Tk 801 crore to Unitex Spinning and its associates, whose managing director Belal Ahmed is the chairman of Social Islami Bank (SIBL).

Nassa Group's outstanding loan to SIBL stands at Tk 651 crore.

Beximco and its various concerns' loan outstanding at Exim Bank was Tk 661 crore at the end of 2023. Beximco's Vice-chairman Salman F Rahman is also chairman of IFIC Bank. To IFIC Bank, Nassa Group's outstanding loan is Tk 637 crore.

Exim Bank lent Tk 2,671 crore to PowerPac Mutiara Keraniganj Power Plant, a sister concern of Sikder Group, controlled by Rick Haque Sikder and his brother Ron Haque Sikder. They had also directorships at the National Bank before they were forced out by the regulator.

Nassa Group's loan outstanding to National Bank was Tk 1,632 crore at the end of 2023.

Exim Bank's financial reports show Mazumder and his family contributed around Tk 250 crore to the paid-up capital of Exim Bank by holding 25 crore shares.

Under central bank rules, he is eligible to secure only Tk 125 crore (50 percent of the share value) of loans from the bank.

"This is a concentration of lending and this type of lending creates risks for a bank though this loan has not become defaulted yet," said Muhammad A (Rumee) Ali, a veteran banker.

"If any big borrower defaults, it would make the bank vulnerable. A good bank usually does not allow this type of lending due to such concerns," he said.

To avoid the loan concentration, the central bank rolled out a rule of a single exposure limit. But these banks have systematically dodged the rule by taking loans in the name of several firms.

"From the banking side, it is not difficult to find out who is the ultimate beneficiary of the loans, so they should be careful," said Ali, a former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank.

SOCIAL ISLAMI BANK

Social Islami Bank (SIBL) provided loans of Tk 1,700 crore to directors of other banks, and its Chairman Belal Ahmed took loans from their banks. For instance, it lent Tk 1,049 crore to several firms of Infinia Group whose chairman is Ahsanul Alam, also chairman of Islami Bank.

In return, Islami Bank lent Tk 2,221 crore to two firms of Unitex Group whose managing director is Belal Ahmed.

Apart from these reciprocal lending, SIBL lent Tk 3,199 crore to several firms and sister concerns of S Alam Group. SIBL Chairman Belal Ahmed and S Alam Group's Saiful Alam are relatives.

Unitex Group holds around 4.5 crore shares in SIBL. This means the company's contribution to the paid-up capital of the bank is less than Tk 50 crore. Several relatives of S Alam also hold shares at the bank and their combined contribution to the bank's paid-up capital is around Tk 230 crore.

ISLAMI BANK

Islami Bank reciprocally lent Tk 4,333 crore to directors of other banks.

Apart from this, the bank's lending to S Alam Group's several firms alone stood at Tk 14,167 crore.

In Islami Bank, Ahsanul Alam, who is the bank chairman, and his relatives hold shares equivalent to Tk 350 crore of the bank's paid-up capital.

Since S Alam Group did not invest in Islami Bank in its own name, the bank has no legal binding in lending to the Group's companies.

OTHER BANKS

Similar practices were widespread at National Bank, IFIC Bank, First Security Islami Bank, Global Islami Bank and Union Bank.

National Bank for example lent Tk 7,080 crore to several companies whose owners are also directors of other banks. These loans were provided to Beximco Group, Nassa Group, and S Alam Group.

Sikder Group, in return, received loans from IFIC Bank, Exim Bank, and First Security Islami Bank.

Similarly, IFIC Bank lent TK 1,075 crore to Nassa Group and Sikder Group. In return, Beximco Group got loans from Exim Bank and National Bank.

IFIC Bank provided loans of Tk 1,020 crore to Sreepur Township Ltd, where Beximco is a joint venture partner.

Salman F Rahman and his son Ahmed Shayan Rahman hold 4.11 percent or 7.51 crore shares of the bank worth Tk 75 crore.

First Security Islami Bank provided those types of loans amounting Tk 2,442 crore.

Global Islami Bank and Union Group's reciprocal lending to each other was Tk 1,618 crore.

Several relatives of S Alam hold 30 crore shares at Global Islami Bank, meaning their investment is around Tk 300 crore in the bank. In Union Bank, S Alam Group holds shares worth Tk 570 crore.

The Daily Star first contacted most of these banks on June 15 and followed up with them on August 12-13. Representatives from National Bank, First Security Islami Bank, IFIC Bank, and Exim Bank did not respond or declined to comment.

Zafar Alam, chief operating officer at SIBL, said they sanctioned all loans in line with banking rules, and that the borrowers, including S Alam Group, are eligible for big loans.

Islami Bank CEO Mohammed Monirul Moula said they have been investing in Nassa Group and S Alam Group since the 1990s, and that the two groups' performance was excellent.

Jahangir new home adviser

FROM PAGE 1

government bodies under "special circumstances".

Of the seven advisers, Nahid Islam and Asif Mahmud, two key organisers of the recent student movement that led to the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government, were given the additional charges of the information and broadcasting ministry and labour and employment ministry respectively.

Nahid is the adviser to the post, telecommunications and information technology ministry while Asif is at the helm of the youth and sports ministry.

Wahiduddin Mahmud, an adviser to the 1996 caretaker government, was given the charge of the planning and education ministries while Ali Imam Majumdar, who was appointed as special assistant to the chief adviser on Monday, was attached to the Chief Adviser's Office.

Fouzul Kabir, an economist and the founding chief executive officer of Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), was given the responsibility of three ministries -- power, energy and mineral resources, road transport and bridges, and railway.

Jahangir, the new home adviser, will also hold the portfolio of the agriculture ministry. He served as the director general of the erstwhile Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) from January 21, 2003 to February 18, 2006.

Then quartermaster general of Bangladesh Army, Jahangir headed a 20-member army probe committee to investigate the carnage at the BDR's Pilkhana headquarters on February 25-26 in 2009 that left 74 people, including 57 army officers, dead.

The service of Jahangir was placed in the foreign ministry in December 2009. He went into retirement a year later.

Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat hogged the headlines for his various comments after assuming the office of the home adviser. A coordinator of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement criticised him for some comments while BNP and its three associate bodies demanded his resignation.

Sakhawat, also a former election commissioner, on August 11 warned all political parties and said, "Now, if you think you'll take control of the markets and resort to extortion, you can go ahead and do it for a while. But I have requested the army chief to break your legs... I don't care, go to hell."

The next day, he advised the Awami League leaders and activists not to do anything that may put their lives in danger, and to reorganise the party with new faces.

"No one has banned your party [Awami League]. Banning any party is a bad culture," he told reporters after visiting some injured Ansar members at the Combined Military Hospital in the capital.

Mentioning the contribution of AL to the country, the retired army official said, "We cannot deny it [AL's contribution]. Reorganise the party and participate in the election whenever it is held."

The same day, Hasnat Abdullah, one of the key coordinators of the student protests, at a rally said, "We have seen the advisers talking about rehabilitating the murderers [Sheikh Hasina and other Awami League leaders]. We want to remind those advisers that you have come to power through the student-people uprising.

"We will not hesitate to oust you the way we made you advisers."

PORTFOLIOS REDISTRIBUTED

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed was given the additional charge of the commerce ministry while Law Adviser Asif Nazrul was given the responsibility of the ministries of cultural affairs and expatriate welfare and overseas employment.

Industries Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan was given the extra portfolio of the housing and public works ministry, and Environment, Forest and Climate Change Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan was given the additional charge of the water resources ministry.

Liberation War Affairs Adviser Farooq-e-Azam, who took oath of office on August 12, will also be in charge of the disaster management and relief ministry.

The portfolios of the other advisers will remain unchanged, said the chief adviser's press wing.

Thirteen advisers of the interim government, led by Prof Muhammad Yunus, took office on August 8 after Awami League President Sheikh Hasina resigned as prime minister and fled the country on August 5. Two more advisers took oath on August 11.

DRAFTS OF FOUR ORDINANCES OKAYED

The advisory council yesterday approved the drafts of the Local Government (city corporation) Ordinance-2024, Local Government (municipality) Ordinance-2024, Local Government (zilla parishad) Ordinance-2024, Local Government (upazila parishad) Ordinance-2024.

The advisory council felt the necessity of amending the four related acts regarding these local government bodies to ensure seamless services to the people and continue administrative activities for public interest in the current context, according to a press statement of the chief adviser's press wing.

The drafts will be placed before the president for promulgating ordinances.

According to the section 13 (Ka) (1) of the draft of the Local Government (city corporation) Ordinance-2024, in view of special circumstances, the government can remove the mayor and councillors of a city corporation in the public interest if it deems necessary.

The 13 (ka), (2) section of the draft said the authority defined by rule can, by order in the official gazette, make the removal of the mayors and councillors effective.

The government can also appoint "competent persons or officials" as the administrators to the city corporations until further notice, said the draft.

Similar provisions are there in the drafts of the three other ordinances to empower the government to remove the elected representatives of municipalities, zilla parishads, and upazila parishads in the public interest if it deems necessary.

Ex-Padma Bank chairman faces ACC probe

FROM PAGE 1

Nafeez took over the bank in 2018 after Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, a former presidium member of the Awami League, stepped down as chairman. Farmers Bank was renamed Padma Bank in 2019.

In 2021, Muhiuddin, founding chairman of the bank, alleged that Nafeez misused Tk 100 crore from the bank.

Nafeez resigned from his post at the bank in January this year.

Burdened by high default loans, Farmers Bank agreed to merge with another bank in March this year.

‘KOLKATA RAPE’

Female students protest at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Female students from several universities in Bangladesh staged a protest yesterday at Dhaka University, demanding justice for the rape and murder of a 31-year-old doctor in Kolkata, India.

The rally, titled “Awaj Tolo Nari” (Raise Your Voice, Women), saw participants calling for the exemplary punishment for the culprits.

Protesters held placards with messages such as “How Old Were You?”, “Hang the Rapists,” “Am I Next?”, “Stop Violence,” and “Don’t Be an Alpha Male, Question What It Represents.”

“This society focuses on exposing the victim’s identity while shielding the rapist or harasser. We see this even in our media. Some people blame incidents of rape on women’s clothing. We’ve

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

People from all walks of life light candles in front of Raju sculpture at Dhaka University yesterday, demanding justice for the rape and murder of a 31-year-old doctor in Kolkata, India. They also called for a proper investigation into all previous rape cases in Bangladesh.

India needs to move on from one person, rebuild ties

Says analyst M Humayun Kabir

PORIMOL PALMA

New Delhi needs to avoid stereotypes about Bangladesh and rebuild relationships with other political parties and people, instead of focusing on one person and party, said international relations analyst M Humayun Kabir.

It is also time for Dhaka to present ground realities regarding the students’ movement and the aftermath of Sheikh Hasina’s fall, and take initiatives to address Delhi’s concerns, he said.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star recently, Kabir shared the challenges of relationships with India and other foreign governments, along with the way forward in the aftermath of Hasina taking refuge in India following the mass upsurge on August 5.

“A few dimensions are emerging following Hasina’s fall. First, India is feeling a sense of loss. In the last 15 years, India enjoyed various strategic benefits and the relationship with Bangladesh deepened. Now there appears to be a pause in it,” said Kabir, former ambassador to the US and now president of Bangladesh Enterprise Institute.

“There is a sense within Indian society that the movement that ousted Hasina was initiated by BNP-Jamaat, which is not right,” he said.

> **“ A few dimensions are emerging following Hasina’s fall. First, India is feeling a sense of loss. In the last 15 years, India enjoyed various strategic benefits and the relationship with Bangladesh deepened. Now there appears to be a pause in it.**

“Second, they are trying to discover a foreign hand in the movement in Bangladesh, indicating Pakistan and China. Practically, none of them existed,” he also said.

“Third, India is concerned over the attacks on minorities, mainly Hindu community, and thinks the right-wing groups are behind them. However, it is mainly the miscreants that are conducting the attacks,” Kabir added.

“These are our concerns as well. The fact that students, citizens, and political and religious leaders have taken the initiative to ensure the protection of minority communities does not have much appreciation in India,” he continued.

The interim government needs to take serious measures to stop any violence against minorities, engage the Indian government and society and present the facts, the expert said.

On anti-India sentiment in Bangladesh, Kabir said, “When it comes to bilateral relationships, there are two layers -- government to government and people to people. However, the relationship with Bangladesh became mostly government-to-government due to India’s role in the last three elections of Bangladesh, which created a major gap in people-to-people relations.”

“Now, there is an opportunity for India to fill up this gap. If we get a sensible response from them and if they positively support our transition to democracy, then I think the loss will be recovered,” Kabir said.

“India has a challenge regarding what it will do with Hasina, who fled after massive killings. India should consider this aspect,” he said.

“Otherwise, India cannot recover the lost ground, because when they are focused on a person, it sends the wrong signal to Bangladeshi people,” Kabir said.

“My gut feeling is that India prefers Hasina to go to another country.”

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Tk 3.11cr found in former senior secretary’s flat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police recovered cash worth around Tk 3.11 crore, including local and foreign currencies, from the apartment of a former senior secretary on Babar Road in Mohammadpur yesterday.

DMP informed the matter to the media through a text message around 7:30pm.

The message said based on secret information, DMP conducted a raid and recovered a large amount of currencies from a house on Block F on Babar Road.

It said the flat belonged to Shah Kamal, former senior secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief. Kamal served as secretary from 2015 to 2019 and senior secretary from 2019 to 2020.

According to DMP, they recovered approximately Tk 3.01 crore in BDT, prize bonds worth Tk 74,400, and various foreign currencies worth around Tk 10.03 lakh. The foreign currencies include $3,000; 1,320 Malaysian Ringgit; 2,969 Saudi Riyal; 4,122 Singapore Dollar; 1,915 Australian Dollar.

Visiting the spot around 8:00pm, this correspondent found that army personnel were deployed at the eight-storey building. The former secretary owned a flat on the first floor.

Mostafa Gazi, a trader, said they saw vehicles entering the building with sacks over the past few days. Suspecting something amiss, they kept watch on the house and learnt from a source that the sacks contained money. They later informed the army, he added.

Nurul Islam, a security guard at the building, said six to seven men, identifying themselves as DB members came to the house around 2:00pm. Nurul said Kamal did not reside there.

“He used to come here once or twice a week with two vehicles and stay for about an hour. One of the vehicles was still parked there,” said the security guard.

CONTROL OF DHAKA SLUMS, FOOTPATHS

Out goes AL, in comes ‘BNP-linked’ group

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* **MUNTAKIM SAAD**

With a shift in political landscape, new groups are vying for control at some slums and footpaths in Dhaka.

These new groups, claiming allegiance to the BNP, are attempting to assert dominance over areas previously controlled by the Awami League. Their targets include shanties, shops, and AL-affiliated clubs and offices in the slums.

However, in some areas, the grabbers have pulled back after warnings from BNP high-ups and the government.

In many places, citizen groups, including students, have become active in thwarting extortionists.

> **Controlling the slums is crucial because these areas are often used by political parties to mobilise crowds for rallies and processions in exchange for money. Besides, AL syndicates made crores of taka by operating in the slums.**

Controlling the slums is crucial because these areas are often used by political parties to mobilise crowds for rallies and processions in exchange for money.

Besides, AL syndicates made crores of taka by operating in the slums, illegally supplying gas and electricity to residents with the help of corrupt city utility staff.

The Daily Star visited five slums in the capital and found that in most cases, the new groups are targeting the shanties and shops that were previously under the control of the then ruling party.

In Karail slum, the largest slum in Bangladesh located in the capital’s Banani area, a new group has taken over several hundred shanties and shops that were previously controlled by pro-AL men.

They also vandalised some shanties and shops, looting valuables, locals said.

A local AL leader from Karail slum’s Bou Bazar unit said he is a wholesale trader with a shop there but is currently in hiding.

“I heard they tried to break the locks of my shop but were unsuccessful. I engaged in politics to protect my business from extortion, but now I fear it might be looted any time,” he said.

Another trader, who was previously associated with the AL Bou Bazar unit, said that pro-BNP men are now threatening him to leave the slum.

“I took a loan of Tk 16 lakh and built 10 shanties in the slum recently. About 10 years ago, I was involved with the Awami League. Because of this, they are now threatening my family to leave the shanties immediately,” he said while in hiding.

A slum dweller said while the new group has been taking over shanties, offices, and shops primarily used by AL-affiliated men, the general public has not yet been targeted.

In Sattola slum in Mohakhali, this correspondent found that pro-BNP men had taken control of the area by driving out members of pro-AL units.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Four more injured in Aug 5 clashes die in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people who were shot and burnt during clashes in the mass protests on August 5 have died over the past two days.

The deceased are -- Abul Kalam, 55, a lawyer from Cumilla Sadar upazila; Ujjal Hossain, 30, a mason from Chuadanga; Md Asif, 26, a shop employee in Noakhali and Al Amin Hossain, 27, a pharmaceutical sales representative from Barguna.

After completing autopsies, the bodies were handed over to their families yesterday.

Among them, Abul Kalam lived on Women’s College Road in Cumilla.

According to the report filed by Akib Noor, a sub-inspector of Dhanmondi Police Station, Kalam participated in a one-point demand protest for the government’s resignation on August 5.

He was allegedly attacked and shot by ward councillor Raihan and his group near Cumilla High School, adjacent to Cumilla Sadar Police Station.

He was taken to a local hospital that day and later transferred to Dhanmondi Popular Hospital in Dhaka on August 6. He passed away around 7:30pm on Thursday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Need to be vigilant against ‘neo-fascism’

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday called on party leaders and activists to stay vigilant to prevent “neo-fascism” from coming to power.

“We have defeated one fascism. We need to be vigilant so that neo-fascism does not come,” Fakhrul said at the BNP’s central office in Nayapaltan during an event marking party Chairperson Khaleda Zia’s birthday.

“...This struggle must continue. Otherwise, we will face a lot of danger,” said Fakhrul.

He said, “There might be a new conspiracy starting again to deprive people of their right to vote, and whether a new form of fascism is emerging... we need to remain vigilant about this.

“We have to keep in mind that this government is still a new government, an interim one... Its responsibility is to hold an election,” Fakhrul said.

“We have fought a long battle... If you

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Two friends enjoy a bike ride on a rainy afternoon on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

‘Yunus should be head of state’

Farhad Mazhar tells discussion; questions validity of constitution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Poet and writer Farhad Mazhar yesterday called for the removal of President Mohammed Shahabuddin and proposed that Prof Muhammad Yunus be declared the head of state.

He said the mandate for Yunus comes from the students and citizens who led the mass upsurge, which toppled Sheikh Hasina.

He was speaking at a views-exchange meeting at Dhaka Reporters Unity, organised by Rastrachinta.

He said instead of focusing on the constitution, there is a need for a “people’s framework” rooted in the spirit of the mass upsurge to lead the country.

He said colonial powers required constitutions to control their subjects.

Mazhar accused the ousted prime minister of allowing torture camps, such as Aynaghar, along with enforced disappearances and murders, to operate under the guise of constitutional legitimacy.

He underscored the need to protect the gains of the mass movement, suggesting that if Dr Yunus were to assume office [of president], he could align the country’s

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Dipu Moni, brother sued over attack on BNP leader's house

UNB, *Chandpur*

A case has been filed against former Social Welfare Minister Dipu Moni and her brother JR Wadud Tipu for attacking the residence of Sheikh Farid Ahmed Manik, president of the Chandpur district unit BNP.

Besides, 510 known and 1,000-1,200 unnamed people were made accused in the case. The case was filed on Thursday following a complaint lodged by A Razzak Hawlader, joint convener of Chandpur Municipal Jubo Dal, said OC Sheikh Mohsin Alam of Chandpur Sadar Model Police Station.

Manik, who was abroad for medical treatment during the attack, claimed the attack was carried out over political issues. The incident occurred on July 18 when armed individuals reportedly vandalised, looted, and set fire to Manik's house on JM SenGupta Road.

Rangpur jail: inmate dies in scuffle

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rangpur*

Tension remained high at Rangpur Central Jail after a prisoner died in a scuffle between two inmates yesterday.

The jail security fired bullets to bring the situation under control following several chases and counter-chases between prisoners and the jail security members.

The deceased is Baharul Badsha.

Mohammad Mobasshwer Hasan, deputy commissioner of Rangpur, said two prisoners --Badsha and Rafiqul Islam --had a scuffle over a fruit at the jail complex around 8:00am.

During the scuffle, Badsha fainted. The jail authorities took him to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead, he said.

As the news of his death spread among prisoners around noon, they started staging protests inside the jail. At one stage, the guards had to open fire to control the situation. Rangpur DC said strong security measures have been taken in and around the jail.

STUDENT MOVEMENT

5 coordinators resign at CU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

A coordinator and four assistant coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement at Chittagong University resigned from their posts yesterday.

"We decided to resign as central coordinators are ignoring our decisions," Al Masnun, a coordinator, said at a press conference at CU. The four others are Sumaya Shikder, Dhruba Barua, Saiduzzaman and Esha Dey.

Masnun alleged central coordinators Rasel Ahmed and Khan Talat Mahmud have allowed students to enter halls defying a combined decision.

Besides, both coordinators failed to give them specific answers about increasing the members of the coordinating committee in CU, Masnun said.

Rasel or Mahmud could not be reached for comments.

They shot my boy

FROM PAGE 5

While visiting the village home of Raihan, this correspondent saw the family in despair. Raihan's mother stood beside his grave and said, "What was my son's fault? He wanted a system without any discrimination but they shot my boy six times."

His father added, "It was our dream that he would someday join government service and support our poverty-stricken family. His untimely death has left our dreams shattered."

Inaugurated but

FROM PAGE 5

CDA, however, failed to complete it within the stipulated time, so the project's deadline was extended twice till June 2024, while its cost went up from Tk 3,250 crore to Tk 4,298.95 crore.

The 16.5-metre-wide expressway has a four-lane path with 14 ramps at nine points.

In August 2023, CDA decided to name it after former Chattogram city mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

Visiting Lalkhan Bazar point of the expressway recently, this correspondent observed that workers were installing electric cables to connect lamps.

Contacted, Mahfuzur Rahman, project director and executive engineer at CDA, said there is no work left except installation of lights on the expressway.

Asked why the expressway has not opened to traffic yet, Mahfuzur dodged the question and requested this correspondent to contact the CDA chairman to know the date for opening the expressway to the public.

Asked why it was inaugurated last year before all works were completed, the CDA official said, "They [high officials of public works ministry] forced us in this regard."

This correspondent went to the office of CDA chairman Mohammad Yunus for his comment on August 13 but found that he has not been coming to office since the former government's fall on August 5. He could not be reached over phone despite several attempts.

Safety, equal

FROM PAGE 3

the state's responsibility to ensure the protection and equal rights of all people in the country, regardless of religion or ethnicity.

It also called upon everyone to ensure the protection of life and property by abandoning all forms of division, enmity, oppression, violence, and destruction.

In a separate press release, it also condemned the murder of three youths in the capital's Jatrabari area.

Yunus should be head

FROM PAGE 3

regulations with international laws and repeal the existing ones that contradict these standards.

Badiul Alam Majumder, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, also questioned the validity of the current constitution.

He stressed the importance of thoroughly investigating and bringing to justice those responsible for wrongdoings over the past 16 years to end the culture of impunity in the country.

Activist Rakhal Raha suggested that the interim government should reflect the true aspirations of the students and people who brought about the mass upsurge.

He emphasised the need for a counter-narrative to challenge the narratives propagated by Awami League-affiliated cultural groups.

Poet and journalist Mahbub Morshed urged students to remain vigilant and active on the streets to ensure the movement's outcomes benefit those who initiated it.

He also advocated for student union elections in educational institutions, especially universities, and proposed the formation of a Sangram Parishad to coordinate leadership across universities.

Prof Moshrekha Aditi Huq of Chittagong University highlighted the psychological, economic, and political challenges that lie ahead, emphasising the need to ensure law and order.

She called for amending the flaws in the current constitution and repealing repressive laws, including the Cyber Security Act.

Other notable participants included Chittagong University's Kh Ar Raji, Dhaka University's Prof Mohammad Azam, and journalist Faruk Wasif.

No parent should bear this loss

FROM PAGE 5

was my lifeline. He was a devoted son. He worked hard to take care of me. How am I going to live without him?" Maya told this correspondent.

Mostak hailed from Gouripur village under Sylhet Sadar upazila.

Salman Ahmed, a student protester who took Mostak to the hospital, said after Mostak was shot near the Muslim Quarters area, he was taken to Habiganj Sadar Hospital in critical condition.

He succumbed to his injuries there.

Noor Bakhat, a contractor supervisor who had employed Mostak, said he worked with them for 40 days till August 2 in the Bhangapool area.

"My two other sons distanced themselves previously. Now my youngest son is also dead. I have lost everything," Maya Khatun lamented.

"No parent should bear this loss. My son was innocent. Why did they shoot him?" she asked.

Four more injured

FROM PAGE 3

Shilu Akter, wife of the deceased Ujjal Hossain, said they live in Muktarpur village of Damurhuda upazila in Chuadanga.

Ujjal, a mason by profession, returned home from work on August 5 and went to Mollah Bazar in Muktarpur in the evening for tea. Protesters set fire to a hardware store in the market that day. Ujjal, along with several others, was inside the store. A gas cylinder in the shop exploded, leaving Ujjal and others severely burned.

They were admitted to the burn unit at DMCH. Ujjal had suffered 66 percent burns on his body. He died around 6:30am yesterday.

Jamal Uddin, a neighbour of the deceased Md Asif, said Asif's home was in Miralipur village in Noakhali's Begumganj upazila. Asif had recently started working at a shop. He attended a rally in Sonaimuri on August 5, where he was shot.

SI Faruk Ahmed of Shahbagh Police Station, who prepared Asif's autopsy report, said a bullet-hit Asif was admitted to the Sadar Hospital. He was later transferred to DMCH on August 7, where he passed away at 10:30pm on Thursday.

Nasir Uddin Nasir, general secretary of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, said Asif was a JCD activist.

Alongside Asif, at least 32 JCD leaders and activists died so far following the clashes, he said.

Russell Hossain, the younger brother of the deceased Al Amin Hossain, said they hail from Afra village of Jashore's Chowgachha. Al Amin worked as a salesman for a pharmaceutical company in Amtali of Barguna, where he had also lived.

After work on August 5, he was sleeping on the second floor of his residence when protesters set fire to the ground floor. The fire spread to the second floor, and Al Amin, along with several coworkers, was engulfed in flames.

Locals rescued and took them to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College in Barishal. The next day, he was transferred to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in Dhaka, where he died at 5:30am yesterday.

Over 500 people -- mostly students -- were killed during the mass protests, which eventually forced Sheikh Hasina to resign and flee the country on August 5.

India needs to move

FROM PAGE 3

"India's other concerns are security and investment in Bangladesh. The interim government needs to reassure India regarding both of these aspects," the analyst said.

Dhaka and Delhi have settled some of the major bilateral disputes, including land and maritime boundaries, and improved connectivity. Also, there was a deal on rail transit through Bangladesh.

Regarding these, Kabir said the connectivity that is already there should continue, but the long-term issues like rail transit should be handled by a political government.

Before the fall, Hasina was looking for foreign investments from multiple countries, as Bangladesh was preparing to graduate from LDC by 2026.

Regarding the investments, Kabir said investors will keep watching what comes next.

But the concerns of human rights and media freedom will be important areas that need to be upheld, he added.

"The international community wants to know when the election will be held. The interim government needs to have a tentative timeframe for the election and communicate this when it engages with foreign governments," he said.

Ensuring justice for the violence during the students' protest will be another major task and engaging independent UN investigators would be a good idea for increasing credibility, Kabir added.

Out goes AL, in comes

FROM PAGE 3

Md Momin, who claims to be the president of the Jubo Dal Sattola unit, and Saddam Hossain, a member of the Banani thana Jubo Dal unit, were seen inside the AL office in the slum.

Saddam told this correspondent that he was born in the slum but was driven out by pro-AL men in 2014.

"After 10 years, I was able to return, but I no longer found my home. So, I am living here in this office," he said.

Momin said they had expelled the AL members from the slum. He claimed that Billal Chowdhury of the Sattola unit AL used to control some shanties in the area, but they have now informed tenants that they no longer need to pay rent.

In Kalyanpur Pora Bosti, a man named Ripon, brother of a ward-level BNP leader, allegedly seized control of 100 shanties on August 6 and 7.

They also vandalised the AL-affiliated office and shanties controlled by AL men.

Ripon didn't respond to calls.

Contacted, Darussalam Thana BNP convener Syed Abu Bakkar Siddique Saju said he would take immediate action if such incidents occurred.

Two days later, this correspondent found that the new group returned many of the shanties to the slum dwellers.

In Abul's slum, also known as "Abuler Bosti," in the capital's Bhashantek, a new group has vandalised several shanties and shops that were under the control of AL members.

A slum dweller Rubina Begum, who has been living in the Bhasantek slum for 20 years, said the political leaders use them as pawns.

"If we want to stay here, we have to abide by those who come into power," she said.

SCENES FROM FOOTPATHS

Meanwhile, Dhaka's footpaths have experienced mixed changes: in some areas, hawkers are no longer paying any fees, while in others, extortion continues.

Milon Patwary, general secretary of the Karwan Bazar Pick-up Van Samity, said that they recently handed over three linemen [agents of local politicians] to students when they came asking for fees.

He said previously, they paid Tk 1,200 per month for each vehicle, along with a one-time payment of Tk 10,000-15,000. However, this practice has ceased for a week.

Some traders mentioned that trucks are still paying Tk 200-300 each night for market entry.

A lineman in the CNG Stand area of Karwan Bazar said that they still collect Tk 6,000-7,000 from footpath vendors in the area.

Belal Hossain, a cloth seller in Farmgate, said they had to pay the local councilor's men, but this practice has stopped for a week.

"A few days ago, pro-BNP activists came, distributed leaflets, and instructed us not to pay any fees," he said.

Arif Chowdhury, president of the Jatiya Hawkers' Federation, said they have directed their units not to pay any money to anyone. If anyone attempts to collect fees, they have been instructed to hand them over to students or the army.

Need to be

FROM PAGE 3

think our fight is over, you are mistaken. We are in a very precarious situation now."

Fakhrul alleged that former prime minister Sheikh Hasina is conspiring against Bangladesh from India.

Fakhrul also expressed concern over the low turnout at the event, questioning, "Isn't today madam's [Khaleda Zia's] birthday event? How many have come? Didn't you have a programme yesterday? How many attended? Very few... very few came today as well. Why? Has victory been achieved?"

Had to beg for money to take

FROM PAGE 5

of July 19, after parking his rickshaw in his garage in Mohakhali, he was making his way home when a stray bullet struck him in the chest.

The bullet came amid a clash between the protesters and law enforcers.

Although bystanders rushed him to a nearby private hospital, there was no doctor available.

He was then taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries a few hours later, according to his elder brother, Hafiz Uddin.

The family didn't even have the financial means to bring his body home. They had to collect money from people to pay the ambulance driver.

Goni's body eventually returned to his village, Khariya Kazir Char in Sreebordi upazila, where he was laid to rest.

He left behind a grieving wife and three children, who are now facing an uncertain future without their sole provider.

Goni's life was a constant struggle to provide for his family. The meagre earnings from his job at the rice mill were not enough to feed his family of five.

Two years ago, he sent his second son, who was only 12 then, to work in a workshop, earning Tk 6,000 a month, as he could no longer afford to keep him in school.

The family was already burdened with a Tk 2 lakh loan, prompting Goni to move to Dhaka in hopes of earning enough to repay the debt.

"My father had dreams of a better life for us," said 16-year-old Md Shahidul Islam, Goni's eldest son. "But now, with him gone, I don't know what will happen to us."

Goni would send Tk 1,000-1,500 per week, which was the lifeline that kept the family afloat, barely covering their basic needs.

With no savings or property, the family has been relying on the villagers for help.

Shahidul fears that like his younger brother, he may be forced to drop out of school to support his family. Their three-year-old sister's education is now in jeopardy too.

"We don't know how we will continue or how we will repay the loan," Shahidul said.

Female

FROM PAGE 3

seen even an eight-year-old girl being raped, yet some still blame the victim's attire," said a student from BRAC University.

Anika Arefin, a student of Dhaka University, said, "We have protested multiple times demanding safety for women, but freedom for women remains elusive due to cultural impunity."

Another student added, "We often face harassment on the streets, but there is little we can do due to a lack of proper evidence."

"There have been cases where girls were harassed by influential figures, like teachers, but they did not receive justice," she noted.

In addition to this rally, a group of women gathered last night at the base of the Raju memorial sculpture on the Dhaka University campus, demanding justice for the victim and proper investigation into all rape cases since Bangladesh's independence.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 17

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-38	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-41	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

OBITUARY

It is with profound sorrow that we announce the passing of former ambassador Mr. M. Sirajul Islam, who left this worldly abode on the night of Sunday, August 11, 2024, while in the care of a US hospital (Innalillahi wa Inna Ilaihi Raziun). He is survived by his wife, Nasrin Fowzia, daughters Sabrina Islam Rahman and Naureen Islam, sons-in-laws Asif Rahman and Rayan Sharif, and granddaughters Alysha Rahman and Alisha Rahman. We offer our heartfelt prayers for his departed soul and extend our deepest sympathies to his grieving family. The janaza for the departed will be held on Sunday, August 18, after Asr, at Gulshan Azad Mosque. We kindly request all to join us in offering their prayers and paying their final respects.

In mourning
The family of the deceased

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা এফ- ব্লকে ১৫০০ বর্গফুটের
শতভাগ রেডি ফ্ল্যাট।
ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৮-১৭০০৭৭
০১৭০৮-১৭০০৭৬

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা এফ ব্লক রানিয়া এভিনিউতে ১৮৫০
বর্গফুটের দক্ষিণমুখী নির্মানাধীন ফ্ল্যাট।
ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৮-১৭০০৭৮
০১৭০৮-১৭০০৭৬

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ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

লালমাটিয়া বি-ব্লক-এ ১৬০০ বর্গফুটের
শতভাগ রেডি ব্র্যান্ড নিউ ফ্ল্যাট।
ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৮-১৭০০৭৬
০১৭০৮-১৭০০৭৭

বাংলাদেশ
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Improving Computer and Software Engineering Tertiary Education Project
Project Management Unit (PMU)
University Grants Commission of Bangladesh
Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

ICSETEP

Ref. No.: UGC/ICSETEP/Advertisement/2024/111 Date: 15-08-2024

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

Improving Computer and Software Engineering Tertiary Education Project (ICSETEP) under Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED), Ministry of Education, is to improve Higher Education in CSE/IT Programs of Bangladesh to meet the challenges of Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and to lead of the country in IT sectors. Asian Development Bank (ADB) is the Project Aid partner of ICSETEP providing major implementation cost as LOAN; and University Grants Commission of Bangladesh is the executing authority. ICSETEP is seeking specialists through Individual Consultant Selection (National) for its following consulting positions.

Sl.	Name of the Consulting Position	No. of Position
1	Procurement Specialist (PMU/S-2)	1
2	Higher Education Specialist (PMU/S-5)	1
3	Stipend Program Specialist (PMU/S-7)	1
4	Women IT Leadership Program Specialist (PMU/S-8)	1

The last date of application submission is 01 September 2024 through ADB CMS (https://cms.adb.org/). The detailed of this REOI as well as application procedure is available at ICSETEP website (www.icsetep.ugc.gov.bd).

Prof. Dr. Md. Aminul Haque Akhand
Project Director, ICSETEP

GD-194

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Bandarban Public Work Division.

Memo No-25.36.0300.330.10.18.140 Date: 15/08/2024

e-TENDER NOTICE (OTM)

e-Tender is Invited in the National e-GP system Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of following works given Below.

Tender ID No	Package No	Description of Works	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
1	2	3	4	5
1007939	04/egp/BBan/Dev/G-11/Re-Tender/24-25	Supply of Consumable Commodities for Bandarban Rowangchhari Upazila Model Mosque & Islamic Cultural Center Under the Project of "Establishing 560 Model Mosques and Islamic Cultural Centers (2nd Revised) in Each Zila and Upazila of Bangladesh"	26-Aug-2024 17:00	27-Aug-2024 13:00
1008058	05/egp/BBan/Dev/G-11/23-24	Supply of Consumable Commodities for Bandarban Naikhongchari Upazila Model Mosque & Islamic Cultural Center Under the Project of "Establishing 560 Model Mosques and Islamic Cultural Centers (2nd Revised) in Each Zila and Upazila of Bangladesh"	26-Aug-2024 17:00	27-Aug-2024 13:00

This is Online Tender, Where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal & no Offline/ Hard copies will be accepted.

15.08.24
(Johir Rayhan)
Executive Engineer
Bandarban Public Works Division
e-mail: ee_bandr@pwd.gov.bd

GD-195

RANGAMATI, KHAGRACHHARI

Students protest removal of graffiti

STAR REPORT

Students in Rangamati and Khagrachhari held rallies yesterday, protesting the removal of graffiti created in support of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

They argued that while discrimination has lessened nationwide, it has yet to reach the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

They demanded indigenous rights in Bangladesh.

"We want liberty from militarisation," said Kiko Dewan, a Rangamati Government College student.

Kiko also said conspiracies against indigenous people continue, as their land is being taken in the name of tourism.

He also called for creating voter lists that include only residents of the region.

Hundreds of students from various upazilas participated in the protests.

They criticised law enforcement authorities for obstructing their efforts to repaint the graffiti, which had previously been removed.

Meanwhile, people from the indigenous community brought out a procession in the Dhaka University area yesterday, demanding protection of their land rights and constitutional recognition.

They also sought justice for the killings of indigenous persons.

Protesting the removal of graffiti created in support of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, students in Rangamati hold a rally yesterday. Similar rally was held in Khagrachhari. Students also criticised the law enforcement authorities for obstructing their efforts to repaint the graffiti. PHOTO: STAR

Safety, equal rights for all

Demands Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The previous government's inaction regarding past incidents of violence against minority communities has encouraged communal extremist groups to continue their attacks and oppression on minorities, said the Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation.

The foundation also demanded the protection and equal rights be ensured for all, regardless of religion or ethnicity. In a press statement, they also condemned the recent violence and oppression against minorities across the country.

The statement said during the anti-discrimination student movement, students and the public spoke for the establishment of a non-communal, democratic state and society by eliminating discrimination.

However, after Sheikh Hasina's resignation, a certain group of people expressed their accumulated anger by attacking, vandalising, and setting fire to government and private establishments, as well as the homes and properties of many leaders of the then ruling party, including ministers and MPs.

Additionally, there were at least 205 incidents of attacks on the homes and religious sites of Hindu minorities in 52 districts, posing a threat to the security of minorities.

The Foundation expressed condemnation and outrage against these incidents, according to the statement.

They said during any political transition, religious and ethnic minorities are often the victims of attacks. Minorities flee their homes in the face of such violence, and some even leave the country.

Although it did not happen this time, many are attempting to label the recent attacks on minorities as politically motivated, which is seen as an effort to sidestep the real situation and create excuses, they said.

The statement said the Foundation believes it is

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Inaugurated but inaccessible

Ctg elevated expressway still not open after 8 months

SIFAYET ULLAH, *Ctg*

The first elevated expressway in Chattogram city has yet to open to traffic, even though over eight months have passed since its inauguration in November last year.

The delay has been a disappointment to commuters in the port city, as they keep waiting for a respite from unbearable traffic congestion.

When the expressway was inaugurated, city dwellers hoped that their suffering would finally come to an end. However, the reality has been a far cry.

"We are still suffering from traffic jams and don't know how much longer this will go on," said Abdul Khalek, a private job holder who commutes regularly from the city's GEC intersection to Customs area.

The Chattogram Development Authority constructed the 16-kilometre-long expressway, from Lalkhan Bazar to Patenga, at a cost of Tk 4,298.95 crore, to smooth communication and boost the economy.

Even though the construction work was incomplete, former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the expressway last year, a decision that drew flak from city planners, who termed it a bid to show off the development achieved by the then-ruling party ahead of the election.

Delwar Hossain Mazumdar, executive member of Forum for Planned Chattogram, earlier said the CDA failed to fulfil people's expectations.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council approved the government-funded Chattogram Elevated Expressway project in July 2017, scheduled to be completed by June 2020.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

50 more hospitalised with dengue

UNB, *Dhaka*

Fifty people were hospitalised with dengue fever in 24 hours till yesterday morning.

Of the new patients, 14 were hospitalised in Dhaka, said DGHS. Some 901 patients are receiving treatment in different hospitals across the country.

A total of 8,980 dengue cases and 74 deaths have been reported since January 1, 2024.

Last year, a total of 1,705 people lost their lives due to dengue, making it the deadliest year on record.

More than just NUMBERS

A 17-year-old student died with bullet wounds in Dhaka. A 38-year-old rickshaw puller fatally shot in Dhaka. A 24-year-old service holder shot dead in Habiganj. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

'They shot my boy six times'

Says mother of Raihan, 17, who died of bullet wounds

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

"My son did nothing wrong; why was he shot dead? I demand justice for my son's death," said Rehena, mother of Raihan, 17, who died after being shot in Dhaka's Badda on August 5.

Raihan had been visiting his cousin's house in Badda since early July, where he got involved in the quota-reform protests and opted not to return home in Chaulabunia village in Patuakhali Sadar upazila until the students' demands were met.

A candidate for Dakhil examination in 2025 from a madrasa in Patuakhali, Raihan hailed from a poor family. His father Kamal Akon works as a day labourer, while his mother Rehena is a homemaker. His younger sister Jannati is only five years old.

On the morning of August 5, Raihan joined a protest in the Badda area when he was hit by six bullets in his chest and legs during a firing at the student protesters.

He was taken to DMCH, where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'Had to beg for money to take his body home'

Says son of Goni Miah, a rickshaw-puller who was shot dead

NILIMA JAHAN

Six months ago, 38-year-old Goni Miah left his home in Sreebordi, Sherpur, with hopes of changing his family's fortune.

A former rice mill worker, Goni believed that pulling a rickshaw in Dhaka would provide the financial stability his family desperately needed.

However, instead of returning with the promise of a better future, Goni's lifeless body returned home in a coffin, plunging his family into deeper despair.

Goni lived in the Nakhalpara area of Tejgaon. On the evening

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

No parent should bear this loss

Says mother of Mostak, 24, who was fatally shot

MINTU DESHWARA, *Moulvibazar*

Maya Khatun, 65, was relieved when her youngest son, Md Mostak Mia, 24, got a job as a lineman under a contractor of Bangladesh Power Development Board in Habiganj.

After his two elder brothers started living separately following their marriages, Mostak had become her only hope. However, everything changed on August 2 when Mostak, who went outside to buy shoes in the afternoon, got hit by a bullet amid a clash between protesters and law enforcers in Habiganj town.

"My youngest son Mostak

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস অফুরন্ত নয়,
এর অপচয় রোধ করুন।

গ্যাসের অবৈধ সংযোগ গ্রহণ ও
ব্যবহার শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ।

Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution PLC
Titas Gas Bhaban, 105 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue,
Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215

Invitation for Tenders (OTM-NCT)

1	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division (EMRD)
2	Agency	:	Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla)
3	Procuring Entity Name	:	Titas Gas Transmission & Distribution Public Limited Company (TGTDPLC)
4	Procuring Entity District	:	Dhaka
5	Invitation for Tenders	:	Procurement of Information Technology Products and Services
6	Invitation Ref. No.	:	TGTDPLC/SMEEIP-ADB/GD-2(SI-02)/2024
7	Date	:	15/08/2024
KEY INFORMATION			
8	Procurement Method	:	Single-Stage Two-Envelope (Open Tendering Method-NCT)
FUNDING INFORMATION			
9	Budget & Source of Fund	:	Development & Asian Development Bank (ADB) [Loan No. 4386-BAN]
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
10	Project Name	:	Smart Metering Energy Efficiency Improvement Project [Installation of Prepaid Gas Meter for TGTDCL]
11	Tender Package No.	:	GD-2(SI-02)
12	Tender Package Name	:	Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Unified Web System and Automated Grievance Redress Center (Hardware & Software)
13	Tender Publication Date	:	15.08.2024
14	Tender Last Selling Date	:	18.09.2024 14:00 (GMT+6) local time
15	Tender Submission Date & Time	:	19.09.2024 14:00 (GMT+6) local time
16	Tender Opening Date & Time	:	19.09.2024 14:30 (GMT+6) local time
17	Name & Address of the Offices:		
	• Selling Tender Document	:	Office of Project Director, Smart Metering Energy Efficiency Improvement Project [Installation of Prepaid Gas Meter for TGTDCL], Titas Gas Bhaban (9th Floor), 105 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215
	• Receiving Tender Document	:	Same As
	• Opening Tender Document	:	Same As
18	Pre-Tender Meeting Place, Date & Time	:	Office of Project Director, Smart Metering Energy Efficiency Improvement Project [Installation of Prepaid Gas Meter for TGTDCL], Titas Gas Bhaban (9th Floor), 105 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215 01/09/2024 & 11:00 AM
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
19	Eligibility of Tenderer	:	1. Successful completion of minimum three (3) contracts as main supplier within the last ten (10) years of which at least one (1) contract valued minimum of BDT37.0 (Thirty-Seven) Crore and two (2) other contracts value of no less than BDT10.0 (Ten) Crore with feature, functions, nature, and complexity as described in Section 6 (Schedule of Requirements) 2. Minimum average of best 3 years over the last five (5) annual turnover of BDT60.0 (Sixty) Crore calculated as total payments received by the Bidder. 3. Details in the Tender Documents
20	Brief Description of Goods	:	Supply of Hardware and Accessories for Unified Web System and Automated Grievance Redress Center. Details in Tender Documents
21	Brief Description of Services	:	Installation and Commissioning of Unified Web System and Automated Grievance Redress Center (Software). Details in Tender Documents
22	Price of the Tender Document	:	BDT10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Bangladeshi Taka)

Lot No.	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount	Completion Time
1	Single	Southern part of Titas Franchise Area (Dhaka, Narayangonj and so on)	BDT90.00 (Ninety) Lac in favor of TGTDPLC	38 (Thirty-Eight) months

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
23	Name of Official Inviting Tender	:	Engr. Muhammad Abul Kawser
24	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	:	Project Director,Smart Metering Energy Efficiency Improvement Project [Installation of Prepaid Gas Meter for TGTDCL]
25	Address of Official Inviting Tender	:	Planning Department, Titas Gas Bhaban (10thFloor),105 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215
26	Contact Details of Official Inviting Tender	:	Cell No.: +8801712816739, E-mail: pd.ipgm.adb@gmail.com
27	**The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject Tender as well as whole procedure.**		

Titas/PR-37/2024-25

15.08.2024
(Engr. Muhammad Abul Kawser)
Project Director

GD-193

KURSK REGION

Russian forces destroy Ukraine unit

Repel 12 missiles targeting Crimea bridge

AGENCIES

Russian forces destroyed a Ukrainian reconnaissance and sabotage unit that was armed with weapons from Nato countries in Russia's western Kursk region, the RIA state-run media agency reported yesterday, citing unidentified security sources.

"Samples of small arms manufactured by the United States and Sweden have been seized at the liquidation site of a Ukrainian sabotage group near the village of Kremyanoe in the Kursk region," RIA cited a Russian security official as saying.

Kursk attack will force Russia to start "fair" peace talks, says Zelensky aide

Russian troops seized a Swedish-made Automatic Carbine 5 assault rifle as well as a US-made M4 carbine assault rifle and M2 Browning machine gun, RIA cited the official as saying.

Russia has been battling Ukrainian forces in Kursk since August 6, when Kyiv launched a lightning incursion in the largest attack on sovereign Russian territory since World War Two, reports Reuters.

A Ukrainian presidential adviser said yesterday that Kyiv's cross-border incursion into Russia's Kursk region was required to convince Moscow to start "fair" peace talks.

Meanwhile, Russia said yesterday that it had repelled a night-time attack using 12 US-made missiles on the landmark Crimea bridge built on the orders of President Vladimir Putin after Moscow annexed the peninsula.

Smoke rises above the burning shopping mall Galaktika hit by shelling, which local Russian-installed authorities called a Ukrainian military strike, in Donetsk, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

ISRAEL'S MONTHS-LONG OFFENSIVE

Gaza's undertakers stack 'graves on top of graves'

AFP, *Deir el-Balah*

Undertakers are working like bricklayers in a Gaza cemetery, piling cinder blocks into tight rectangles, side by side, for freshly dug graves.

More than 10 months into the Gaza offensive, so many bodies are arriving at the cemetery in Deir el-Balah that the men, working in the hot sun, hardly have space to bury them.

"The cemetery is so full that we now dig graves on top of other graves, we've piled the dead in levels," says Saadi Hassan Barakeh, leading his team of gravediggers.

Barakeh, 63, has been burying the dead for 28 years. In "all the wars in Gaza", he says he has "never seen this". Previously, Barakeh also oversaw burials at the nearby Ansar cemetery, which covers 3.5 hectares.

But now "the Ansar cemetery is completely full. There were too many dead", he says, his clothes smeared in dirt from digging graves.

He now handles just the Al-Soueid cemetery, with its 5.5 hectares of graves. Yet even with one cemetery instead of two, he works "every day, from six in the morning to six in the evening".

"Before the offensive, we had one or two funerals per week, maximum five," he says, wearing a white prayer cap that matches his long beard.

"Now, there are weeks when I bury 200 to 300 people. It's unbelievable."

Gaza's death toll of just over 40,000 in more than 10 months of offensive, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry, is straining its people as well as its cemeteries.

Barakeh bears daily witness to the tragedies. Hoe in hand, he gives encouragement to his 12 workers as they prepare and close dozens of graves every day.

At night, however, some images are hard to forget. "I can't sleep after seeing so many mangled children's bodies and dead women," he said, adding: "I buried 47 women from one family."

"I buried a lot of women and children, and only two or three guys from Hamas," says Barakeh.

If Israelis "have a problem with (Yahya) Sinwar, why do they harm children?" he adds, referring to the alleged October 7 attacks mastermind who is now Hamas's overall leader. "Let them kill Sinwar and all the others, but why the women and children?"

Mounds of freshly dug soil are reminders of recent burials. Graves with white headstones fill nearly all the available space, while men dig new holes in the few vacant areas.

The team forms a human chain to carry the cinder blocks, whose price has soared since Gaza's factories closed due to a lack of fuel and raw materials.

"One shekel ($0.27) before the war, 10 or 12 today," he lamented.

Besides gravediggers and the workers carrying cinder blocks, hardly anyone comes to funerals anymore, Barakeh says.

High above his head, the constant hum of an Israeli surveillance drone serves as a reminder of the aerial threat creating a steady stream of bodies.

COLLEAGUE'S MURDER

Indian doctors step up protests

Call for work stoppage

AFP, *Kolkata*

Indian doctors stepped up nationwide protests and strikes yesterday after the rape and murder of a colleague, a brutal killing that has focused outrage on the chronic issue of violence against women.

The discovery of the 31-year-old's bloodied body on August 9 at a state-run hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata sparked nationwide protests.

In Kolkata, hundreds of doctors and other healthcare workers gathered demanding action, with protests also held yesterday in the capital New Delhi, and Nangpur in Maharashtra state.

"We want justice", doctors chanted in Kolkata, waving handwritten signs that read: "No safety, no service!" The Indian Medical Association has called for a "nationwide withdrawal of services" for 24 hours starting today, with suspension of all medical procedures at private hospitals.

India's Kashmir to vote in polls from Sept 18

REUTERS, *New Delhi*

India will hold provincial elections in the Himalayan territory of Jammu and Kashmir from September 18, the Election Commission said yesterday, the first regional polls there in a decade and five years after New Delhi scrapped the region's special autonomy.

India's only Muslim-majority region, Jammu and Kashmir has been at the heart of more than 75 years of animosity with neighbouring Pakistan since the birth of the two nations in 1947 at independence from colonial rule by Britain.

The larger Kashmir region is divided between India, Pakistan and China. The part ruled by India enjoyed a special status that was revoked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government in 2019 and the state was split into two federally-administered territories. The decision to hold fresh elections follows a December order by India's Supreme Court that rejected petitions challenging the revocation of Kashmir's special status and set a deadline of September 30 for holding provincial polls.

Nearly 9 million people are registered to vote for the 90-member legislative assembly, the election panel said. Voting will be staggered over three stages between September 18 and October 1.

Cementing

FROM PAGE 12

who chairs a committee tasked with liaising between the government and social groups such as teachers and activists, said, "Right now we have no interest in forming a political party. Our focus for the time being is solidifying the mass uprising and assisting the government to sustain and consolidate."

Earlier in the afternoon, Reuters, quoting Mahfuj, reported that the student leaders were discussing the formation of a political party to end the duopoly of Hasina's Awami League or the Bangladesh Nationalist Party of her rival Khaleda Zia.

This newspaper also talked to Nasir Abdullah, another member of the liaison committee, who said, "We will reach out to people from all walks of life. If the people of Bangladesh think that something new is required, then it will happen."

He also said there would be propositions from their end to the people, adding, "If we want to end the chaos that had been prevailing post-independence, we have to start afresh and dream of a new Bangladesh."

Hasnat Abdullah, another key coordinator of the platform, told this newspaper that they do not have any plans to form a political party as of now.

"The time for discussing the formation of our own political party has not yet come. We are now busy with those who are now in the hospitals after being injured in the protests," Hasnat told The Daily Star.

Hasina, Quader

FROM PAGE 12

that AL men killed his brother after getting orders from Hasina and Quader.

As of yesterday, Hasina was facing a total of eight cases, including five for murder, one for abduction, and two filed with the International Crimes Tribunal for crimes against humanity and genocide.

Pakistan

FROM PAGE 12

Sweden's Public Health Agency told AFP on Thursday that it had registered a case of the Clade 1b subclade -- the same new strain that has surged in the DRC since September 2023, and the first such infection outside the African continent, according to the agency.

The patient was infected during a visit to "the part of Africa where there is a major outbreak of mpox Clade 1", epidemiologist Magnus Gisslen said in a statement from the agency.

The mpox strain that caused the case in Pakistan was not immediately known yesterday, the Ministry of Health said in a statement. "The affected person has come from a Gulf country," the statement said.

It's violation of human rights: Sarjis

FROM PAGE 12

Sarjis termed the incidents in different parts of Dhaka, including Dhanmondi 32, as "unexpected" and said these do not go with the "spirit of the mass uprising".

"In a viral video, we saw that a person of my father's age was made to perform squats while holding his ears; a person of my father's age was stripped; the phones of many people were checked; a woman of my mother's age was beaten up; and we witnessed various incidents of attacks on our journalist brothers and sisters," Sarjis said.

"Our uprising was against corruption and oppression. We want a Bangladesh where everyone will be able to speak, express their opinion, and work according to whatever ideology they believe in.

"We saw several such incidents where the students were involved. We do not know which ideology they hold, nor can we define them," Sarjis said.

The leaders of the platform sat on Thursday night and took two decisions, according to Sarjis.

The first decision was to expel any coordinator or co-coordinator from their team if they were found to be involved in Thursday's incidents.

Their second decision was to take whatever step was necessary as a "pressure group" to ensure legal steps against those involved in the incidents. Justice will be ensured through the two coordinators in the interim government.

"Those, who carried out incidents like stripping people or assaulting them, violated human rights. These incidents are not legitimate by any means," Sarjis said.

Speaking of the history of Bangladesh, Sarjis said the contribution of some people is undeniable and each of them should be remembered for their contribution.

"No one can be belittled deliberately for political purposes. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman should be given the respect he deserves; Similarly, Ziaur Rahman should be given the respect he deserves," he said.

PRESSURE GROUP, NOT AUTHORITY

Sarjis made it clear to the students that the Movement, which led the uprising that replaced the government of Bangabandhu's daughter Sheikh Hasina with an interim administration headed by Professor Muhammad Yunus, was "not an authority, but a pressure group".

"Our clear message is that where the police, traffic police and other law-enforcing agencies come to, the students should hand over their responsibility and leave. They must go back to their educational institutions and classes," he said.

"The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement does not promote anything like searching hostels and hotels or forcing a professor to step down. We are not an authority. We are a pressure group. We can demand the removal of corrupt or power-abusing people, but we cannot force them to do it [resign]."

Sarjis alleged a large group of people have become fake coordinators or co-coordinators of the movement.

"We have even received information that a committee [of the movement] was formed in Uttara Sector 12. They went to a mosque and asked its governing body to resign.

"But we only gave committees in universities and other educational institutions. These people [fake coordinators] are doing things to fulfil personal and political objectives. We will decide on this platform after the interim government becomes stable."

Sacked army officer Ziaul arrested

FROM PAGE 12

investment adviser to former premier Sheikh Hasina, and ex-law minister Anisul Huq were also placed on a 10-day remand in the same case on Wednesday, a day after they were arrested in Dhaka's Sadarghat area.

Ziaul, former director general of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC), an intelligence agency under the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, was arrested based on secret information, according to a Whatsapp message from the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Later in another message, DMP said Ziaul was handed over to police on Thursday night after he went to the army for shelter. He was later arrested.

NTMC is responsible for monitoring, collecting, and recording information and communication data as well as for the interception of electronic communication such as phone calls, emails, and social media accounts.

Ziaul was detained in a dramatic circumstance around midnight on August 7 after the plane on which he was fleeing was brought back from the Dhaka airport runway to the boarding bridge, sources said earlier.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Arfatul Rakib placed him on remand after investigation officer Sajib Mia, sub-inspector of New Market Police Station, produced him before the court with a 10-day remand appeal in the Shahjahan murder case, said a sub-inspector working in the court.

Ziaul told the court that since his detention on August 7, he was kept at Aynaghor (a secret detention facility).

He also claimed that Aynaghar was not his creation, and no one ever filed any complaint, case or even a general diary against him. Claiming his innocence, Ziaul said that he has cardiovascular issues and he did not go to the New Market area during the incident on July 16.

The defence lawyer, also a younger sister of Ziaul, sought bail along with cancellation of the remand appeal.

Ahead of his court appearance, the army, BGB, and additional police personnel were deployed at the court premises.

In Aynaghor, numerous individuals were reportedly held captive and subjected to torture for years during Hasina's administration.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ZIAUL

Maj (sacked) Arif Hossain, one of the convicts in the Narayanganj seven-murder case, confessed before a Narayanganj court that two days after the murder, Col Ziaul Ahsan, then Rab additional director general (operations), gave former Rab-11 commanding officer Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad an assignment to kill Nur Hossain.

Nur Hossain is the main accused in the case, and he allegedly paid Rab members Tk 6 crore to kill Narayanganj city councillor Nazrul Islam, one of the seven victims.

Col Zia, then second-in-command of the force, called now sacked Lt Col Tareque and Maj Arif to his Rab headquarters office and gave the order, according to the charge sheet of the 2014 murder case that contains the statement.

Ziaul earlier, however, denied that he gave any such orders.

He joined the Bangladesh Army as a commissioned officer in 1991 and is alleged to have been involved in enforced disappearances and assassinations during his time in the Rab.

Despite various allegations, the Awami League government promoted Ziaul to the rank of Major General.

Law enforcers used

FROM PAGE 1

further intensifying the violence. In some cases, the security forces were reported to have employed vehicles and helicopters that bore the logo of the UN."

The number of reported killings in revenge attacks since that time still remains to be determined. Those killed include protesters, bystanders, journalists covering the events and a number of members of the security force, the OHCHR said.

"Thousands of protesters and bystanders have been injured, with hospitals overwhelmed by the influx of patients."

The majority of deaths and injuries have been attributed to the security forces and the student wing affiliated with the Awami League, it says.

"These casualties resulted from the use of live ammunition and other force against protesters who while acting violently reportedly were not armed, or only lightly armed, as well as from instances of security forces unlawfully using lethal force against protesters posing no apparent threat, unarmed protesters, and bystanders, including at least 4 journalists and at least 32 children, with many more injured and detained -- a number of whom were seemingly deliberately targeted.

"From July 12 to August 3, at least 450,000 unknown persons and 2000 identified persons were reportedly registered for offences in at least 286 criminal cases in Dhaka alone, including a combination of named and unnamed individuals -- many members of the opposition reportedly among them."

Suing hundreds of individuals as "unnamed" increases the risk of widespread arbitrary arrest and detention, it observes.

"Block raids were conducted in various locations of Dhaka city and near other university and college campuses. During these operations, large numbers of law enforcement personnel surrounded the area in question, prevented anyone from leaving, and conducted house searches based on intelligence information and, in several cases, without presenting judicial search warrants. Law enforcement agencies claimed that they were arresting individuals involved in violence and property destruction, based on analysis of their social media activity.

"Reports indicate that a number of those arrested were subjected to ill-treatment and even torture while in police custody."

The authorities also enforced widespread restrictions on communication, including internet, between July 18 and July 23 and again on August 4 and 5, severely affecting the rights to freedom of expression, and to peaceful assembly, and other fundamental rights.

The government had claimed the internet shutdown was due to the destruction of key infrastructure by protesters, but information the OHCHR received indicates the government did it deliberately.

Also, the prolonged countrywide curfew and restrictions on communications disproportionally restricted freedom of movement.

The UN body suggested that the political actors prioritise de-escalation and prevention of any further loss of life or injury and refrain from reprisals. They also need to uphold the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, protect minority communities, advocate for accountability and prevent further rights violations.

The UN also suggested that the transition process is transparent, accountable, inclusive and open to the meaningful participation of all Bangladeshis.

The interim government should take steps to restore democratic order and rule of law through an inclusive and participatory process guided by human rights, develop a systematic approach to vetting for any appointments to and dismissals from the judiciary, security sector and other institutions.

The recommendation to the interim government mentions, "Provide law enforcement agencies with clear instructions limiting the use of force, and especially firearms, in line with international human rights standards, ceasing any use of pellet guns, and, when use of force is absolutely necessary and proportionate, prioritising instead restrained use of less-lethal weapons; emphasise a de-escalation approach to all public order management."

"Refrain from deploying Border Guards and Rapid Action Battalions to any protest or other public order management tasks and initiate a comprehensive review of these forces, their functions, command, control and accountability mechanisms and operational doctrines."

It recommended providing reparation and effective remedies to victims and protecting all related evidence, including CCTV footage and other recordings.

It suggests establishing broader truth and accountability measures beyond investigation of the most recent events, while facilitating open dialogue to address social, economic, and political grievances.

The UN also recommends allowing media to operate freely and safely.

It urges the international community to support Bangladesh to ensure a transition in which human rights are fundamental and to support fact-finding and accountability efforts.

The full UN report can be found on OHCHR website.

My movement is rooted in oneness: NAWSHABA

A 2018 nightmare– that often haunts Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed– was to some extent brought to ease on August 5. On the path to creating a discrimination-free nation, Nawshaba believes that the state is now prepared to hear the uncensored story of her journey that completely reformed her into a new person.

SHARMIN JOYA

On August 4, 2018, Nawshaba was detained by RAB from a shooting spot in Uttara. Under Section 57 of the ICT Act, she was charged with spreading rumours on social media about the student protest for the demand for road safety. It is to be noted that she was not the only one who was charged under that act. Photographer Shahidul Alam, lawyer Imtiaz Mahmood, journalist Kajol, and many other activists were charged under this act for speaking against the former AL-led government.

After being sent to the lockup, Nawshaba was denied bail and granted several days of remands as well. She was released from Kashimpur Central Jail on August 21, 2018, considering her health condition. Her case is still active.

We talk to this forgotten hero, arguably one of the first celebrities to speak out against the former regime.

What instigated you to speak out on this uprising, having been persecuted in 2018?

The first time I discovered how deeply students were hurt by being called 'Razakars' (war criminals), it struck me to the core. It brought back the pain I felt in 2018 when I was constantly branded a traitor, a 'Razakar'.

It took me nearly a year to recover from the trauma and the relentless self-doubt, haunted by the belief that I had made a costly mistake. However, in that one reaction from the students, I found validation—confirmation that I wasn't wrong, just as my father had reassured me until his passing.

My 11-year-old daughter, who is aware of the situation, was looking up to me. How could I not be alert to what was happening? Though I wasn't in the front row during the protests, I still showed up most days, quietly blending into the back, hiding my identity.

Could you please open up about what you went through since August 4, 2018?

I was actively participating in the peaceful protests, because I believed the students' demands were justified. Even the day before, I joined them on the streets. On August 4, while I was at the shooting location, a few protesters called me with alarming news—students were being brutally attacked. They sent me photos and video clips of the attacks and repeatedly sought my help. In a state of panic, I reached out to a police officer several times to confirm; but when I couldn't get any clear answer, my anxiety grew, and I thought of asking for help.

I never imagined that my message would mark me as a traitor. I had no idea it would brand me as a war criminal.

My Facebook account was hacked within 13 minutes following the live broadcast and I had no clue what was going on with my account. I was flooded with calls—hundreds, mostly threats. Many urged me to delete the video. My father was the sole voice of support, calling to say, 'I'm proud of you'. He also foresaw the trouble I might face soon, warning, 'You will be in danger,' and asked if I wanted to leave the shooting location. I told him I couldn't abandon my work until it was done. He respected my decision and waited until I finished. By then, a group of officers in plainclothes arrived and forcibly took me away.

Recently, in an interview, you mentioned being taken to Aynaghor (The Mirror House), where the disappeared were kept during the former government's regime.

I have never mentioned this to any media! When I was taken from the shooting location, they blindfolded me, and throughout the entire ordeal, I was kept in the dark about my surroundings. I also want to set the record straight: since that interview, many news outlets have reported on my situation without reaching out to me first. This is completely unethical, and the information they've shared is inaccurate. I have not disclosed any personal details on record yet.

After you were released on bail, your life became even more challenging. Could you elaborate on that?

My father was my steadfast support, and with his passing, my daughter has taken on that role. When I returned, my parents faced the harsh criticism that I had tarnished our family's reputation. They heard that, despite my father's background as an army officer, I had failed entirely and brought shame upon us.

During that period, I was so traumatised that I couldn't understand how I could be accused of such things. I've always strived to serve my country to the best of my ability. My father's stories about 1952, 1969, 1971, and Bangabandhu inspired me deeply throughout my life.

I was ousted from the roles I had been promised and blacklisted by many. It's a harsh reality that only a few, including some journalists, stood by me during that crisis. Their reports were pivotal in helping me secure bail quickly—at least, that's how I see it. I don't need to attend the court hearings now as my lawyer handles it.

Now that many stories are coming to light and you're willing to open up, how do you feel?

Given the many lives lost in the recent mass uprising, let us honour their sacrifices by steadfastly pursuing the vision of building a new and better country.

At the same time, seeing people vandalise Bangabandhu's statue, set fire to his house, and destroy monuments broke my heart. My movement is rooted in oneness, love, and peace. The profound transformation I've undergone over the past six years drives me to pursue peace in the face of any form of anarchy. While many may mock me, my vision remains resolute and undeterred.

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

> **I was ousted from the roles I had been promised and blacklisted by many. It's a harsh reality that only a few, including some journalists, stood by me during that crisis. Their reports were pivotal in helping me secure bail quickly—at least, that's how I see it.**

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
Emily in Paris

Prime Video
Fear the Walking Dead

FEAR THE WALKING DEAD

Disney plus
Are You Sure?!

Are You Sure?!

HBO Max
Rick and Morty: The Anime

Apple TV+
Bad Monkey

1-MINUTE REVIEW

From barbers to trash cans: 'Maharaja's' fresh take on classic themes

The Tamil action thriller ***Maharaja***, featuring Vijay Sethupathi, Anurag Kashyap, Mamta Mohandas, and Sachana Namidass, demonstrates director Nithilan Swaminathan's filmmaking skills and how a skilled writer can turn an old concept into a captivating film.

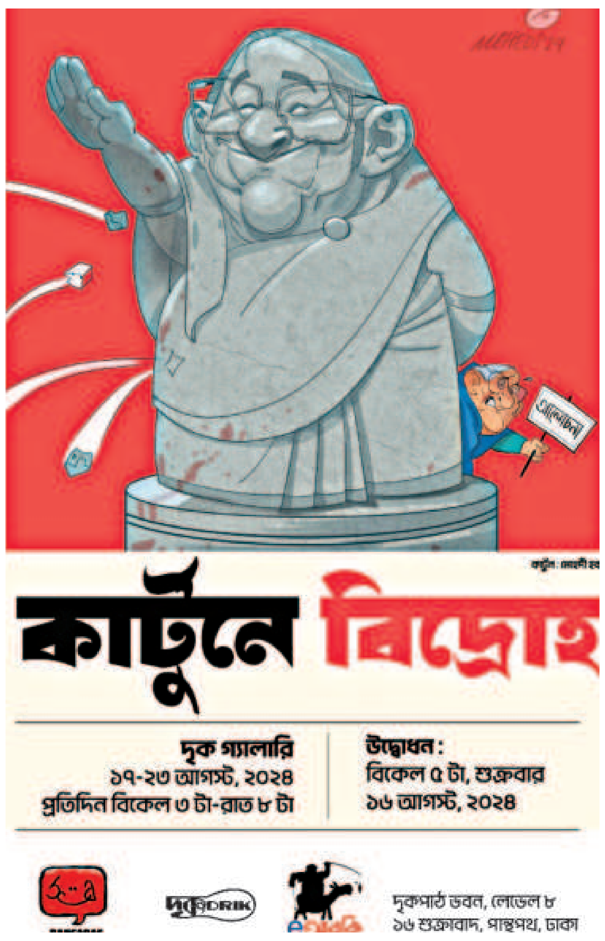
The film begins with a barber seeking revenge after his home is robbed. He tells the police that his "Lakshmi" was stolen, leaving them confused about whether it's a person or an object, and his quest to recover it begins.

Nithilan revisits his signature themes and filmmaking style in his second film, using life's unpredictability to link plot elements—like a falling fan or a sudden crash. By juxtaposing timelines and central motifs, he engages the audience's imagination.

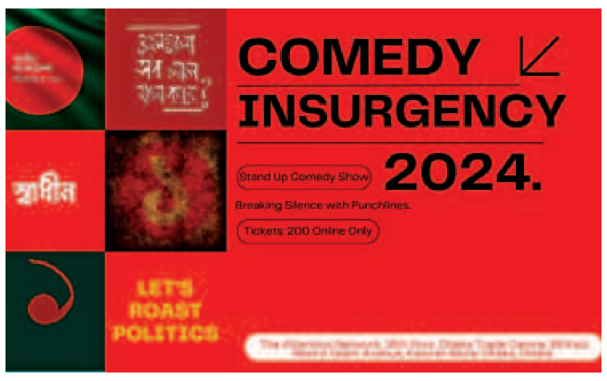
For example, while a monkey-faced bag was key in his first film, ***Maharaja*** features a trash can that prompts viewers to question if something loses its value simply because it's deemed useless.

What truly elevates the film is Vijay Sethupathi's performance. In his 50th role, the actor immerses himself effortlessly into this intriguing character, delivering several memorable scenes that stand out and are sure to be appreciated.

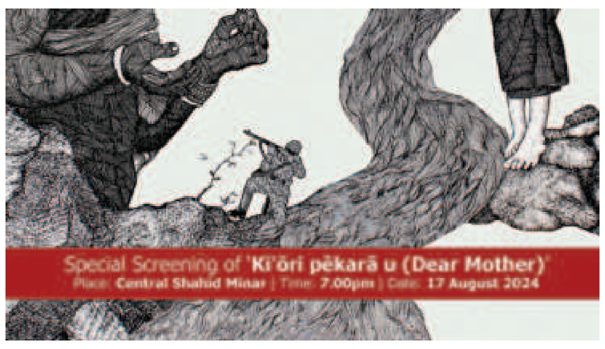
OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA



Resistance through Cartoons
August 17-23 | 3pm-8pm
DrikPath Bhobon



Comedy Insurgency
August 24 | 6pm-8pm
The Attention Network, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue


Special Screening of 'Ki'ori pekara u (Dear Mother)'
Place: Central Shahid Minar | Time: 7.00pm | Date: 17 August 2024

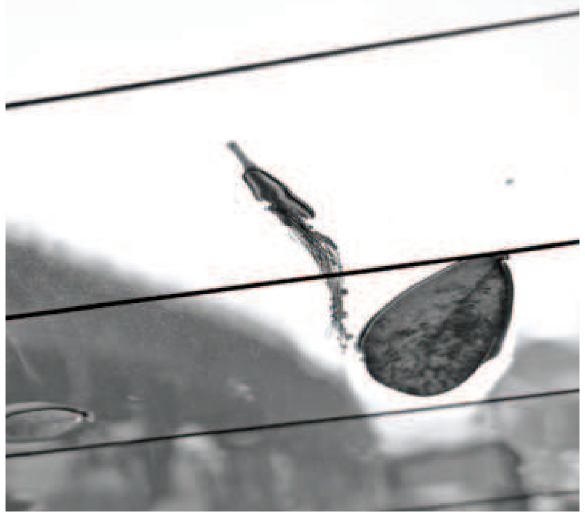
Ki'ōri pēkarā u (Dear Mother)
August 17 | 7pm
Central Shaheed Minar

WHAT'S PLAYING
ADHAR

Adhar, the debut single from Azwaad Rajarshi's EP ***Bhul Ronger Phul***, is a haunting exploration of darkness and light, both lyrically and visually.

Produced by Sinjan Saadat of the Mothership Records, the track is a melancholic, soothing blend of indie sensibilities and raw emotion. The lyrics, rich with imagery, paint a vivid picture of despair and longing, while the accompanying video, shot on a rainy day in Dhaka, complements the song's moody atmosphere.

Azwaad's voice, paired with the minimalistic production, creates an intimate experience that resonates with listeners, making ***Adhar*** a strong and memorable introduction to his craft.



The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Freedom of the press must be protected

Recent events show past excesses may recur if we are not careful

It is a testament to our unique times that journalists are having to fight against the same abuse and harassment that they did when an authoritarian government was in power. But it does hurt more now because of the expectations created by the student-led mass uprising that overthrew the Awami League government. We understand that the interim government that replaced it requires time to establish full control and effect change, but the responsibility to ensure a safe environment for journalists primarily falls on them, as well as the political and pressure groups active on the ground.

That it would not be smooth sailing for journalists after Sheikh Hasina's fall became clear on the very day, when at least eight TV channels and three newspaper offices in Dhaka were attacked. While many assumed these were spur-of-the-moment reactions and would not be repeated, subsequent events, especially on August 14-15, have upset the calculation. On August 14, as many as 20 journalists were injured when the Chattogram Press Club was attacked and ransacked. The same day, a journalist was hacked in Pirojpur. And on August 15, a number of journalists were assaulted and even made to delete photographs they had taken in Dhaka's Dhanmondi Road 32 on the occasion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's death anniversary.

In fact, the scenes unfolding in Dhanmondi were quite disturbing, as young men interrogated pedestrians, checked their identity cards and phones, and also manhandled visitors who came to pay respects to Bangabandhu. They also prevented any documentation, with announcements being made over loudspeakers instructing journalists and spectators to refrain from filming. Many of these young men were armed with iron rods, plastic pipes, bamboo, and wooden sticks. These harsh measures were apparently part of efforts to prevent a so-called counter-coup by Awami League and allies, with BNP and its student wing staging sit-ins at various locations in Dhaka and the Students against Discrimination movement holding a "resistance week" programme. While none of them acknowledged responsibility for the harassment, it just goes to show how chaotic the situation is at the moment.

Clearly, it is not just media freedom that is at stake in such a situation; human rights in general are being violated, too. This is painful to see in the wake of an uprising that wanted to break people free from these very shackles of oppression and subjugation. It's apparent that fascism has not left the building even if the fascists have. The rights to publish, speak, organise or mourn are all inviolable ones. It was, however, heartening to see the student leaders vowing to protect these rights. At least four key coordinators of the students' movement have strongly condemned the excesses that occurred in Dhanmondi and elsewhere. They cautioned against "fake platforms" pretending to represent students and also pledged to expel anyone from their platform if found guilty of human rights violations.

We appreciate the swift and unequivocal condemnation. But it is important to remind the student leaders that they must be more cautious going forward. Other political forces that are now active and pushing their own agenda must also answer for any crimes committed in their names. Most importantly, the interim government must take stern actions to prevent such crimes, especially against journalists. Together, they must prevent a return to the same excesses that the past regime made a habit of committing.

Make city corps fully operational

Public services severely disrupted in the absence of mayors, councillors

We are quite concerned about the mounting suffering of people across the country due to the disruptions in services provided by city corporations and municipalities in the absence of their top functionaries. Reportedly, nine city mayors out of 12 are in hiding, while 205 municipal mayors out of 330 are also on the run. The situation is the same down the ladder, with 44 zila parishad chairmen out of 64 and 319 upazila parishad chairmen out of 495 also in hiding. In Dhaka, among the 129 councillors spread across both wings of the city, a staggering 118 are missing. Similar absences have also been noted in other cities as well.

These public representatives have gone into hiding after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising led by students. Their escape, out of security concerns, is understandable since all of them were Awami League leaders, but it also shows how disastrously imbalanced the power structure was with an overwhelming majority of these important positions filled by one party, leaving little space for rival parties who could have served under the present circumstances. The mass escape has not only created a sudden power vacuum, but key services are also being disrupted, especially in city corporations and municipalities.

Among the services that residents get from city corporations are street lighting, waste management, mosquito control, birth and death registration, trade licensing, etc. In Dhaka, the responsibility of sewage management was also handed over to the city corporations. Many city roads still remain broken and unclean since August 5. Then there is the challenge of fighting dengue, which needs exemplary leadership given the debacle of last year's dengue season. There are many such issues and grievances that public representatives are expected to engage on and address.

Against this backdrop, we welcome the interim government's decision to give full mayoral responsibility to the chief executive officers of the city corporations, which will take care of the operational side of these institutions. We think the authorities should also make a decision about the municipalities and local parishads soon. Having administrative officers at the helm of these bodies comes with the expectation that they will perform better and more honestly than political recruits, who have repeatedly failed to address public grievances. That said, the need for having public representatives directly connected with the grassroots levels cannot be overemphasised, despite their questionable track records. Whatever the administration now does to weather these challenging times, it must ensure good governance.

How to ensure justice for the atrocities committed in the past

Kamal Ahmed
is an independent journalist. His X handle is @ahmedka1.

KAMAL AHMED

The Awami League regime, which sought global recognition as a model of governance, has ironically left behind a legacy marred by unprecedented brutality against its own citizens. The scale of state-sponsored violence and repression under Sheikh Hasina's rule rivals some of the worst autocracies in the world, like Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. Bangladesh is also a unique example where a military dictator, Gen HM Ershad, succeeded in resettling in a democratic political framework but a popular leader, who jointly led a movement for restoration of democracy, degraded herself by turning into a worse dictator.

The recent student-led uprising, evolving into a broader civilian insurrection, has been dubbed by some as the "Gen Z Revolution." However, lacking a coherent revolutionary agenda or a well-defined path for enacting fundamental change, this movement remains more of a chaotic and prolonged transition towards democracy than a fully fledged revolution. Consequently, the pursuit of justice for the regime's atrocities faces significant challenges.

In a true revolution, justice would be swift and uncompromising. Special tribunals or summary trials might have been established to address the crimes committed under Hasina's rule, and eventually under the rule of her predecessors. However, in a society aspiring to democracy and the rule of law, the process of ensuring justice becomes more complex. Fairness—both real and perceived—is paramount, and justice must not only be done but also be seen to be done.

At present, there is widespread anger as well as a clamour for accountability, particularly for those responsible for the deaths of at least 440 people, maiming of thousands, and false imprisonment of countless others in politically motivated cases. The challenge for the transitional government is immense, as it inherits a nation teetering on the brink of chaos and division. The economy has been devastated with billions of dollars syphoned abroad by the deposed regime's cronies, while the civil service is riddled with corruption. Inflation is soaring, and unemployment is rampant. The security apparatus, weakened by the violent fallout of crackdowns on dissent, is struggling to maintain law and order.

Rebuilding the capacity of the police and other law enforcement forces to pre-regime levels could take years. In this context, conducting thorough investigations, preserving crucial evidence, and prosecuting powerful figures with significant followings will require not only strong political will, but substantial support from both domestic and international communities as well.

Before moving forward with prosecuting the crimes of the previous regime, several critical issues must be addressed. The public's demand for justice focuses on two key periods: the atrocities committed between July 15 and the establishment of the interim government, and the systemic repression that began when the former government dismantled democratic safeguards by abolishing the 13th Amendment of the constitution and suppressing the opposition. The violations during the former prime minister's rule—enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and custodial torture—constitute crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute.

Ensuring justice for these crimes will require bringing all responsible parties to account, from top political leaders to the enforcers on the ground. However, there is growing impatience among the victims' families, students, and human rights activists who are eager to see prosecutions initiated. While some individuals have already initiated legal action, these hasty private efforts risk failure due to insufficient evidence or lack of corroborating witnesses, which will politically benefit the perpetrators. The interim government must take decisive actions to develop a realistic prosecution strategy that can secure convictions, particularly against the former prime minister and her top associates. Eventually, the same must be done to address crimes committed by the past regimes as well.

There are also discussions about potential prosecutions at the International Criminal Court (ICC) under the Rome Statute. Several human rights groups are preparing submissions to the ICC's chief prosecutor. As Bangladesh is a signatory to the Rome Statute, the ICC has jurisdiction over crimes committed within the country. However, international prosecutions are notoriously complex and require significant global support, which may not be forthcoming until all national legal avenues have been exhausted.

The pursuit of justice for the regime's atrocities against students and citizens during the quota reform protests and the subsequent mass uprising faces significant challenges. FILE PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

Law adviser Prof Asif Nazrul has suggested that Sheikh Hasina could be tried at the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) for her role in the killings between July 1 and August 5 during the student-led movement. However, concerns remain about the ICT's reputation, given its past weaknesses during trials for crimes committed during the Liberation War of Bangladesh. Additionally, remnants of the old regime and their sympathisers may attempt to undermine any legal proceedings. The biggest impediment, however, would be the revival of Awami League, unless it decides to break away from the tradition of a hereditary leadership of the party.

The failure to bring Ershad to justice serves as a stark reminder of the challenges facing the country's judicial system. Prosecuting Sheikh Hasina, arguably the worst dictator in the nation's history, will be even more challenging and must be pursued before public memory fades. A promising development is the offer of assistance from UN human rights chief Volker Türk, who has proposed helping investigate the alleged crimes. The UN's expertise in evidence collection, preserving them, and prosecution support could prove invaluable, whether the trials occur at the ICC or in domestic courts.

Another possibility is the application of universal jurisdiction, which allows courts in any country to prosecute those responsible for atrocities, regardless of where the crimes were committed. This was the legal principle that led to the detention of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet in the UK and subsequent return to his homeland, where he was convicted and eventually died in prison. While it is unlikely, even India could theoretically prosecute Hasina under universal jurisdiction, according to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984.

Mob justice goes against the spirit of the student movement

Maisha Islam Monamee
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MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

In recent weeks, our country has echoed with the triumphant cries of a movement sparked by students demanding the end of a repressive regime. As someone who stood shoulder to shoulder with these courageous individuals, I have felt the euphoria of our shared victory and the weight of our collective responsibility. The triumph was not just a political victory; it was a testament to the power of unity and the enduring spirit of resistance. But as we bask in its aftermath, a disturbing reality is surfacing: the rise of mob justice. Instead of celebrating our newfound freedom with dignity and respect, we are witnessing a troubling shift towards a new form of oppression, one that mirrors the injustices we once fought to eradicate.

I want to be clear: I am not here to belittle anyone or question their commitment to the cause. But as we stand on the threshold of a new era, it is imperative that we address the ways in which our movement's ideals are being compromised. If anything, history has taught us that the most dangerous threat to freedom is not always an external oppressor, but the internal corruption of the very ideals we fought to protect. In the wake of our triumph, some disturbing reports have surfaced—of so-called "representatives" of the movement seizing rooms once occupied by oppressive leaders, of individuals being harassed and assaulted for their attire or political affiliations, of phones being checked and hotels being raided. This behaviour, cloaked in the guise of justice, is nothing more than a new form of oppression.

The essence of our movement was never solely about toppling a tyrannical regime, but about ushering in a new era of inclusivity and respect. Our cause was built on the promise of a society where discrimination would find no refuge and where every voice could be heard without fear. Yet, instead of fostering a culture of tolerance, some of us have chosen to perpetuate a different kind of oppression, casting aside the very principles that fuelled our fight. It is crucial to recognise that true freedom is not merely the absence of tyranny, but the presence of equity and respect for all. The shift from people championing the anti-discrimination movement to some of them engaging in acts of mob justice represents a perilous deviation from our original mission. We must confront this shift head-on and reaffirm our commitment to the values that inspired us. I appreciate that the leaders of the anti-discrimination student movement addressed the recent incidents and made it known that these are reprehensible, unacceptable acts.

> **Instead of fostering a culture of tolerance, some of us have chosen to perpetuate a different kind of oppression, casting aside the very principles that fuelled our fight. It is crucial to recognise that true freedom is not merely the absence of tyranny, but the presence of equity and respect for all. The shift from people championing the anti-discrimination movement to some of them engaging in acts of mob justice represents a perilous deviation from our original mission.**

In a true democracy, criticism should not be equated with betrayal, but embraced as a necessary part of the discourse. To label dissent as support for a discredited regime undermines the very essence of the freedom we sought to achieve. The measure of our success should be found not only in the regime we dismantled, but in our ability to uphold democratic values in the face of new challenges. While it is definitely too early to comment on where we are headed, we must engage in these difficult conversations and keep things in check.

The interim government now faces a pivotal moment. The decisions made now will shape the future of our society and determine whether we won't become the very power we sought to overthrow. It is time for courageous leadership that embraces the full spectrum of democratic principles, including the protection of individual rights and the encouragement of open discourse. The challenge before us is not just to avoid the pitfalls of authoritarianism, but to actively build a society that reflects the highest ideals of justice and equality. This requires more than just symbolic gestures; it demands substantive actions and a commitment to creating systems that promote transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. The revolution was not an end but a beginning—a chance to forge a new path and to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated. True freedom is not a privilege for the few, but a right for all. Power must be used to uplift, not to oppress.

To the student leaders and coordinators who guided us through this historic struggle, I urge you to recognise the immense responsibility that comes with the power we have gained. You have the ability to set an example, to lead with integrity and ensure that the ideals we fought for are not lost in the process of rebuilding. When you first called for action, you sparked a fire within countless students who stood with you, ready to support the cause in any capacity. Now as you reform the political infrastructure, please remember the power and influence you hold over these students, and guide them so they can lead from the front to uphold the rule of law and ensure equity and justice for all. As we navigate this new era, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to the values that united us.

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REVOLUTION AND EDUCATION

Some thoughts on the 'political' in universities

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SAMIA HUQ *and* **SHAFIUL AZIZ**

Much has changed since the all-out protests began in mid-July, galvanising an entire nation, from aggrieved mothers to despondent rickshaw pullers, to bring down a 15-year-old authoritarian regime. It was indeed people's power and it was infectious. The movement mobilised not only street agitation and online activism—forms of protest we are already familiar with—but also an unprecedented array of civic actions. While in the fervour of the moment when old binaries of young and old, right and left, and secularists and religionists converged, it seems urgent to consider how these convergences may play out in the transformation that is being called for.

At this moment, all eyes are on the interim government. The need to restore law and order, stabilise and grow the economy, and institute a robust political system and culture that do not fail again makes the tasks complex and onerous for the new government. How will the country recoup, regroup and rebuild? Eventually, when the country emerges from the transitory interim phase to a democratically elected one, will all that the revolution called for in spirit prevail in structures? How will inclusion be defined and what kinds of processes will ensure it? Experts will need to work out how the current phase and its policies are emboldened to achieve this desirable end.

Many are already talking about constitutional changes and mechanisms such as truth and reconciliation that might provide a means to political rectification. We may also look at the Arab Spring which sociology professor Asef Bayat refers to as "refolution"—a term referring to a phenomenon which resulted in neither revolution, nor reform—to draw lessons from and work towards the required redistributive justice to make the transformation meaningful. While experts work on the state apparatus, economy and political mechanisms, society also has a role to play. As a part of civil society, universities may play their part in this transition as universities are the very sites where it all began.

Universities have long provided fertile grounds for student protests that have also taken on autocratic regimes in the past. However, public universities carry deep political fractures polarising both student and faculty bodies. They are now confronted with reform within and between students, faculty, and overall institutional governance. Private universities have been relatively free of deep political factionalism, partly by design. In recent years, they have resisted pressures to introduce student politics with the stated intent that students remain focused on academics. While this confirmed for many that private university students are placidly apolitical, their involvement in recent events proved otherwise. In fact, their participation in the July movement—propelled by their participation in earlier movements such as the 2015 No Vat on Education protests and the 2018 road safety movement—allow us to reconsider whether the old binaries of public and private hold anymore.

VISUAL: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

Private universities are now much more diverse in class composition than they were a decade ago. The trickle-down effect of the neoliberal economy has enabled a broader class to invest in better education. Additionally, there is a generational shift towards prioritising higher spending on education. This diversity in class composition is equally reflected in differing opinions and stances on a variety of issues ranging from gender, religion, history and national identity. The fact that distinct groups have not yet coalesced around these important issues has been a boon for the movement. The coming together to depose an autocratic regime could, therefore, not be prevented by the strength of or competition between distinct groups.

Such a position that is driven neither by discrete ideology nor through any particular party patronage has lived up to its potential of galvanising a nationwide movement. It is now imperative to wrestle with the challenges posed by the need to enunciate the new "political" in the nation and elsewhere. An important part of this wrestling lies in the recognition of the social capital formed through the coming together of students. Universities that thrived on factional student politics need to ensure that the capital and collective energy do not fall into old structures and patterns of behaviour.

Whether public universities will ban politics altogether and how this will affect any possibility of its return later require careful thought and execution. Private universities, where national politics through student groups was not allowed, may strengthen some of the ways in which they have already been nurturing students' growth and promoting student-centricity. Students rising to the call of post-revolution clean-up and maintenance demonstrate civic engagement that universities who actively promote it can further harness. Embedding civic engagement into the curriculum and establishing university-wide networks that bring students together for the common good would be an excellent way to protect some of the social capital accrued from this movement.

As students engage societal problems and work collectively to address them, they learn by doing and preparing for collaborative action in many spheres of life, including engaging higher authorities with reason and purpose. It is this form of engagement that paves the way for societal changes. Universities that have responded appropriately to students' justified demands and universities that have formal or informal mechanisms of standing by students' rights to protest, are well-placed to deepen their channels of student engagement in order to cultivate their collective and creative energy.

Last but not least, the classroom is of essence. Paolo Freire in Pedagogies of the Oppressed spoke of education as the seed for societal change, highlighting pedagogies in classrooms as the place to start. Freire argues that education must be redone to move away from a banking mode, where wisdom is deposited from teacher to student, to one where learning is born out of students being allowed to think outside the box. In this framework, the classroom is a place where "wisdom" is co-created and both teacher and student learn and teach each other new things. Enlivening a classroom with present-day realities, engaging students to think about them collectively, and allowing them the space to express their aspirations while guiding them through the ethical import of their thinking are how we retain the relevance of Freire today. As educators, we firmly believe that when such approaches to education are pursued, they provide the basis for healthy, inclusive societal change, and many students in this movement are surely richer for having received such an education.

As the country emerges from the revolution to rebuild, universities must deepen some of the good work they have done and rethink what has not worked. We have seen that students are capable of teaching themselves many things, including bringing down a regime. They must constantly remember what brought them together across many divides, including the public-private one, in order to arrive at the kernel and essence of this new politics. As the dust settles, universities must come forward with students to enunciate the new political and effective pathways to achieve its objectives. Students need university classrooms as much as classrooms need the students. We must embrace this relationship and do it through mutual respect so that our students remain the life force of the nation. It is urgent that we, as teachers and students, get back to our calling in education as co-learners towards the continued and arduous task of nation-building.

Universities must prepare for the transition of students

BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Dr Shamsad Mortuza
is professor of English at Dhaka University.

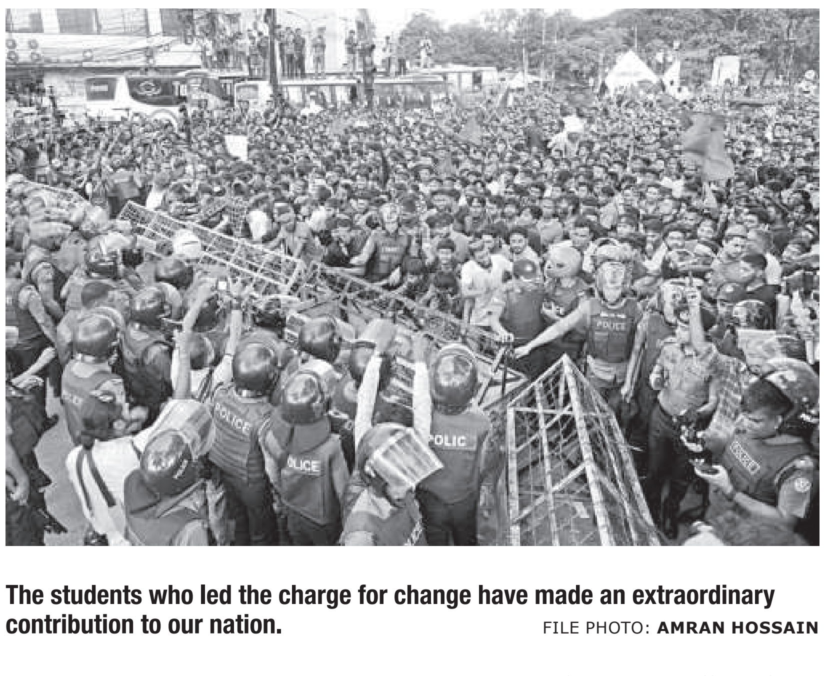
SHAMSAD MORTUZA

In a recent circular, the education ministry asked all educational institutions to reopen and resume their activities. It is a curious call, to say the least, as all academic institutions have been technically open following the ISPR statement issued on August 5, the historic day of regime change. The resumption of classes, however, is a different ball game.

The traumatic memories of losing hundreds of lives due to unprecedented police brutality are still fresh in the public imagination. The resignation or forced removal of many institutional heads, including 19 vice-chancellors of public universities, has created a vacuum in academic leadership, further complicating the situation.

The challenges of reopening academic institutions, therefore, extend beyond simply unlocking their doors. While talking to our students, it was obvious that many of them are experiencing severe stress. Their mental state is a mix of grief, pride, and revolutionary zeal, which makes it difficult for them to return to any academic routine. While some are upbeat about the national duty that they have embraced to bring structural change to the system, many others have developed anxiety, depression or PTSD, requiring psychiatric help before they can effectively engage in their studies. Some of them are recovering from their injuries or undergoing medical treatment. There is also a growing tension between revolution supporters and former collaborators or supporters of the old administration, which has created mistrust and conflict among students. For example, the regular students who have returned to the dormitories of the public universities are adamant about resisting any entry by their opponents.

The lack of leadership and the ongoing purges among staff and students are also not helpful in restoring normalcy. The makeshift administration can bring necessary modifications to academic schedules and lesson plans, but these could have long-term repercussions on students' academic and professional futures. No one knows how to undertake essential activities such as exam administration, curriculum planning, and the maintenance of academic standards, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability. Private university students in a strict semester-based paid system may now face a graduation delay. The economic disruption may handicap many of the students from paying their fees and living expenses. It is possible that many public universities will see the return of session jams. Those preparing for critical public or international exams such as HSC, O Levels and A Levels face additional pressure to meet deadlines.



The students who led the charge for change have made an extraordinary contribution to our nation.
FILE PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

The primary challenge lies in a mindset shift, however. Students seem unwilling to withdraw from public service or associated visibility. Their revolutionary achievements, such as graffiti, traffic control, and street-cleaning, are garnering significant media attention. Their resistance to the resumption of classes may stem from a supposed compromise with their revolutionary drive. Perhaps they fear that their withdrawal at this stage may leave their calls for change incomplete, and some old politicians could return with vengeance. The environment is polarising. Reopening educational services will require a sophisticated strategy that prioritises rebuilding leadership, providing psychological support, and ensuring all students feel secure and respected in the academic community.

As educators, we understand that we can curate the classrooms as a space for healing and rebuilding. With some professional training and workshops, we can teach our colleagues to transform our classrooms into a structured environment where students can regain a sense of normalcy, purpose, and direction. Students can critically reflect on their actions and activism during these counselling sessions to renew their sense of purpose.

It will require a lot of tact for us to deal with the students, who were previously known to be generally apolitical but are now politically charged. Their desire for "cleansing" operations targeting peers and faculty members believed to be complicit with the previous regime will require deft and professional handling. This is a delicate topic, and institutions must inform their staff to deal with the atmosphere of distrust and retribution. If needed, the University Grants Commission (UGC) or other teachers' associations can organise workshops on creating a congenial educational environment where unity and mutual respect are essential. Faculty members, too, must approach students with understanding and patience, recognising the immense stress and trauma they have experienced. Faculties should adjust academic expectations to accommodate the students' current emotional state, and provide guidance and mentorship to help them navigate this challenging transition.

To support students effectively, educational institutions must implement trauma-informed teaching practices and provide resources to help students heal and succeed. Creating safe spaces on campus for open dialogue and fostering understanding among students is crucial. If needed, universities should also establish partnerships with their alumni bodies and social organisations to provide additional support services, such as housing, food security, and legal assistance. Some of the universities have already named some of their installations after the martyred students or held memorial services to begin the healing process.

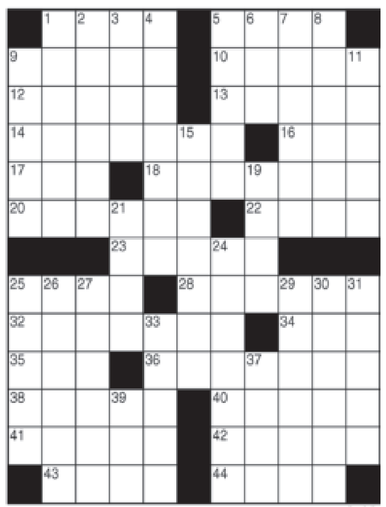
Students have done their part in bringing a positive change. The onus is now on us to channel the revolutionary zeal that fuelled the protests into constructive efforts to build a more inclusive and tolerant academic community. The students' ability to foster reconciliation and solidarity in the aftermath of removing a tyrant will measure the true victory of their movement. This is the time to set aside differences and work together to ensure that institutions can resume their vital role in shaping the future leaders of our nation.

Reopening universities is not just about resuming academic activities, but about rebuilding them as centres of learning, healing, and unity. As members of the academic community, we must rise to the challenge of rebuilding our institutions with the same courage and determination that fuelled the revolution. The students who led the charge for change have already made an extraordinary contribution to our nation. They must now return to classroom to continue their activism, not retreat from it. By resuming their studies, students will equip themselves with the knowledge and skills necessary to guide our country into a new era of justice and prosperity.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Barn area
5 Obsessed captain
9 Major mistake
10 Vein settings
12 Elroy's dog
13 Sun Valley setting
14 Tendency
16 Reunion group
17 Pert talk
18 What a jeté involves
20 Increase
22 Cuts off
23 Showy flower
25 Prepares for battle
28 Wild
32 Car option
34 Through
35 — es Salaam
36 In front
38 Car of the '50s
40 Road incline
41 Treatment center
42 Diner patron
43 Steak choice
44 Fabric worker

DOWN
1 Go ballistic
2 Like some books
3 Plant with fronds
4 Cressida's love
5 Juanita's friend
6 Stashed
7 Luke's father
8 Trailing
9 Pool need
11 Album tracks
15 Triton orbits it
19 Sassy
21 Fail to fail
24 Set to wed
25 Birch's cousin
26 Book buyer
27 Mason of movies
29 Take to the sky
30 Caretaker
31 Raring to go
33 "You don't say!"
37 Simple cart
39 Stirrup setting



2-18

AUGUST 3 ANSWERS

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Write for us. Send us your opinion pieces to
dsopinion@gmail.com

JULY 36

A win for the youth

AZRA HUMAYRA

On a Wednesday that history will not soon forget, the High Court rendered its verdict: the October 4, 2018, notification, which had hastily terminated the Freedom Fighter quota in first and second-class government employment, was declared illegal. It was June 5, a day that will be remembered throughout history—the kind of occasion that future generations will point to as the spark that set off the events that occurred just two months later. A day that will leave an indelible impression on us, compelling us to read the pages of history books to comprehend the chain reaction of events that it triggered.

When I joined the protest on July 7, a familiar surge of purpose welled up within me. It was a flashback to 2018 when I stood shoulder to shoulder with thousands, demanding safer roads, a movement that felt like a moral imperative. This time, the stakes were different, but no less important. We were battling for fair representation, insisting on a redistribution of power that did not leave the majority in the dark. What we wanted was reformation, a restructure that would finally allow our voices to be heard in the halls of power rather than drowned out by the noise of the status quo.

PHOTO: **SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED**

After the verdict was handed down on June 5, the students began their protests the following day, though it wasn't until July 1 that they truly took to the streets. The movement gained momentum as other universities joined the cause on July 3. When their demands continued to fall on deaf ears, the students called for the 'Bangla Blockade,' a move that effectively brought the country to a standstill. Yet even this drastic measure failed to compel the authorities to take them seriously. July 14 marked the beginning of the end when former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in a press conference, ignited a firestorm with her words: "If the grandchildren of the freedom fighters don't get quota benefits, should the grandchildren of *Razakars* get the benefit?" This incendiary remark set the nation ablaze, and the students, wounded and indignant, began to cry out, "*Chaite gelam odhikar, hoye gelam razakar*"—we demanded our rights, and now we're branded traitors.

July 15 will forever be etched in our collective memory as a day of profound horror. On that day, the goons of the Bangladesh Chhatra League descended upon the protesting students with a fury that was as brutal as it was unprovoked. I was at the Dhaka University campus that day, and the scenes I witnessed are not ones that will fade from my mind anytime soon. This wasn't just the reality for the students of Dhaka University; it was the reality for students across the nation. The tragic death of Abu Sayed marked one of the first martyrdoms of the protest, and from July 16 onwards, the bloodshed spread throughout Bangladesh. The very soil of the nation was painted red.

By July 19, we were entirely cut off from the outside world, as the government imposed a curfew and shut down internet services. Life carried on in an eerie semblance of normalcy, even as the media spun a narrative that now seems almost laughable in hindsight. For the first time in recent years, I found myself grateful for my newspaper subscription, as it offered a sliver of the truth amidst the boom of state propaganda. On July 21, the Supreme Court dramatically reduced the number of government positions reserved for war veterans and their descendants, and the authorities, in their arrogance, believed that the students' demands had been met. They expected the protesters to go home without ever acknowledging the lives lost in their quest to be heard.

When the internet finally flickered back to life on July 23, I was confronted with the full scale of the atrocities that had been unfolding while I had been fed the state's narrative. The true horrors—deaths, injuries, police brutality, block raids, mass arrests, and the so-called 'protection' offered to coordinators by the police—became impossible to ignore. What had started as a protest had evolved into a full-blown uprising.

The success of the 'Drahajatra' on August 2 united the masses with the students, and suddenly, the entire nation had coalesced around a single demand: the resignation of the Prime Minister. August 4 saw the deaths of another 114 people, yet even this arbitrary use of force could not quell the spirit of the people. On August 5, the day we had reserved for the 'Long March,' Sheikh Hasina finally stepped down, bringing an end to her over 15-year reign. The streets erupted as waves of people poured out to celebrate a hard-fought victory, marking the end of an era that had come at an unspeakable cost.

From the battle for quota reforms to the toppling of a government, July was a month marked by both triumph and tragedy. Unsurprisingly, August 5 is called July 36. Never before has an uprising in Bangladesh witnessed such a staggering loss of life in such a short span of time—a fact that renders this victory all the more torturous and historic.

It was the demise of a regime that failed to heed the voices of its youth, a regime brought to its knees by a movement that began with students but swiftly evolved into a nationwide outcry. The popular outrage was fuelled by a litany of grievances: rampant corruption, grotesque economic disparity, soaring commodity prices, mass disenfranchisement, and the erosion of democratic institutions. Yet, despite the overwhelming force wielded against them, the students' resolve remained unbroken. Their spirit, undeterred by brutality, formed into a vow to combat injustice and ignorance, igniting a movement that would alter the course of the nation's history.

When I joined the protest on July 7, a familiar surge of purpose welled up within me. It was a flashback to 2018 when I stood shoulder to shoulder with thousands, demanding safer roads, a movement that felt like a moral imperative. This time, the stakes were different, but no less important.

Reading articles, I have seen authors compare the uprising with the 1968 protest that erupted from the Sorbonne in France. Television shows sometimes have gone so far as to label demonstrators as 'French' in their spirit of resistance. But to compare the struggle of Bangladesh's youth to a mere echo of past movements is to overlook the extraordinary passion with which they fought—a passion unparalleled by any previous uprising. One French slogan, *Sois Jeune et Tais Toi*—"Be Young and Shut Up"—became a rallying cry for a generation demanding the right to be heard.

Bangladeshi students had similar objectives; they wanted to live in a country where they could use their rights without fear of retribution. Historians will write about the new Bangladesh, but it is critical to remember that it originated from the dreams and hopes of a generation that refused to be silent.

Azra Humayra is majoring in mass communication and journalism at Dhaka University. Find her at: azrahumayra123@gmail.com

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

PHOTOS: **STAR**

The streets will remember

Following August 5, as no traffic policemen were found on duty on the roads, students took charge of traffic management in different parts of the capital, as well as various other parts of the country, as volunteers. The country will forever be indebted to its student populace for the role it has played during these trying times.

OPINION

Chaos, uncertainty, and our newfound social awareness

ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

ZABIN TAZRIN NASHITA

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement has been a resounding success, as evident by the resignation of the Sheikh Hasina-led government. The interim government has been sworn in, and hopes of reformation are running rife throughout the whole country. Of course, the anticipated moment of truth came at a great price with rampant vandalism and looting following suit, and the most shameful of all, attacks on minorities and their properties.

As the lives and properties of religious minorities, especially the Hindu community of Bangladesh, were under threat, the general population wasted no time in coming forward to offer their protection and aid. With the police being on strike, students of Bangladesh took to regulating traffic. Initiatives were also taken and executed for cleaning up different areas, including the parliament building. Last but not the least, this movement has inspired an unprecedented level of social consciousness and made way for open conversations surrounding various pressing matters.

The movement has attempted, from time to time, to make room for the voices of minorities and their sufferings. While activists have been vocal in calling for the demilitarisation of Chittagong Hill Tracts for some time, the issue is finally gaining much needed traction among the youth. The notion "none of us are free until all of us are free" is circulating all over social media, expressing solidarity with the indigenous people of Bangladesh whose rights have been violated for decades now.

The abduction of human rights activist Kalpana Chakma in 1996 was spoken of with reverence, and as a symbol of struggle and resistance. The youth has rightfully adopted the belief that the total reform of Bangladesh we all seek cannot be achieved without protecting the lives and lands of indigenous communities.

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement has exposed many underlying issues in the system. The murder of Sagar-Runi; seventeen-year-old Tanvir Mohammad Toki; Avijit Roy, activist and founder of the internet blogging community *Mukto-Mona*; Sohagi Jahan Tonu, a student who was raped and murdered within the Cumilla Cantonment area –have resurfaced holding the regime accountable for its lack of transparency.

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement has also made space for conversations surrounding class consciousness. Class consciousness refers to the subjective awareness of a social class, typically the working class, of their shared interests, and the need for collective action to achieve change. It helps us understand how to fight back against exploitation and put aside differences to protect our rights.

This movement has shown us a picture of unity within the social classes that we've only read about in the history of the Liberation War. People from the working class, such as rickshaw pullers, shopkeepers, electricians and construction workers came forward in helping the protesters. In turn, donation links and crowdfunding were arranged for martyred or injured members of the working class. Not to mention, people engaged in constructive conversations about the unjust treatment suffered by the working class and the need for their voices to have a platform.

As the lives and properties of religious minorities, especially the Hindu community of Bangladesh, were under threat, the general population wasted no time in coming forward to offer their protection and aid. With the police being on strike, students of Bangladesh took to regulating traffic.

This movement has not only caused us, the youth of Bangladesh, to be more socially and politically aware, it has also helped us understand how important it is for representatives of all communities to have a voice. Amidst the chaos and uncertainty that seems to have taken over the country, our newfound social awareness remains a sliver of hope for a better future.

Star
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What to WATCH

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The Hundred
Birmingham Phoenix vs Southern Brave
Live from 11:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
Ipswich Town vs Liverpool
Live from 5:30 pm
Arsenal vs Wolves
Live from 8:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD2
Newcastle vs Southampton
Live from 8:00 pm

Nazmul 'wants to resign', but what's next for BCB?

SPORTS REPORTER

Word around the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is that Nazmul Hassan Papon has informed one of the directors that he is in favour of resigning as board president. Many other directors, however, claimed to have no knowledge of the president's wish.

It is understood that the BCB president is currently in London. Many of the board directors are untraceable since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, and those that are there, are facing a crisis.

BCB sources told The Daily Star on Thursday that one of the board directors got in touch with Nazmul and has been told that the board president is ready to cooperate.

"I have heard that Papon bhai told one of our directors that he wants to cooperate. I have not talked to the BCB president directly. I have only heard that he is ready to cooperate but haven't heard of resigning," a BCB director told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury could not be reached over phone at the time of filing this report.

A few BCB directors who are still present, have informed this newspaper that they have asked for a guideline on how to go on about their proceedings from relevant authorities. "What would be best is that if a guideline comes from the interim government that's in our constitution and within ICC's legal framework, it would be good for us," one BCB director said on condition of anonymity yesterday.

"We are still waiting for that guideline," another director said.

According to the BCB constitution, only the BCB president or a vice-president can call for a board meeting. Despite there being provision for two vice-presidents in the current constitution, the BCB did not appoint any. Thus under the current circumstances, a board meeting cannot be called unless the BCB president himself communicates to the BCB CEO that he wants to resign and calls for a meeting even if he is absent from the meeting. He can also appoint a board director as vice-president in his absence and then the vice-president can call a meeting.

The resignation will then have to be approved or rejected by the board.

If a resignation comes from the president, elections are the likely due process and will have to be called since there is nothing in the BCB constitution regarding an interim body.

The BCB president can also communicate and call for a board meeting to appoint two vice-presidents through elections among the 25 directors.

The other way to resolve the current scenario in absence of key figureheads is through the National Sports Council, who can appoint two new directors in place of the ones currently in place. The two new NSC directors can then be appointed as vice-presidents through a meeting to resolve the crisis at the board.

Along with the present scenario in the board, the fate of the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup, originally scheduled to be played in Bangladesh, hangs in the balance. Following an initial August 15 deadline, there is not much time left for ICC to make a decision. For the board, the guideline it seeks would clarify what moves it can make to resurrect Bangladesh's chances of hosting the tournament.

BPL in limbo as Sk Jamal, Sk Russel set to miss out

ANISUR RAHMAN

Troubles for the forthcoming season of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) have deepened further as two top clubs –three-time BPL champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club and treble winners Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra– are seemingly set to miss the upcoming edition.

It has been learnt that Bashundhara Group, which used to sponsor both clubs, has backed out as financers, leaving the sides without a sponsor with just three days left in the transfer window.

Players and coaches of Sheikh Russel KC and Sheikh Jamal DC have confirmed that the clubs will not compete in the forthcoming season, however, no officials from Bashundhara nor from the two clubs could be reached for confirmation.

"The officials who usually handle the forming of the squad for Sheikh Russel, told us about a week ago that they won't form a squad," said a coach who was supposed to be part of Sheikh Russel's coaching staff, seeking anonymity.

National team defender Rahmat Mia, who was supposed to join Sheikh Russel from Abahani, said, "The day after the resignation of Sheikh Hasina, some 20-25 players were kicked out of a Whatsapp group which was the main medium of communication among players, officials and coaches.

"Since then, we have no idea whether Sheikh Russel are going to play or not. No one from the club has officially communicated with us though some 20 to 25 players have signed contracts and have received token money ranging between Tk 5-10 lakh from the club," he said.

It has been learned that Sheikh Russel director-in-charge Ismat Jamil Akhond has been trying to form the squad after Bashundhara pulled out as sponsor but the information could not be verified as he did not respond to repeated calls and text messages from The Daily Star.

Alamgir Mollah, another defender who was supposed to join Sheikh Russel from Abahani, said, "I'm really confused. They once said they will not play, but then they said they will play but haven't taken any visible steps. They are not acting professionally."

Sheikh Jamal midfielder Atiqur Rahman Fahad, who was set to continue with the club this season, said, "Yesterday [Thursday], the club informed us that they won't form a squad."

Both clubs have a regular feature in the BPL, with Sheikh Russel breaking into top-flight football in the 2003-04 season and Sheikh Jamal returning to the top tier in 2010 and remaining there ever since.

According to BPL regulations, both Sheikh Russel and Sheikh Jamal would get demoted to the Bangladesh Championship League next season if they don't compete in this year's BPL.

Both clubs are named after sons of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and brothers of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who resigned and fled the country on August 5 in the face of a massive uprising.

It has also been learned that Sheikh Jamal officials want to revert the club to its previous name, Dhanmondi Club, but could not do so this season as the club is already registered as Sheikh Jamal DC. It had adopted its current name in 2010.

Chittagong Abahani are also at risk of missing the next season as team manager Arman Aziz has failed to communicate with club high-ups since the ouster of the Awami League government.

"I will again try to communicate with them [high-ups] tonight [Friday] and if I can't, I will inform the players that Chittagong Abahani will not form a squad," said the former national footballer.

The remaining nine BPL clubs are trying to complete the players' registration formalities before the deadline though most clubs are struggling to manage the funds.

The players of Sheikh Russel and Sheikh Jamal are searching for new teams and many of them have reached out to Brothers Union manager Amer Khan.

"How many players can we sign? I think all clubs should play this season without foreign players and accommodate those 50-60 players," said Amer, who is also BFF executive committee member.

Inter's bid to maintain Serie A status quo starts

REUTERS

Inter Milan begin their Serie A title defence this weekend with a trip to Genoa, looking to get off to another bright start as they bid to become the first team to retain the Scudetto since Juventus in 2020.

That was Juve's ninth consecutive league title but since then the Italian top flight has become a lot less predictable with Inter (twice), AC Milan and Napoli all tasting success. Now, Inter hope to carve out their own period of domination.

In order to do that, Inter will want to make a similar start to last season, where they began with five consecutive wins to hit the top of the table early on, and they have the advantage of continuity on their side.

Simone Inzaghi is still at the helm, whereas their likely rivals all have a new man on the bench. AC Milan brought in Paulo Fonseca and Juventus have Thiago Motta in charge, while Antonio Conte is the man looking to take Napoli back to the top.

Inter have been relatively quiet so far in the transfer market and their main business has been bringing in Polish midfielder Piotr Zielinski and Iranian forward Mehdi Taremi on free transfers.

Zielinski will not be available for Inter's opening games because of injury but Taremi should be on the bench for the trip to Genoa on Saturday and ready to give Lautaro Martinez a chance to rest after his Copa America exploits with winners Argentina last month.

Last season, Inter were held to a 1-1 draw at Genoa at the end of December and Alberto Gilardino is another manager hoping for a repeat of his side's previous campaign.

Genoa were a newly promoted side last time out and more than held their own as they finished the season in a respectable 11th place, but they are expected to find it tougher going this season and avoiding relegation will be the target.

Against Inter, Genoa could struggle for goals with many of their forwards unavailable, and they have also lost striker Mateo Retegui to Atalanta.

Vitinha will likely start, as Gilardino will be without Caleb Ekuban and David Ankeye, and their top scorer from last season, Albert Gudmundsson, could also be an absentee. He is heavily linked with a move away before the transfer window closes.

Milan begin life under Fonseca with a home game against Torino on Saturday and new signing Alvaro Morata, fresh from captaining Spain to Euro 2024 success, will lead the attack.

Motta impressed at Bologna last season, leading them to a top-five finish and Champions League football, but the pressure will be much greater at Juventus.

It should be an interesting start for the new man as his side host newly promoted Como on Monday, a team managed by Cesc Fabregas.

Como have been busy in the transfer market bringing in Spanish keeper Pepe Reina and his compatriot, defender Alberto Moreno, along with striker Andrea Belotti.

Napoli will look to bounce back from their dismal attempt to defend their title last season, when they finished 10th, and life under Conte begins at Hellas Verona on Sunday.

Will Arteta's unique methods do the trick this time?

AFP, *London*

Arsenal will begin their Premier League campaign at home against Wolves on Saturday, hoping for their manager Mikel Arteta's unique methods -- which involved hiring a group of pickpockets to teach his players a valuable lesson -- to stay with the troops for the entirety of the season.

Arteta's side suffered an agonising end to last season as City pipped them to the trophy by just two points on the final day.

That painful near-miss came 12 months after the Gunners allowed City to snatch the 2022/23 title from their grasp after squandering an eight-point lead.

Rather than dull his appetite for success, those blows inspired Arteta to take his already obsessive attention to detail to new heights as he chases Arsenal's first league title in 21 years.

With that in mind, Arteta secretly tasked a team of professional pickpockets with taking phones and wallets during a dinner with his players.

At the end of the meal, he asked the squad to empty their pockets and they immediately realised they were missing valuable items.

The exercise was done to teach them of the importance of being alert at all times, on and off the pitch.

Arteta, who is no stranger to using creative ideas in a bid to motivate his players, brought an olive tree into a team meeting last season, describing the players as the branches and the staff as the roots.

But the 42-year-old's admirable ability to think outside the box has yet to deliver a prize that is beyond the reach of even his pickpockets.

And for the likes of Martin Odegaard, Bukayo Saka, Declan Rice, and William Saliba to earn themselves a place in the club's hall of fame alongside the "Invincibles" of Arsene Wenger who brought the club's last title in an unbeaten 2003-04 season, they would need to acquire the abilities of being so aware that no one would be able to steal anything from them -- be it from their pockets or from their grasps.

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STUDENT PROTESTS

Hasina, Quader sued over killing of schoolteacher

99 AL leaders and activists also made accused in the case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bogura*

Another murder case was filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in Bogura yesterday. With this, she has been sued in a total of five murder cases.

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader was also among the 100 other AL leaders and activists sued in the case filed with Bogura Sadar Police Station.

The case was filed over the killing of Selim Hossain, a 35-year-old school teacher and a resident of Palikanda village in Shibganj upazila, on August 4.

Selim was an assistant teacher at Muril Light High School in Kahaloo upazila.

Sikandar Hossain, the victim's father, filed the case around 2:00am, the police station's Officer-in-Charge Saihan Oliullah told The Daily Star.

On August 4, the day before Hasina resigned and fled the country in the face of a student-led mass uprising, Selim joined the student protest in Bogura's Satmatha area.

At that time, AL leaders and activists swooped on the protesters and hacked Selim to death with sharp weapons, according to the case statement.

Selim's brother, Uzzal Hossain, told The Daily Star

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

A portion of Hatkhola road in Old Dhaka's Tikatuli is in a bad state. Underground utility lines were installed around three months ago, but the road was not restored properly, causing problems for the users. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Sacked army officer Ziaul arrested

Court places him on 8-day remand

STAR REPORT

Controversial army officer Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan, who was sacked from the service a day after the fall of the Hasina-led government amid an uprising, was arrested on Thursday night from the capital's Khilkhet area.

Yesterday, a Dhaka court placed him on an eight-day remand in a case filed over the death of Shahjahan, a shopkeeper, in the New Market area during the quota reform protest on July 16.

The next day, Ayesha Begum, the mother of the victim, lodged a murder case against some unnamed assailants.

Salman F Rahman, private industry and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

HARASSMENT ON AUGUST 15

It's violation of human rights: Sarjis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sarjis Alam, a key organiser of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, has condemned the attacks and harassment during the observance of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's death anniversary as violations of human rights.

Hundreds of people, many armed with sticks, obstructed people from going to the historic Dhanmondi 32 residence of Bangabandhu to pay their respects on the 49th anniversary of the assassination of the independence hero and the massacre of his family.

Journalists, along with citizens, were barred from filming or taking photos of the incidents.

Speaking to the media at Dhaka University's Amar Ekushey Hall yesterday,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

'Cementing the revolution main focus'

Student protesters say they are not considering floating political party right now

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement is currently focussing on solidifying the revolution earned through a mass uprising rather than floating their own political party.

Nahid Islam, a key coordinator of the platform, which spearheaded the movement that ousted former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, said in a Facebook post yesterday that the purpose of the mass uprising was not to form a political party.

"Right now, we need to support the families of the wounded and martyred and preserve the spirit of reform, nation-building, and national unity. The students and the interim government will work towards that goal."

He added that the abolition of the fascist system and a new political order were part of the one-point demand, and that requires significant effort and political initiative.

"We want to shape the future of Bangladesh through discussions and dialogue with the people...The students will act as a socio-political force to preserve the spirit of the revolution and the government will work towards restructuring the state in accordance to the people's aspirations."

The issue of the formation of a political party by the students came to the fore after Reuters yesterday reported that they were considering creating their own party to cement in place reforms.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Mahfuj Alam,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Israel orders fresh evacuations in Gaza

Drops warning flyers in Khan Younis; ceasefire talks paused with resumption planned next week

AGENCIES

The Israeli army ordered a fresh evacuation of areas in southern and central Gaza previously designated as a humanitarian safe zone yesterday, saying the areas had been used by Hamas as a base for firing mortars and rockets towards Israel.

It said warning flyers and text messages had been sent out in the area north of the southern city of Khan Younis and in the eastern part of Deir Al-Balah, where tens of thousands of people have sought shelter from fighting in other parts of Gaza.

"The advance warning to civilians is being issued in order to mitigate harm to the civilian population and to enable civilians to move away from the combat zone," the military said in a statement.

Earlier the military said it had hit an area in Khan Younis from where rockets were fired towards the community of Kissufim on Thursday, finding weapons including shoulder-fired missiles and explosives.

The latest evacuation warnings came as ceasefire talks in Doha were paused yesterday with negotiators set to meet again next week in search of an agreement to end fighting between Israel and Hamas and free remaining hostages, mediators said.

In a joint statement, the United States, Qatar and Egypt said Washington had presented a new proposal that built on points of agreement over the past week, closing gaps between the sides in a way that could allow rapid implementation of a deal.

Mediators would continue to work on the proposal in coming days, they said. Hamas will not accept "new conditions" from Israel in a proposal put forward during talks in Doha, officials told AFP.

Israel, meanwhile, pressed its assault on Gaza. The Hamas-run health ministry said the military strikes across the enclave killed at least 17 Palestinians yesterday.

Among them, at least six Palestinians were killed on Thursday night in an Israeli air strike on a house in Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza Strip.

Israeli troops earlier hit targets in the southern cities of Rafah and Khan Younis. In a statement issued late on Thursday on Telegram, Hamas politburo member Hossam Badran said Israel's continuing operations were an obstacle to progress on a ceasefire, reports Reuters.

- » New US proposal builds on previous agreements
- » Hamas rejects 'new conditions' in proposed deal
- » Death toll in Gaza rises to 40,022

Thai MPs elect Shinawatra heiress as PM

AFP, *Bangkok*

The 37-year-old daughter of billionaire Thaksin Shinawatra became Thailand's prime minister yesterday, the third member of the influential but divisive clan to lead the country.

Paetongtarn Shinawatra -- the youngest leader in Thailand's history as a constitutional monarchy and the second woman premier after her aunt Yingluck -- assumes office after two court rulings that threw the kingdom's politics into turmoil.

She will hope to avoid the fate of her father and aunt, both of whom were ousted as PM by the army during a two-decade power struggle between Thaksin and the kingdom's conservative pro-military, pro-royalist establishment.

Lawmakers approved Paetongtarn of the Pheu Thai party as premier by 319 votes to 145, House of Representatives Speaker Wan Muhamad Noor Matha said on live TV. Paetongtarn said she was "very honoured and happy".

"I really hope that I can make people feel confident. I hope to improve the quality of lives and empower all Thais," she told reporters.

"I decided that it's about time to do something for the country and the party. I hope that I can do my best to make the country go forward."

Pakistan logs first mpox case

China takes precautions as fears of global spread grow

AFP, *Islamabad*

Pakistan said yesterday it had confirmed a case of mpox, a day after Sweden recorded the first infection outside of Africa involving a new, more dangerous strain of the virus that has killed hundreds in the DR Congo.

China said yesterday it will begin screening people and goods entering the country for mpox over the next six months.

The mpox surge in Africa -- which has also affected Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda -- prompted the World Health Organization on Wednesday to declare a public health emergency of international concern, the highest alarm it can sound.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Palestinians flee with their belongings from Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip to a safer place yesterday after Israel issued a new evacuation order. PHOTO: AFP

Archaeologists find 'hidden empire' in long-lost Roman city

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Archaeologists in Spain have uncovered a trove of ancient Roman settlements that could point to the existence of a "hidden empire" previously unknown to historians.

When researchers from University of Cádiz embarked on their exploration in the Guadalete area in 2023, they only expected to find a few remnants of Roman influence.

Instead, they unearthed 57 sites revealing a complex interconnected web of settlements that may reshape the understanding of Roman history in the area.

The sites were scattered across the Spanish regions of Arcos de la Frontera, Bornos Villamartin and Puerto Serrano and were originally linked by trade and communication routes along the Guadalete river.

Experts believe the sheer number of settlements and their strategic locations suggest the area was far more significant during the Roman era than previously thought.

As part of the ambitious project, the team employed cutting-edge technology, including ground-penetrating radar to detect structures buried beneath the surface.

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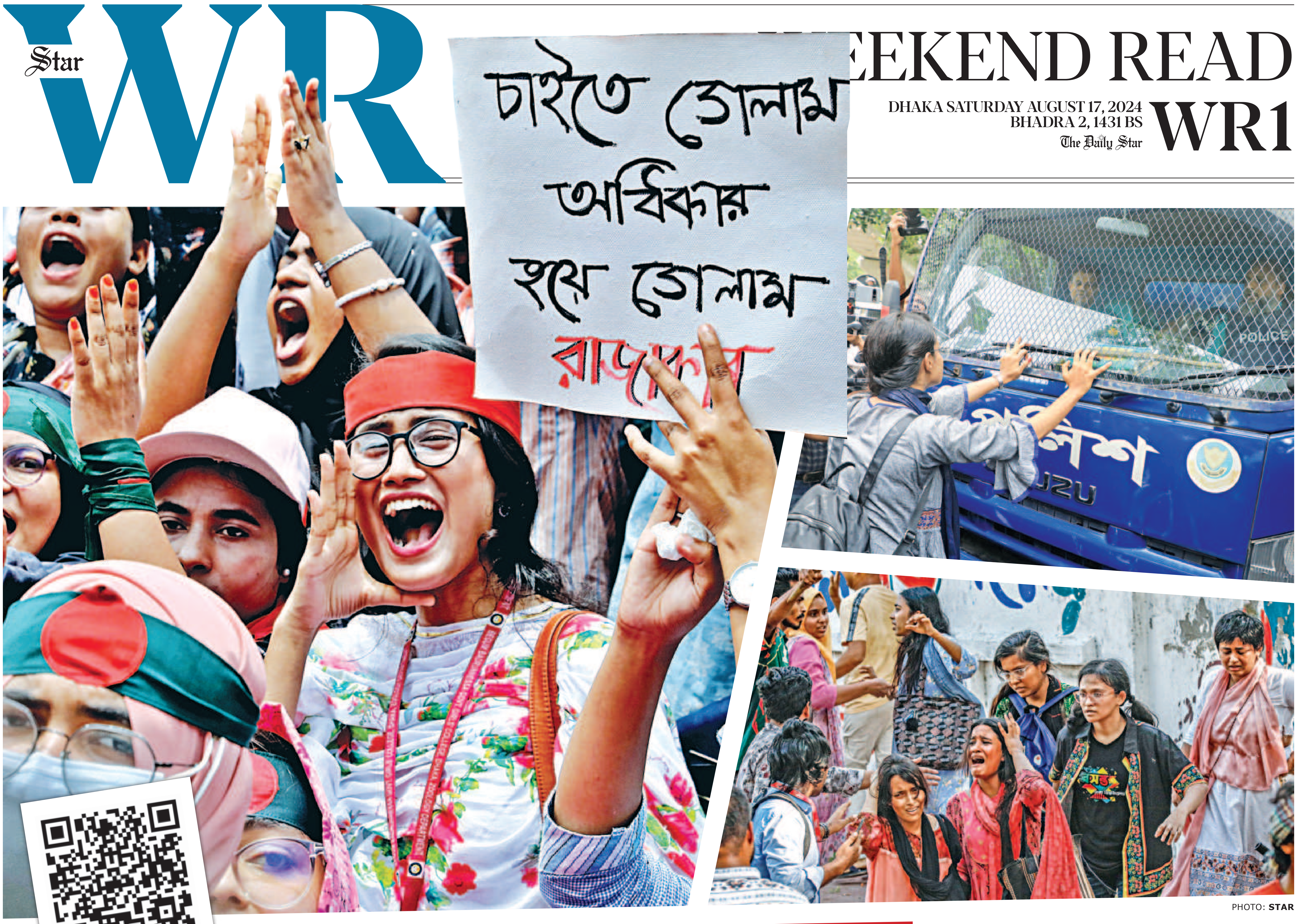

PHOTO: STAR

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FROM RESISTANCE TO REVOLUTION

Women's role in TOPPLING THE GOVT

MASHFIQ MIZAN

A female student, her face streaked with blood, pleads with Chhatra League activists to stop the relentless beatings.

Another lies alone on the ground, surrounded by the taunting faces of Awami League supporters. Two others, sprinting for their lives as BCL members chase them, brandishing rods and sticks.

These were some of the many scenes that emerged from Dhaka University on July 15, when AL and BCL activists attacked quota reform protesters.

Sanjana Afifa, a resident student of Shamsunnahar Hall at DU, said, "Once they [BCL members] spotted us, they lunged towards us and threw brick chunks. We tried to hide, but they hunted us down... At one point, I hid inside a bus and heard the attackers screaming, 'You are razakar (collaborators of the Pakistani army)'. Many of those hiding with me were dragged out and beaten."

The attackers, nearly 500 BCL activists, targeted female students. Their main goal was to prevent the participation of women in the quota reform protest.

But the strategy backfired. The country was outraged, and instead of retreating, the female students rose stronger.

They returned to the protests the next day with a newfound determination.

The movement, which began as a protest against an unfair quota system, evolved into something much greater eventually.

From the beginning of the protests on July 5 to the day Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign and flee on August 5, female students were at the forefront of the movement.

Some scenes from the protests have become emblematic of the resistance. In front of the Supreme Court, a lone female student stood defiantly before a prison van, using her bare hands to stop it from driving away with her detained friends.

Tangila Tasnim, a resident of Ruqayyah Hall at DU, joined the protests on July 5 not because she aimed to secure a government job, but to ensure fairness for those who did.

"It was all peaceful until Sheikh Hasina called us razakars. We could not accept it," she said.

The female dormitories of DU generally get locked within 10:00pm.

But on July 14, after Hasina's controversial press conference, at least 700 Ruqayyah Hall students broke the gates of the dorm at 11:30pm and took to the streets. Students from all the female dormitories then joined in at midnight.

But on July 15, Tangila and her friends were targeted and assaulted by BCL members.

They returned the next day armed with pepper spray and sticks.

On July 16 night, Ruqayyah Hall became the first to chase away BCL leaders, rest of the female dorms followed, eventually setting off a wave of similar actions across all male halls.

"Dhaka University dormitories were bastions of BCL for 15 long years. What the female students started [chasing BCL away] was unthinkable even a few hours before it actually happened," Tangila said.

The next day, the campus was besieged by police, BGB, and Rab. A sudden directive ordered the evacuation of all dorms.

Tangila, who was off-campus at the time, managed to sneak back in, pack her belongings, and join a protest near the Mall Chattar.

However, when the procession reached the DU public library, it was met with tear gas and sound grenades from the police. Tangila first took refuge in Kalabhaban, then at Jashim Uddin Hall.

Then police started firing in front of the dormitories. Tangila narrowly escaped rubber bullets and shotgun pellets.

"I thought I would be killed," she recalled, as she fled her campus under a hail of gunfire.

She sought refuge in houses of two former DU students. She could not leave Dhaka as the country turned into a warzone by then.

On August 3, Tangila left Dhaka for her home in Rajshahi, hiding her student ID card throughout the journey, fearing it had become a mark of criminality.

She believed she might never return to Dhaka, but then, on August 5, Sheikh Hasina resigned. Tangila said, "Sheikh Hasina resigned, and I got my normal life back."

Nourin Sultana Toma, a Dhaka University student, joined the quota reform protests on July 5. After BCL attacked students on July 15, Toma was forced to return home to Savar.

"However, after I saw the video of Abu Sayed being shot dead by police on July 16, I was outraged. I knew the Hasina government must go. I told my parents I had work, left home, and called them from campus, saying I wouldn't return until we got justice for the murder," Toma recalled how she rejoined the protests.

After the brutal clear-out of the campus, Toma sought refuge in Azimpur Government Colony, in a sublet flat.

On July 18, when law enforcers opened fire on protesters outside the colony, Toma retreated but found her building's gate locked.

She took shelter in another building, where she and others tended to the wounded.

The violence continued the next day.

Sensing the imminent threat of arrest as curfews and internet shutdowns gripped the city, Toma left Azimpur for Savar.

"The night I left, a block raid happened, my room was searched by police. They arrested some of my female friends who stayed back and warned flat owners not to rent to students anymore."

Back in Savar, Toma joined the protests at Jahangirnagar University. She painted graffiti demanding Hasina's resignation.

On August 4, following a call for a march to Dhaka demanding Hasina's resignation, Toma told herself, "I will return to Dhaka, or die trying."

On August 5, Toma, alongside a female friend, braved police, BGB, and army checkpoints to return to Dhaka. Shots rang out near Shahbagh and Central Shaheed Minar, but they pressed on.

Despite their crucial role in the revolution, these women felt sidelined after August 5.

"We are only talking about a select few individuals while discussing the mass uprising," Toma said.

She said the contributions of women, as well as students from Jahangirnagar University, private universities, schools, colleges, and even rickshaw pullers, should be recognised and celebrated.

Mifthaul Janat Mithila, a college student, joined the protests after witnessing BCL activists attacking protesters at Dhaka University.

"After finishing our HSC exam on July 15, I saw pictures of our senior sisters being beaten by BCL men. I couldn't just sit back. I joined the protests the very next day," she recalled.

"I saw people being killed, my friends being arrested, police shooting at us. But we did not back down," she said.

Sazzad Hosain, another college student, said he fell unconscious after BCL members attacked him in the Science Lab area.

"When I regained consciousness, I found myself in a city hospital, being cared for by female students. They brought me there, risking their lives. If they hadn't, I would have bled to death."

His friend, Al Fahad, said after being attacked and handed over to the police by BCL, he was saved by female students who intervened.

"The police were trying to take me away, but some apus [sisters] arrived like angels and held onto me tightly. They didn't let me go."

'MOTHERS OF MARTYRS'

On July 19, as the BGB fired live bullets at protesters in the Bansree and Rampura areas, many women, mostly mothers, acted as human shields to protect the students.

These women provided first aid and water to students, and also took the injured to hospitals. When the student dormitories were cleared and block raids began, they opened their homes to protesters, offering shelter.

Many mothers also lost their children since July 18.

Selina Begum, the mother of 18-year-old Shawon, who was shot dead by BGB in Rampura, said, "My son died a martyr. I am a proud mother."

Similarly, Yasina Akhter, whose 16-year-old son Ahmed Imran was killed by police in Narayanganj, said, "I am proud to be a mother of a martyr."

FACES OF THE REVOLUTION

Nusrat Tabassum is one of the six protest coordinators who was detained by the DB without formal charges and coerced into making a statement to withdraw all protest programmes.

On the night of July 19, DB officers entered her home without a warrant, she said.

They detained her and subjected her to severe physical and mental torture over six days, using intimidation tactics to extract statements.

Eventually, after starting a hunger strike in protest, Nusrat and the others were informed they would be released, she added.

On the protests of July 14 against Hasina's statement, she said, "That night, we didn't expect all the female students to gather in just a few minutes. The consensus among the women was clear: if the male students were barred from coming out of their halls by BCL, we would break the male dormitories locks and get our brothers out."

"When we gathered at Raju Sculpture, there were only a handful of male students present. We marched to the VC's office, and eventually, the male students joined us. We returned to the hall around 2:00am."

On July 16, as police opened fire inside DU, the female students were the last to leave their halls, she said.

Rafia Rehnuma, a female leader of the movement, said they held strong despite facing brutal attacks, and fought till the last day alongside their male counterparts.

Umama Fatema, another female leader of DU, echoed her.

She said they don't want dormitory based student politics, rather she called for student council elections.

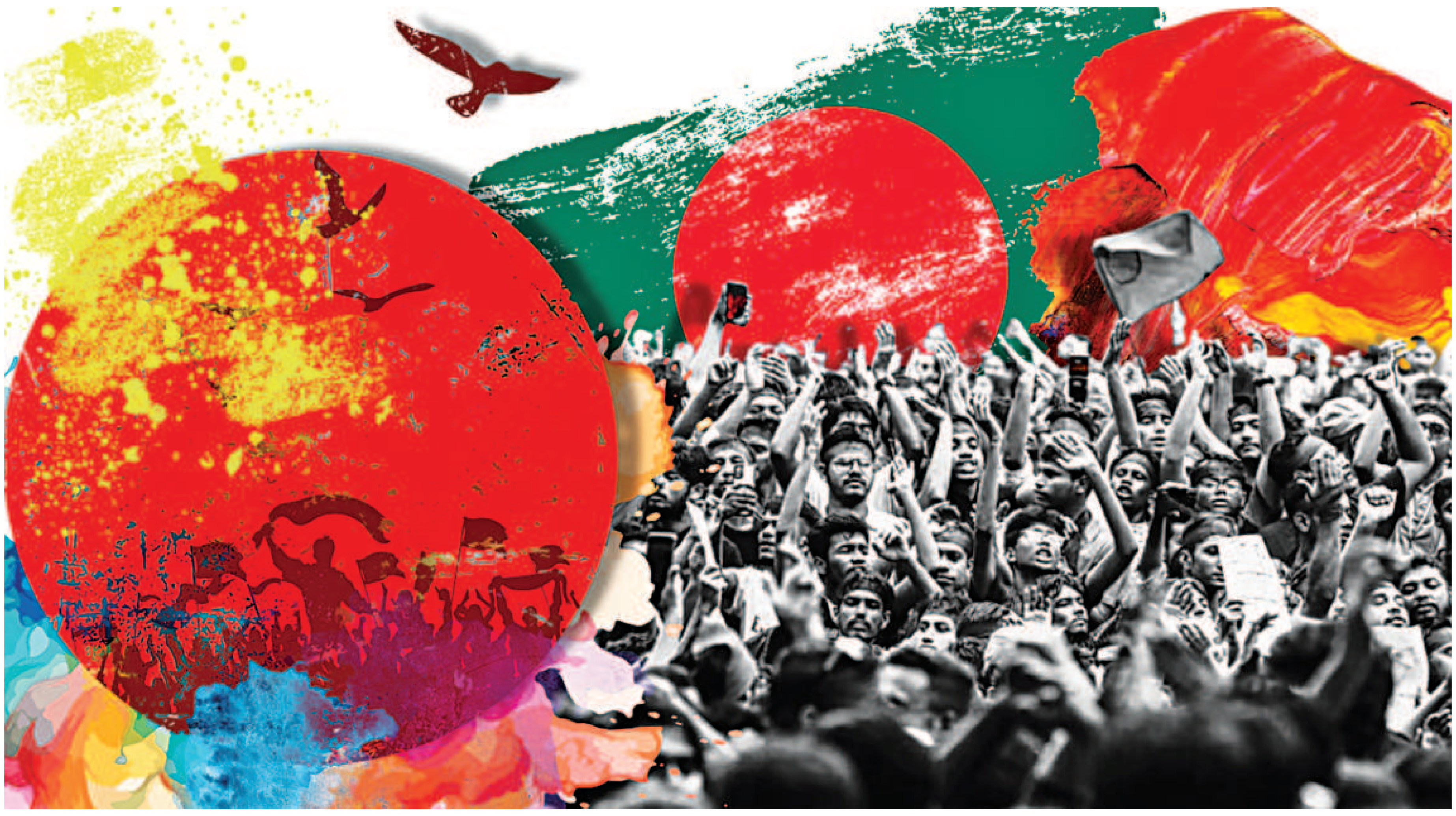


PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON** | ILLUSTRATION: **MAISHA SYEDA**

CREATIVE NONFICTION

Not waiting for answers

Are our bodies an extension of the land we are born into? Do footsteps over our native terrains vibrate in our insides? Do the silences of its hidden silos create pockets of voids in our lungs and minds?

IFFAT NAWAZ

How long does a corpse of a hero take to rot? 50 years or more? What about the corpses of martyrs? One week? 10 days? The 40-day mark to blow the candles of funeral fires? What if these corpses were mummified and inserted into living bodies by some strange mechanism, then does the soul of a bygone hero survive intermingling with the soul of the living? Do we even have souls? Do they also know how to cry? Do the dead leave the world at all? Mixing with the soil beneath and the air above water–do they become dark-skinned fruits, hard-pitted seeds, scentless flowers?

Do the unhealed, vengeful living misconstrue the words of the corpses they carry? Can corpses talk? Can the past's language still be relevant today? Do pasts speak only on repeat, in muted sighs and high volumes on screens to remind us how dead they are? Do these pasts ever beg to be let go? Do these pasts want to swallow whole the living which use them to survive?

What's the meaning of survivor's guilt and how many of us have it? How many times can an event be played on loop for it to lose its power? What are the dilemmas of the ones who hang in the middle? Besides shelter and food? Is it that we always have too much to lose yet not enough to go by? Is it our supposed clear conscience matched with bent spines? Is it fear of deaths and tears shed over recent corpses which have turned our clocks counterwise?

Are we stuck or are we moving forward? Is death yesterday's news or is it tomorrow's? Can we lend courage from posterity to untie our hands, so we can hold the truth that keeps sliding by?

What's the maximum length of time we are allowed to stay in purgatories? Do limbos run out of space or give up replicating patterns of demise? Does history really repeat itself? Or are we struck by some magician's dark spell, reenacting history–painted on walls, bleeding till we fall, to become corpses in a soulless world–bulldozed, stampeded, wiped clean for a future that resembles old sorrows?

Are our bodies an extension of the land we are born into? Do footsteps over our native terrains vibrate in our insides? Do the silences of its hidden silos create pockets of voids in our lungs and minds?

Do we all carry remains of war-fields in our ribcages? Do we then lie down with the weight of ancient weapons, face-up to the sun, and beg for mercy, for Grace to enter, to pardon us for crimes we committed and didn't, for words we spoke and that which remained unspoken, for our breaths which always feel borrowed? Should we cut open our chests, exposing our hearts and its muffled screams? Are there any tears left to shed by the clouds who stare at us cold and distant, can they break open blood-stained skies?

And then when the sky breaks, do we howl from the base of our spines, all of which we had held inside–disguised, disowned? Do we learn how to swim in mud to become lotus buds or do we get stuck between yesterday's wrath and today's shifting power? Who do we trust? Can we even trust our own impulses, emotions? Can we grow new ears to differentiate truths from half-truths and half-lies? Or do we spend a few days in stillness to stop the earthquake and its aftershocks or have our nerves turned to steel? Is anyone working on calming our insides, banking on the overused but unignorable word––heal?

Did someone tell us that victory can also be vicious? Do we draw boundaries in our celebrations or let our joy run wild while mobs ravage our earth in the name of justice and pent-up scorn? Will we always have scores to settle, is forgiveness just a myth we were told about, are its edges too soft to carry, its voice too bold?

Do all deaths–of children, young ones, mothers, fathers, animals, objects, nations, trees, beliefs, hope, identity and foresight–reincarnate to bring us peace? How long do we have to wait for clarity? How long till the unheard speaks?

Will the world revolve faster tomorrow? Spin us out of our morbid guises and fling us to someplace fresh and high? Do we dare ask the Universe to whimper, do we dare go off orbit searching for a guiltless star's warmth and light?

Iffat Nawaz *is a Bangladeshi-American writer based in Pondicherry, India. Her first novel* Shurjo's Clan *was published by Penguin India (Vintage) in 2022, and was shortlisted for the Best First Book Award by Tata Lit Live/ Mumbai Literature Festival in 2023.*

POETRY

The children of the red storm

TAHSEEN NOWER PRACHI

You've ignited a tempest,
a crimson anger,
A defiance burning brighter than the summer's sun.
They'd armored the skies,
and paved the earth with steel,
A chilling sword of blooded power,
raw and cold.
Days bleed into nights,
as wounds begin to heal,
Yet courage persisted,
stories yet untold.
We yearned for triumph,
a rise of liberty's gleam,
But memory's echo whispered
coldly of winter's chill.
Millions of hearts restless,
Dreaming a fervent dream,
Of a nation transformed,
where justice runs its fill.
They fabricated sunshine,
a plastic, hollow sphere,
While outside, Commander Bengal Rain,
too roared in cheer.
Now, victory's dawn has come,
We'll also bring questions anew,
For power once grasped,
is hard to subdue.
Debating with questions to whoever's rule,
with youths' voices now strong,
Demand explanations,
where playing with power goes wrong.
No longer the silenced,
the fearful and meek,
Shape our own destiny,
Your future to seek.

Tahseen Nower Prachi *is a writer whose head is a koi pond of micro tales too scattered to come down to her keyboard. For more of her little pieces follow The Minute Chronicles on Facebook.*

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

POETRY

The color of courage

MARZIA RAHMAN

Surely, it's madness
it's insanity—that he walked on.
That he stood alone, facing
hundreds of the police with their rifles
pointing at him.
And
he shouted.
And
he showed—what courage looks like.
What youth is made of.
Right then, there, the shot was fired.
Valor lay still on the dusty street, dripping
blood, colouring the earth
with the colour of courage—RED.
RED
1. The colour that screams like police vans, the rifles, pointed at people, point-black.
2. The blood stains on the clothes after the bricks are thrown, after the shots are fired.
3. After the bodies are dragged down the roads, leaving marks.
4. How the protesters with posters and banners look like in daylight!
5. How the streets filled with graffiti look like in moonlight!
6. The colour of Facebook screens on a particular day for a particular cause.
7. The colour of rebellion, hundreds of thousands of closed fists, shouting reform.
8. The colour of sky, just after dusk, heralding a new beginning, a new era.
9. The procession, carrying flags, celebrating victory.
10. The colour of freedom.

Marzia Rahman *is a flash fiction writer and translator. Author of two books,* The Aftermath *and* Dot and Other Flashes, *she has been published widely in both print and online journals.*

MEMOIR

Days in the blackout

MALIHA TRIBHU

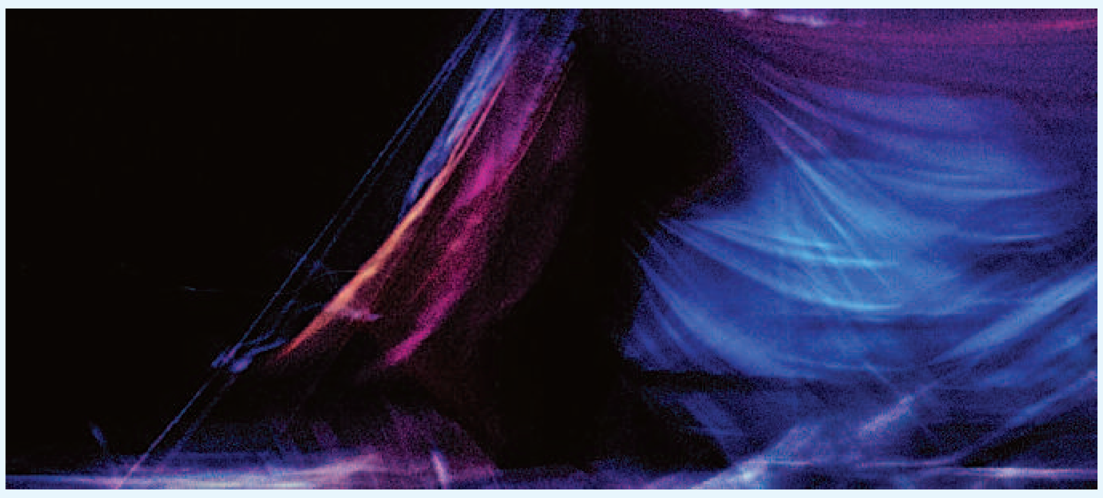


PHOTO: **MAISHA SYEDA**

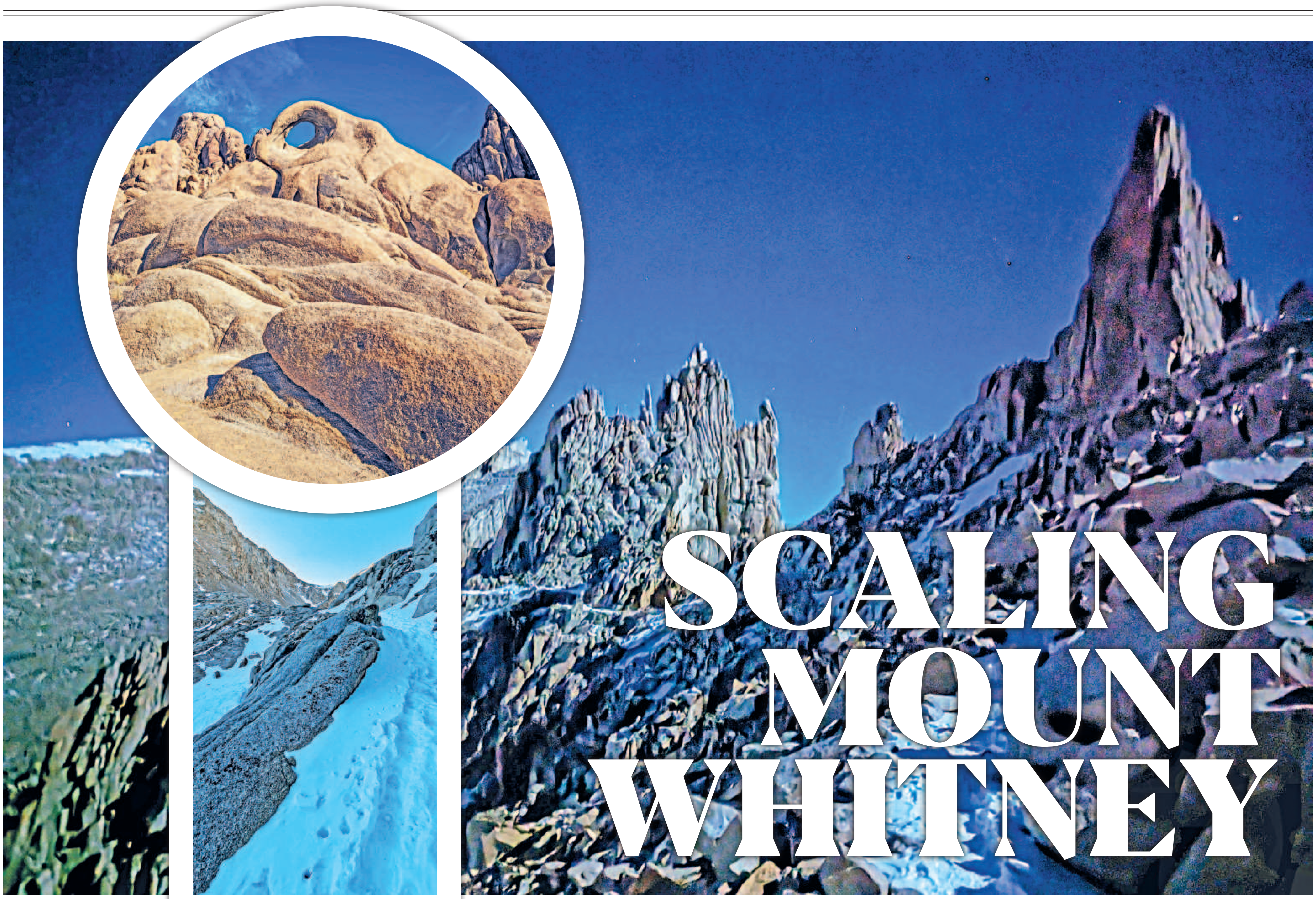
The silence forced upon the mass came on a sudden Thursday, as all means of communication were shut down abruptly overnight. A sense of terror rising over the nation, mothers wailing for their lost child, fathers running on the streets looking for their sons. Somewhere afar the sounds of gunshots and grenades fade behind the roaring sirens of patrolling police cars. The once scarlet-red streets and alleyways are now enveloped with dust and burnt out garbage from the past week; a rather cunning attempt at damage control, they'd say. The radios only cover their shuffled playlists on repeat, the televisions show their routined statements and further schedules about the ongoing curfews, and a falsified hope to calm down the distressed, "the situation is under complete control", they said. When an entire nation burns and bleeds at the cost of speaking up for their rights, the general people count their days of survival under repeated internet shutdowns and strict curfews. Although, it doesn't seem to affect them as much. Like a normal Sunday, the vegetables vendors hollers in the alleyways with their freshly brought tomatoes and cucumbers, the neighboring women quarreling with the vendors over the hiking prices of onions and chillies, elderly men idling away their times sitting at the street-side tea stalls, debating over their senseless notions of prejudices and superstitions—war hasn't reached over to these alleyways just yet it seemed.

Here, some sleep at night without a single noise coming out of their windows, some sleep in terror as the helicopters continue to fly off of their skylines. One... Two... Three... Ten... The child falls asleep counting the roaring choppers instead of sheeps. The mother weeps silently in a quiet corner upon the prayer mat, asking the Almighty for the impossible. Somewhere far away, far into the future where past is only a falsification deemed to be the truth accepted by the mass; someone repeats the rhyme as a lullaby to their wailing children, to shut them up from asking too much—

"Here comes a candle to light you to bed

And here comes a chopper to chop off your head!"

Maliha Tribhu is a writer, currently an undergraduate majoring in marketing at the University of Dhaka.



SCALING MOUNT WHITNEY

Soon, I realised that the thermal water bottle I had was no match for this extreme cold as the water started to freeze inside the bottle. I looked around; the large lake was completely frozen, and it was certain that no water source would be available throughout the climb to refill my bottle.

EASHAN HASAN
a graduate teaching assistant at University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is an avid trekker and nature lover.

Want to share your travel experiences with us? Please send your stories to **holiday@thedailystar.net**

EASHAN HASAN

"My God! How can a mountain change so much in just a month?"

Standing just below the summit of Mt. Whitney in the Sierra, I couldn't help but wonder if this was the mountain I had researched for hours.

It was late, almost evening. The early December sun in the west was setting quickly as if it was in a race. I stood alone halfway up an icy slope, panting heavily. A gust of brutally cold, dry winter air slashed my face like a sharp knife as I looked up. The summit of Mt. Whitney in the great Sierra was just about a hundred feet away, the last pitch before the top. My lips and throat felt as dry as desert sands, desperately craving a sip of water. But alas, all I had in my insulated, thermal bottle were ice clusters – the negative thirty-degree Celsius temperature was too much for the bottle to keep the water in its liquid form.

"Just a little more, just a few minutes to the top," I tried to motivate myself. Alone in that ethereal environment, I couldn't help but remember what brought me there.

For some time, I wanted to add the experience of a winter solo climb to my repertoire, and my eyes fixed on Mt. Whitney for a couple of reasons. First and foremost, the magnificent Sierra Nevada -- the mountain range home to this peak. "There's nothing like the Sierra," the words from the legendary mountaineer John Muir had been playing in the back of my mind for quite a while, and I was keen to explore those incredible mountains.

The thought of attempting Mt. Whitney, the highest peak (14,497 feet) in the continental US (excluding Alaska), as my first winter solo, was quite appealing.

Another reason was the beauty of the trail leading to the basecamp and the relatively low technicality of the climb under normal conditions. Though the trail is around 34 kilometres long, the actual climb is non-technical in its normal climbing season until late October.

After that, the snowfall starts and the trail gets buried under tonnes of winter snow, raising the difficulties of the climb significantly. The winter climb requires proper gear and preparation to survive in the extreme cold. Finding a route through the white ice becomes a daunting challenge.

Winter arrives in the Sierra Nevada around mid to late November, so I set my plan in motion following the Thanksgiving holidays. After flying to Nevada, I drove to the Alabama Hills, a picturesque desert nestled in the Sierra foothills. I camped overnight there to acclimate and started my hike from the trailhead the next day around 11:00am. With the vast distance ahead, the plan was to cover at least a third of the distance and establish a basecamp for shelter against the biting cold wind. The trail quickly steepened, soon disappearing beneath soft layers of snow that hardened as elevation increased, obscuring any discernible path. Not many people climb in the Sierra during winter, so there was not much beta data to know what to expect beforehand. As I neared my probable basecamp, the plummeting afternoon temperature, the almost frozen lakes, and the amount of snow on everything made me realize that it was going to be a lot tougher than I thought.

After setting up my campsite at a good spot protected by a big boulder, I cooked, had my meal, and went to sleep early. The wind intensity and the harsh cold increased ferociously with time. Though I had prepared my sleeping system well for the extreme cold at night, it still felt too much at times. The sleep was erratic, and as a result, I woke up about three hours late. Instead of my planned 3:00 am start, it was now 6:30 am when I finally left my campsite for the summit push with a 10.5-kilometer distance and a 4,500-foot elevation gain ahead.

I took my first break at Consultation Lake after a couple of hours to have my peanut butter-chocolate sandwich. Soon, I realised that the thermal water bottle I had was no match for this extreme cold as the water started to freeze inside the bottle. I looked around; the large lake was completely frozen, and it was certain that no water source would be available throughout the climb to refill my bottle. So, if my water froze, I wouldn't have any other option except to crush that ice with the pointy end of my ice axe and chew on it!

Despite being a bit frustrated, I decided to move forward. After a short while, I reached the notorious "99 switchbacks" section where the trail became extremely dangerous as it steeply traversed the mountain, and there were places where a slip could be fatal. What began as a strenuous uphill snow hike had become a formidable test of endurance and skill amidst frozen landscapes and treacherous conditions. Negotiating through snow, rock, and ice demanded expert route-finding and the fortitude to withstand extreme cold and furious wind gusts – a true testament to the resilience required for a winter ascent.

Time was flying by, and in contrast, I was advancing at a sloth-like pace with a constant feeling of dehydration and the fear of altitude sickness that comes with it. It was late afternoon when I got a clear view of the summit, which was still about an hour away by my estimation. Though the weather was pretty good with a blue, clear sky and still some warm sunlight left, I knew the temperature would drop at least ten degrees more just after sunset. I hastily moved forward and soon stumbled upon the last pitch – fifty meters of an icy section just before the summit.

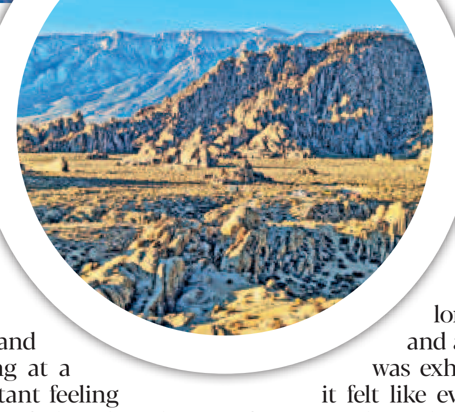
What would be just boulder-hopping in normal conditions was now under feet of solid, slippery snow. I looked at the slope – it did not look good with its formidable gradient. I was using microspikes, a traction device similar to crampons but not as good as the actual ones, so I could not be very secure about footing on that slippery ice. It would have to be one step – strike the axe into the ice – pull the body up using the axe – another step – and repeat probably a hundred more times. It was surely going to be a tough, tiring climb!

> **With the vast distance ahead, the plan was to cover at least a third of the distance and establish a basecamp for shelter against the biting cold wind. The trail quickly steepened, soon disappearing beneath soft layers of snow that hardened as elevation increased, obscuring any discernible path.**

As every nightmare ended, that pitch was over just a few minutes before sunset. I reached the top, ate a few Oreo cookies I had with me, chewed some of those ice clusters again to keep myself hydrated, and experienced one of the best sunset views of my life. It was a surreal moment – summiting the highest peak of the incredible Sierra in those winter conditions, finding myself way above all the clouds with the grand panoramic view of this marvellous range, and witnessing the last rays of the sun over the region before it set.

But I had to climb down quickly reigning in all emotions as it would be dangerous to climb down that last pitch in the dark.

As expected, the night was even colder, and I had to keep moving constantly because my body started to freeze every time I stopped for a second. But I still couldn't resist stopping to marvel at the epic scenery of the moonlit mountains.



My God! It was undoubtedly the most wonderful moonlit night I have ever witnessed.

Despite the breathtaking beauty, I was climbing down swiftly, almost running, thanks to the slope and gravity. It took just half the time to reach my basecamp compared to the ascent, and "Ah, peace!" I exclaimed loudly, drinking the "liquid" water after almost a day.

So yes, it was a ten-hour long push to reach the summit, and another five to come down. I was exhausted and heavily drained; it felt like every system in my body was frozen, and my lips and face were dried and burning from the extremely cold, biting wind. All twenty fingers felt almost numb all day, even after wearing Gore-Tex gloves, boots, and layering with multiple socks. I was constantly worried about getting frostbite. But still, the wonderful feeling of standing on top of the majestic Sierra Nevada, the mesmerizing beauty of the sunset and moonlit mountains, and the adrenaline rush – nothing could beat that combination.

KOREAN EPZ

A modern facility draped in greenery

The KEPZ covers 2,492 acres of land, of which 52 percent is kept green by plantations, water bodies and open areas. It has 33 lakes and waterbodies that attract around 137 species of birds and more than 87 mammals

JAGARAN CHAKMA *and*
SOHEL PARVEZ

Our journey to the Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ), an eco-friendly industrial area in Chattogram, began on a sunny morning.

Upon reaching our destination located in Anowara, about 40 kilometers southeast of Chattogram, we passed through an automated entrance and observed several well-designed, multi-storied buildings.

To the right, a warehouse and a highly sophisticated factory operated by a world-renowned company came into view. On the left, a vast facility to produce much-needed manmade fibre (polyester yarn) caught our attention although it was still under construction.

We then drove past a long stretch of factory units housing padding, printing, and garment-making facilities.

Initially, everything was quiet. Security personnel, on high alert, were the only ones visible outside the large prefabricated structures.

As we continued, we found ourselves surrounded by lush greenery and complete tranquillity. The landscape featured shrubs, trees such as ear leaf acacias, and small lakes nestled between rolling hills.

If fortunate like us, one might catch a glimpse of a wild elephant peacefully grazing on the shoreline opposite one of the lakes, where a dense green forest adds to the sense of seclusion and wilderness.

The KEPZ covers 2,492 acres of land, of which 52 percent is kept green by plantations, water bodies and open areas.

This unique zone is the country's only private export processing area where humans, machines, flora and fauna peacefully coexist.

Within the industrial enclave, there are 33 lakes and waterbodies, which attract around 137 species of bird and more than 87 mammals.

A subsidiary of the South Korean Youngone Corporation, the KEPZ currently hosts 48 industrial units, largely under the ownership of Youngone.

Youngone is recognised as one of the early leaders in setting up garment factories in Bangladesh for overseas exports.

Its EPZ-based factories specialise in producing premium jackets, trousers made from synthetic fibre, sports shoes, leather handbags, backpacks, and travel bags for international retail markets.

Presently, the KEPZ factories collectively export goods worth approximately $400 million each year.

"Our goal is to increase annual exports to $1.2 billion from the KEPZ. We are optimistic about reaching this target once the facility is operating at full capacity," Md Shahjahan, managing director of the Korean EPZ (KEPZ) Corporation (BD) Ltd, shared during our meeting at the dormitory, which provides accommodation for overseas employees and clients.

Since the commencement of the project, the KEPZ has created direct job opportunities for 31,000 individuals, most of whom are female, within the industrial facilities. It has also created over 25,000 indirect jobs outside the zone.

The private industrial enclave commenced operations in 2011 under the Bangladesh Private EPZ Act.

"This area was once an undulating and sandy hillock, with most of it being 'khas' land that was left barren. We developed this area while preserving its natural surroundings," Shahjahan stated.

Officials reported that they had planted 27 lakh trees to enhance forestry, encompassing over 400 plant species.

A six-kilometre main road has been constructed by the authorities to facilitate the transportation of raw materials and finished goods to and from factories, with a total road network of 40 kilometres within the KEPZ.

The KEPZ is the third major project undertaken by Youngone, following their decision to start manufacturing garments for export markets in 1980.

Youngone Chairman Kihak Sung, a Korean national, chose to invest in Chattogram, leading the way in garment production in Bangladesh through a partnership with a local company. Production began in a rented facility in the port city.

In 1987, Youngone set up a factory in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone. The Dhaka EPZ started operations in 1993 with Youngone's first investment.

Shaikh Shahinur Rahman, managing director of Youngone Group in Bangladesh, explained that all these factories specialised in producing apparel from manmade fibre.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

The Korean investor diversified its production to include shoe manufacturing and emphasised expansion in 1997.

As per the authorities, of the 2,492 acres of land, 52 percent (1,296 acres) has been transformed into green areas to comply with the Environment Clearance certificate from the Department of Environment.

The remaining 48 percent (1,196 acres) has been designated for industrial use, including roads, utilities, and other logistical and infrastructural facilities.

Within this 48 percent, 30 percent is allocated to roads, utilities, and infrastructure, leaving 812 acres for industrial development.

A significant portion of this land has already been allocated to various investors for industrial setup, with 732 acres already developed.

Currently, factories and related facilities have been established on 600 acres while construction is ongoing on the remaining land.

Youngone is planning to construct 16 24-storey buildings in the private EPZ for software and IT development.

Shahjahan stated that they are exploring the idea of creating mixed-use towers in the IT block, which would offer both work and living facilities, in anticipation of generating 20,000 IT-related jobs.

This underlines further diversification.

In addition to garment, textile, and footwear facilities, Youngone has also set up 10 design and development centres (DDC) for global retailers and brands to create their products for international markets. These DDCs were designed by leading local architects, and are already operational.

"We do not allow polluting industries in the KEPZ. Any investor looking to set up textile and dyeing factories must establish effluent treatment plants (ETP)," he firmly stated.

KEPZ especially focuses on renewable energy and thereby supports the development of rooftop solar power technology as a way to produce renewable energy and decrease reliance on fossil fuels.

Youngone has established a 40-MW solar rooftop power plant in the KEPZ, which is the biggest in Bangladesh.

The foreign investor has also established dormitories to accommodate 5,400 female workers, alongside a medical centre and daycare facilities for working parents.

An automated kitchen prepares food to serve as lunch to the workers at a nominal price of Tk 2 only. The lunch hour begins at 11:30am and continues until 2:00pm to ensure that workers of all units can have their lunch in batches.

After moving from one production unit to another, we reached the canteen around 1:30 pm. The atmosphere was bustling, with workers chatting and engaging in various activities around the lunch tables.

Men and women, all holding blue tokens, stood in line patiently to receive their meals.

Upon entering the kitchen, Ferdous Al Kowser, the deputy general manager at Youngone Corporation in Dhaka, proudly stated: "We have a nutritionist who oversees the quality of food served to our workers."

Nearby is a medical facility where we found nearly a dozen of workers waiting to see doctors.

At the end of the workday, the fair price shop at KEPZ is bustling with activity.

Shahjahan stated that a majority of the workforce in the KEPZ are from nearby communities and started earning for the first time after joining the factories.

The employment opportunities have provided economic independence to female workers in the area, he added.

The creation of jobs in this area has led to an improvement in the socioeconomic condition. As a result, the local economy is thriving due to the increased spending by residents. Additionally, over 600 vehicles are utilised daily to transport workers to and from surrounding villages.

Asked about the incentives for investment in KEPZ, he informed that investors get all fiscal and non-fiscal benefits established by the government.

Shahjahan also added that chairman Sung has a vision to uplift the socioeconomic condition of Youngone's workforce.

He plans to build an international standard medical complex, which will include a general and specialised hospital, medical college, nursing college, and health technology institutes, to provide the best healthcare services to workers and their families.

He also aims to establish a technical institute and general education facilities to improve the skills of employees.

Sung also emphasises health and hygiene of the people of surrounding villages. To achieve this, a massive cleaning and awareness campaign is underway.

As we wrapped up our activities and started heading back in the evening, the main road, which had been quiet all day, suddenly became crowded with male and female workers, eagerly awaiting their rides home.

It was around 7:30pm when we arrived at the main entrance of the KEPZ.

In the distance, the sound of security personnel blowing whistles could be heard, helping workers get on buses and electric three-wheelers in an organised manner.

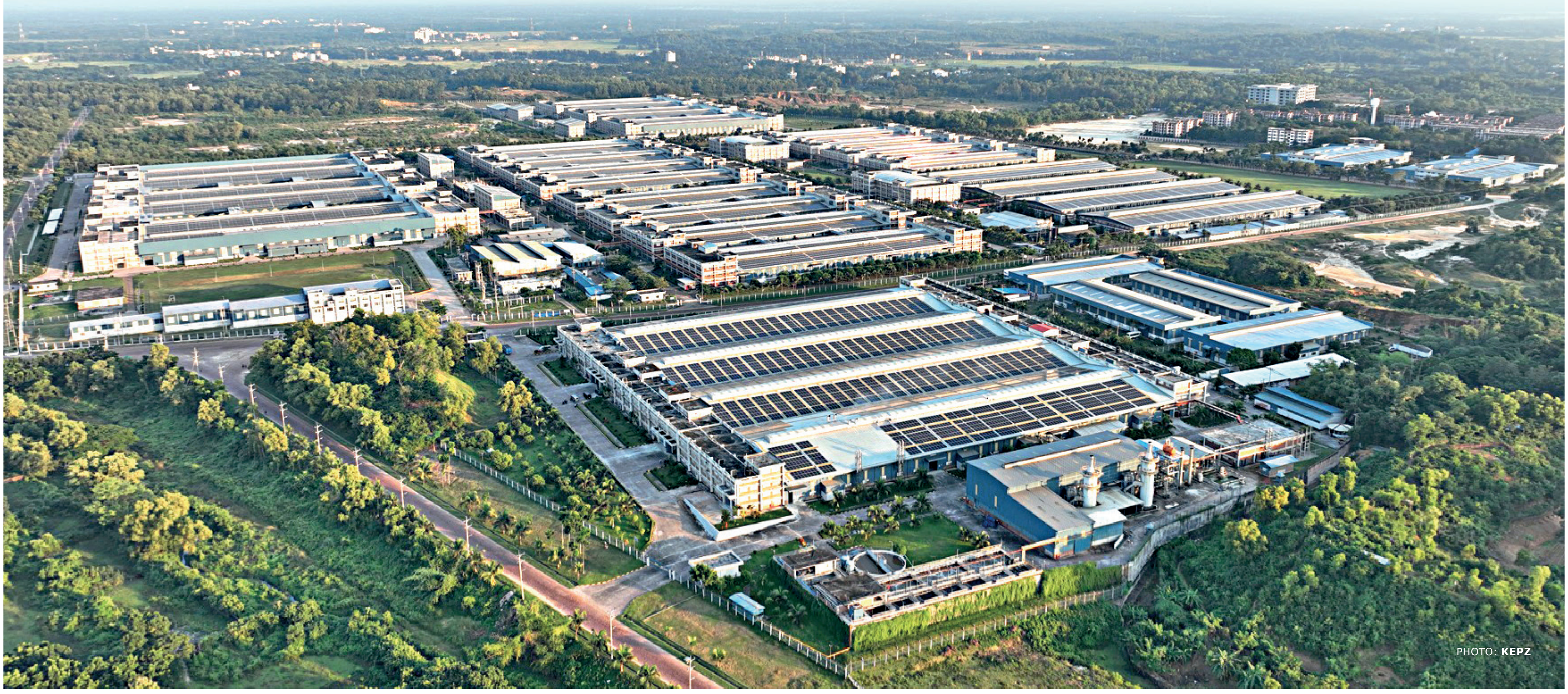


PHOTO: **KEPZ**

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BB may increase policy rate

B1

Footballers demand BPL with all clubs

P11

The tasks ahead for Bangladesh

P9

Dengue: August deadliest month of 2024

P3

Civil admin still on edge

BAHARAM KHAN

Chaotic is the word that best describes the days at the Secretariat after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government of 15 years on August 5.

Those who were denied promotions for political reasons or poor track records; those who were given promotions but not their placement of choice; and those who are in good positions but were denied a big promotion for below-par performance are agitating -- all at the same time.

Throughout last week, processions were seen every few hours. None of those were to press home demands for improved public services but for personal benefits.

"I have never seen such a situation in my 29 years of service -- it is unimaginable that BCS cadres of the Secretariat can behave like this," said a secretary who asked not to be named to speak candidly on the issue.

It is a "chaotic' situation", he said, adding that such a situation has arisen due to a lack of qualified leadership.

"This administration is rotten. We have failed to set a good example in the administration," the secretary added.

So disorderly are things that the ministries housed in the Secretariat have not been able to do their normal work since August 5.

However, the ministries and departments that have new advisers or secretaries are returning to normalcy.

To avoid getting heckled, Mohammed Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, the senior secretary of the ministry of public administration, comes to the Secretariat occasionally.

> **"This administration is rotten. We have failed to set a good example."**
> A secretary who asked not to be named

But he is struggling to handle the aspirants for promotion, The Daily Star has learnt with people familiar with the proceedings.

The chief adviser is at the helm of the ministry along with several other ministries. The ministry, the most important in state administration, does not have a dedicated adviser.

Besides, Cabinet Secretary Md Mahbub Hossain is not coming to the Secretariat at all from August 6. He is discharging his duties by going to the office of the chief adviser of the interim government or the Bangabhaban.

The Daily Star spoke with a host of mid-level officials, who attributed the current state of general administration to two issues.

Firstly, the top brass of the current administration -- the secretaries -- have not been able to set an example of integrity in their work and leadership.

"This is why most of the secretaries did not join office after the fall of the Hasina government. As a result, subordinates do not respect them," said one of the officials.

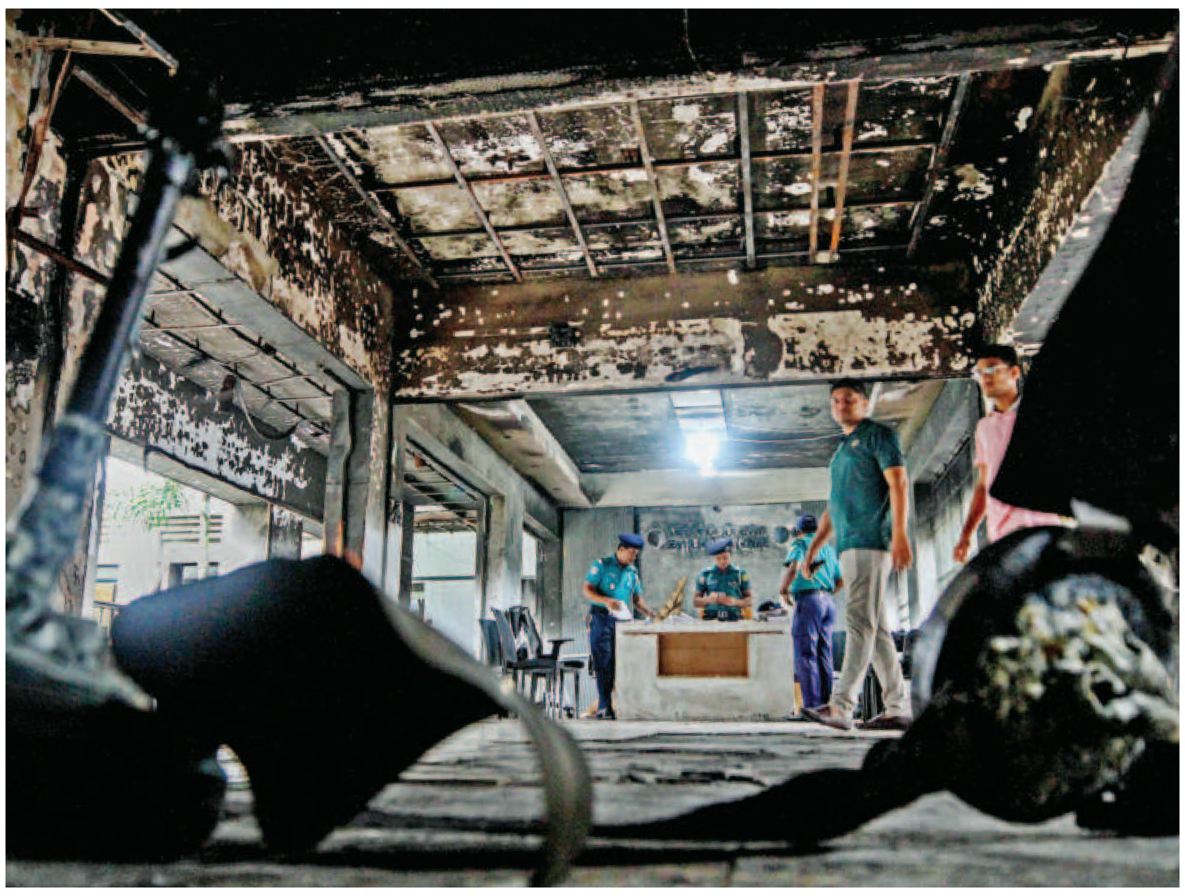
During the past regime, the top officials have only spent their time taking various benefits including promotion, and contractual appointments, said a joint secretary of the public administration ministry on the condition of anonymity.

In the last decade and a half, no administrative reforms were done, and those who wanted to push for reforms were not allowed to work, he said.

"Despite having a lot of merit, some officers were cornered along with some corrupt ones. However, incompetent, corrupt and partisan officials were mostly promoted. As a result, many of the beneficiaries of the previous government are trying to destabilise the administration by claiming they have been deprived," the joint secretary added.

Those people with a view to safeguarding personal interests including transfer, appointment, promotion and change of designation exploited the vacuum in governance for the first three days after the fall of the Awami League government, officials said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Policemen working in a charred room of Chattogram city's Kotwali Police Station yesterday. Hours after the ouster of the Awami League government on August 5, a mob attacked and torched the police station, causing extensive damage. The station resumed partial operations on August 10. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

S Alam drains Janata branch dry

AM JAHID *and* MD MEHEDI HASAN

As much as 90 percent of the loans disbursed by a branch of state-run Janata Bank was for S Alam Group, in yet another instance of how the Chattogram-based business giant exerted its influence on the country's banking sector.

Janata's Sadharan Bima Bhaban Corporate Branch in Chattogram provided Tk 8,216 crore to S Alam Group, which is 167 percent more than the branch's single borrower exposure limit, according to the bank's documents.

The business conglomerate took another Tk 2,233.45 crore from Janata to take the tally to Tk 10,449.45 crore, which is 451.57 percent of the struggling state-run bank's paid-up capital.

As per law, a bank is not allowed to lend more than 25 percent of its paid-up capital to a single client. At the end of June this year, Janata's paid-up capital stood at Tk 2,314 crore.

The loans to S Alam, which has controlling stakes in as many as eight banks, accounted for 10.7 percent of Janata's total disbursed loans of Tk 98,000 crore at the end of June.

As much as 49 percent of the bank's outstanding loans have turned bad, putting its financial health at risk.

Amid such a situation, the bank on June 25 rescheduled the Tk 1,844.60 crore loans taken by the six companies of S Alam Group for four years -- by breaching rules but with special permission from the central bank.

Of the sum, Tk 1,038.75 crore was for S Alam Refined Sugar Industries, Tk 1,186.43 crore for S Alam Trading Company, Tk 696.42 crore for S Alam Vegetable Oil, Tk 221.13 crore for Global Trading Corporation and Tk 1,229.55 crore for S Alam Cold Rolled Steels.

S. ALAM GROUP

The companies were given the rescheduling facility although S Alam Group had outstanding loans of Tk 8,895.91 crore.

As per banking rules, a fresh loan rescheduling facility can be granted for a client only if it is within the permitted limits.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

INJURED IN PROTEST

They are to be treated at separate units in hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENTS

Separate specialised care units will be formed in all government hospitals nationwide to ensure better treatment for those injured during the Anti-discrimination Student Movement.

The decision was made during a meeting between two coordinators of the student movement and the authorities of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

At the meeting, it was decided that only doctors, nurses, and legal representatives of the patients would be allowed to enter these specialised units as many of the injured were in critical condition.

Besides, it is also required to prevent the spread of diseases, particularly during the post-operation period.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

GLOBAL SOUTH SUMMIT

Yunus pledges fair polls, inclusive democracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser of the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said the government is committed to ensuring a transition to inclusive and pluralistic democracy and creating an environment in which free, fair, and participatory elections can be held.

The young generation has impressed upon the people their aspirations for a revolutionary change and the restoration of all state institutions to ensure democracy and human rights through meaningful reform, he said in a speech delivered virtually during the "3rd Voice of Global South Summit 2024" hosted by India.

"Our task is now to carry

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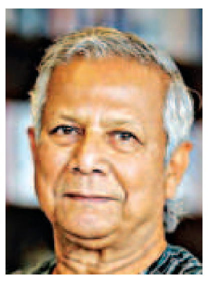


> **"I invite you to visit Dhaka soon. Otherwise, you may miss something important. Much of Dhaka has turned into the graffiti capital of the world."**

Will I ever play football again?

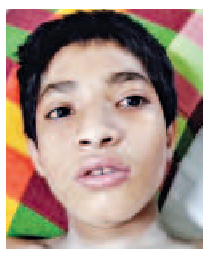
Asks boy shot in both legs

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* AHMED DEEPTO

Nine-year-old Rifat Howlader got shot when he stepped out of his home in Mirpur-13 to buy some snacks in the evening on July 19.

One bullet went through his right leg, breaking the bone above the knee, while another bullet lodged in his left leg. There was also a gunshot wound in his right hand.

Since then, Rifat, who is a student of class II at the Sher-e-Bangla Government Primary School, has been lying in a bed at the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor).



Rifat Howlader

"Rifat has been telling everyone to take him home. He wants to play football outside with other children like he used to. He does not understand that he may never be able to run again," says his father Shohagh Howlader, an Uber driver.

Rifat's parents separated when he was less than three years old. For the last few years, he has been

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Hasina sued in two more murder cases

STAR REPORT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has been accused in two more murder cases.

With this, Hasina is now facing 10 cases, including seven for murder, one for abduction, and two for committing crimes against humanity and genocide.

In Narayanganj, Hasina, along with former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan and 46 others, was sued over the killing of a 20-year-old man during a clash between protesters and Awami League men on August 5.

Abul Bashar Anik, brother of the victim, Abul Hasan Sajan, 20, who was shot in the city's Chashara area, filed the case last night, said Abdus Sattar, officer-in-charge of Narayanganj Sadar Model Police Station.

Former MP AKM Shamim Osman, his brother former MP AKM Selim Osman, son Imtinan

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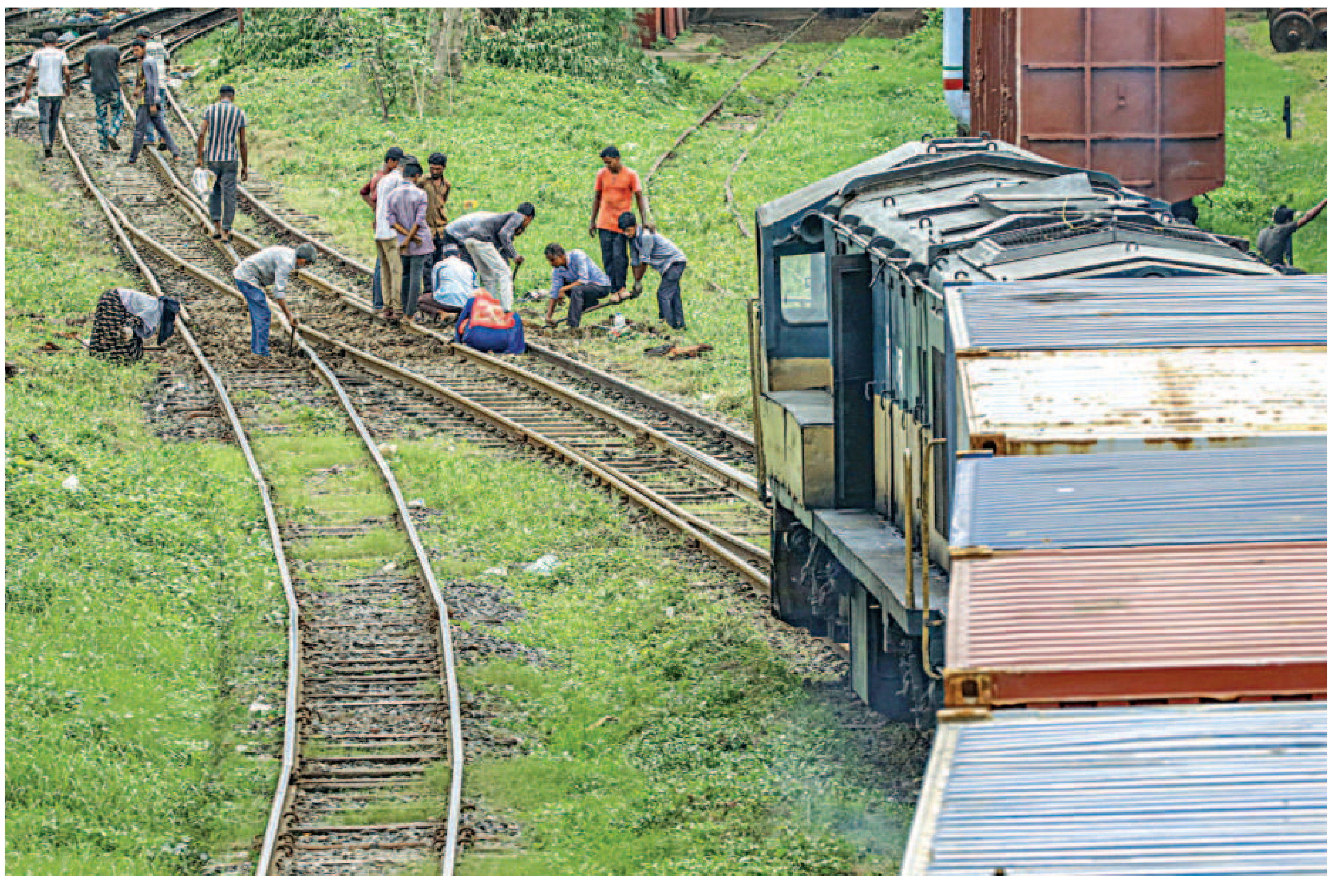


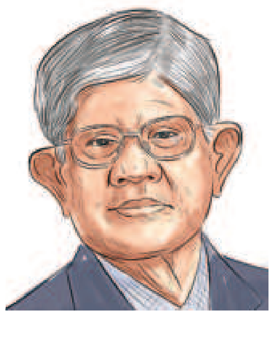
A freight train waits at Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday afternoon as necessary maintenance on the lines is going on ahead. During the nationwide protests and violence, train services had been suspended. Bangladesh Railway resumed operation of cargo trains on August 12 after nearly a month. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Star INTERVIEW

'Big defaulters won't be spared'

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed shares his plan to discipline rogues in banking sector

REJAUL KARIM BYRON



Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed has vowed to mete out exemplary punishment to big loan defaulters as the interim government scrambles to fix the ailing banking sector of Bangladesh.

The new government has begun its journey with banks struggling to cope with a ballooning bad debt. At the end of March, delinquent loans increased to Tk 182,295 crore, the highest in the history of Bangladesh. That means 11.1 percent of the disbursed loans have soured. The amount is even higher if outstanding rescheduled loans and outstanding restructured written-off loans are taken into account.

"How did it happen?" said Salehuddin, who worked as the central bank governor from 2005 to 2009. He presided over the financial system during the army-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Bavarian Nordic to ramp up production of mpox vaccine

REUTERS

Danish biotech firm Bavarian Nordic BAVA.CO said on Saturday it plans to ramp up production of its mpox vaccine and work with international health organisations to ensure fair access as the disease has been declared a global public health emergency.

The company, one of the few drug firms that have an mpox vaccine, said it has informed the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that it can manufacture 10 million doses of the vaccine by the end of 2025, and could already supply up to 2 million doses this year.

The company said that it is expanding its production network to include Africa, and is prepared to work with Africa CDC as well as the World Health Organization (WHO) to make the vaccine accessible to all countries.

Earlier this week, the WHO declared mpox a global public health emergency for the second time in two years.

Staffers on daily pay and outsourced workers of different government and autonomous offices stage demonstrations blocking the capital's Shahbagh intersection yesterday demanding nationalisation of their jobs.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Two Somoy TV journos attacked by 'students'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

Two journalists from Somoy TV were attacked and beaten yesterday afternoon, allegedly by a group of students demonstrating in Sylhet city.

The injured were reporter Avijeet Banik Apu and cameraman Naushad Ahmed Chowdhury.

According to Avijeet, students surrounded their motorcycle and started beating them with sticks as soon as they arrived at the city centre after the protest started there around 3:00pm.

The journalists went there to cover the demonstration organised by HSC examinees demanding that the rest of the exams be cancelled and they be given pass grades on all subjects.

The journalists went there to cover the demonstration organised by HSC examinees demanding that the rest of the exams be cancelled and they be given pass grades on all subjects.

The injured were able to escape with help from some of the protesters and later went to a hospital for necessary treatment.

Speaking on the matter, Sojol Chotri, president of the Electronic Media Journalists' Association in Sylhet, said, "The attack on journalists is a heinous crime, and we strongly condemn this incident. We demand prompt justice."

Hasina sued

FROM PAGE 1

Osman Ayon, nephew Azmery Osman, brother-in-law Tanvir Ahmed Titu, who is also a director of Bangladesh Cricket Board, and Narayanganj City Corporation Mayor Salina Hayat Ivy's younger brother Ahammad Ali Reza Uzzal were also among the accused.

Around 100-150 unnamed people were also accused in the case.

According to the case statement, a few hours before the announcement of Hasina's resignation on August 5, Sajan was shot at Chashara during the clash between protesters and Awami League men.

"He died while undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital the following morning," Sajan's brother Anik had told The Daily Star earlier.

Sajan, son of Jakir Hossain, was a sales representative at a private company. He was living with his family at Kushiara village in Narayanganj's Bandar upazila.

In Chattogram, Hasina, along with former education minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhoury Nowfel and 32 leaders and activists of the Awami League, was sued for the killing of a college student on July 18.

Tanvir Siddique, 19, a Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinee from Ashekan Awlia Degree College, was shot dead during a clash between protesters on one side and police and AL activists on the other side in the port city's Bahaddarhat area.

His uncle, Mohammad Parvez, filed the case with Chandgaon Police Station late Friday night, accusing 34 people and 100 to 150 unnamed individuals, the police station's Officer-in-Charge Jahidul Kabir told The Daily Star.

He said, "Three people were killed during the violence in Bahaddarhat area on July 18. The plaintiff mentioned the two other victims' names in the case statement."

Jubo League leader Babar Ali and three ward councillors of Chattogram City Corporation -- Nur Mostafa Tinu, Saibal Das Sumon, and Esrarul Haque -- were also among the accused.

The case statement said armed Chhatra League and Jubo League activists opened fire on the protesters.

[Our staff correspondent from Chattogram and district correspondent from Narayanganj contributed to this report.]

S Alam drains Janata branch dry

FROM PAGE 1

This was not the case for the S Alam companies: the rescheduled liabilities of the S Alam companies were Tk 4,372.28 crore against the limit of Tk 3,250 crore.

Yet the central bank gave a no-objection certificate for rescheduling the loans on July 28.

However, in its no-objection certificate, the central bank set some conditions, including the loan amount cannot be increased anymore, and the loan amount must be brought within the permitted limits by December 31, 2025.

Saiful Alam, chairman of S Alam Group, and Md Abdul Jabbar, managing director and chief executive officer of Janata Bank, could not be reached for comment.

They are to be treated

FROM PAGE 1

Additional Director General of DGHS Prof Ahmedul Kabir, DMCH Director Brigadier General Md Asaduzzaman, coordinators of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement Sarjis Alam and Hasnat Abdullah, among others, were present in the meeting.

Civil admin still on edge

FROM PAGE 1

During the tenure of the previous government, the most privileged employees at the Secretariat were the officers of the administration cadre.

The chaos at the Secretariat was initiated by officers of this cadre on August 6.

After that, officers of the other cadres started presenting their demands.

Officers coming to the administration cadre through the deputy secretary pool are the most vocal protesters.

They say that even if they join as deputy secretaries from different cadres, they are not properly evaluated by the administration cadre officials.

At the time of promotion, they are overlooked. On August 12, they made a complaint to Mezbah Uddin, the public administration ministry's secretary.

On the other hand, the lower-grade employees (10th to 20th) have joined in the chorus. On August 15, they gave a memorandum to Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud and others with various demands.

Even though the interim government assumed responsibility on August 8, no specific instructions have come about the general administration.

Doubts have also arisen over whether these officers, who are on contract, will remain in office as the government has announced that all contracts will be cancelled.

There is no clear message about whether there will be a change in the other important posts of the administration such as that of the cabinet secretary and the secretaries of the public administration, finance, local government and law ministry.

As a result, no one can perform their duties with confidence. This is another reason for the crisis.

Meanwhile, the employees of the food department are set to protest against the corruption of the former minister and the current secretary of the food ministry. They are scheduled to hold a rally in front of the Food Directorate.

Earlier on August 14, the employees of the Directorate of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in the capital demanded the trial of the former agriculture secretary Wahida Akhtar in the conference room of the Directorate.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited employees working in grades 10 to 20 are on indefinite strike for more than 15 days.

As a result, metro rail services are yet to resume despite instructions from the advisory council of the interim government to start operations yesterday.

The administration is led by secretaries and if they can't lead by example, it is natural that such a crisis will emerge, said Firoz Mia, a former additional secretary at the ministry of public administration.

"Earlier, we would hear that qualified officials were not appointed to the top posts, but now it is out in the open," he added.

Ali Imam Majumder, an adviser to the interim government, and Mezbah Uddin, could not be reached for comments.

'Big defaulters won't be spared'

FROM PAGE 1

backed caretaker government until Sheikh Hasina formed a new administration.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star on Thursday, Salehuddin, the head of the finance ministry, spoke about his plans to take recourse to the judiciary to punish the big loan defaulters and tackle the ongoing situation through the central bank. On Friday, he got the additional charge of the commerce ministry.

"Big defaulters will not be spared. If necessary, we will urge the chief justice to form a special bench [to deal with such cases]," he said.

Salehuddin pointed out that the central bank, along with the banks, has a responsibility to reduce bad loans. He has already talked to new Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur who assured him of taking stern action against the loan defaulters, including the big ones.

As part of the immediate steps to rein in default loans, the central bank will discontinue concessions and rescheduling facilities enjoyed by the loan defaulters over the years, Salehuddin said.

The interim government headed by Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus took charge earlier this month with a pledge to bring reforms as demanded by the student movement against discrimination that ousted Hasina.

Despite uncertainties amid chaos in the immediate aftermath of the uprising, the political changeover has brought optimism among economists and civil society who expect big changes, especially in the economic sector.

Salehuddin said they took charge when the country was reeling from a multi-pronged economic crisis caused by domestic issues alongside global headwinds. There were regulatory failures and irregularities in the name of development.

The adviser pointed out inflation, banking sector irregularities, low revenue collection, a sharp decline in foreign currency reserves, money laundering, and graft as the key challenges to the economy.

Along with restoring law and order, the government has prioritised steps to wipe out setbacks to economic growth, he said. The new central bank governor was appointed in a swift move to fill a vacuum created by the resignation of his predecessor. The interim government was also working to bring changes to the posts of chairman of different banks, he added.

In the past financial sector, rules and regulations were violated using "special power". For example, the single exposure limit was not followed in disbursing loans, Salehuddin said.

The new government has stopped such irregularities, he said.

"Most importantly, transparency and accountability in the financial sector have been ensured," he added.

The adviser said he has asked officials to end the culture of passing the buck in the sector where everyone has to take responsibility and be accountable.

Asked about medium-term reform plans, he said the authorities would bring some necessary changes to the financial and banking sectors, and he has talked with the development partners about the matter.

"Some reforms are required urgently which we will ensure," he said.

On the other hand, establishing a banking commission could be part of long-term reforms. The interim government may take initiatives to this end, he added.

CENTRAL BANK AUTONOMY

The full autonomy of the Bangladesh Bank has always been in question in the past. The finance adviser said the issue depends on the person who remains at the helm of the regulator.

"The Bangladesh Bank Order is a very good law which provides enough authority to the central bank. Yes, there are issues which demand discussion with the government. However, those are not day-to-day issues," he said.

It is the central bank's full authority to decide what will be the country's monetary policy, and interest or exchange rates. Besides, it is also the duty of the central bank to act against loan defaulters, Salehuddin said.

In his view, the central bank has enough autonomy. There are some limitations mainly because of the Bank Company Act.

The Daily Star asked whether the interim government will support the central bank when the latter needs to increase the policy rate to tame inflation and boost reserves, or slightly raise the crawling peg mid-rate against the dollar.

Salehuddin said the central bank governor has talked about revisiting some rates and spoke about the differences.

He said Governor Mansur will work to this end because if these issues are not addressed, then there will be uncertainty over inward remittances and the currency market.

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

The finance adviser identified development projects, some of which have not started while some are ongoing, as the biggest issue for the interim government.

Bangladesh's development partners also wanted to know the interim government's position on the projects and they were informed that the ongoing projects will continue.

However, some large projects could be placed at the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council.

This newspaper asked him whether the interim government would seek budget support from international development partners such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to ease pressure on reserves.

Salehuddin said support from development partners is not a "big issue" when it comes to improving the reserves, for which he emphasised increasing export earnings and remittances, and bringing more foreign direct investments.

The development partners set different conditions in line with Bangladesh's economic reforms in their loan programmes and these reforms are also the interim government's priority, he said.

If their priorities match, then the government will be able to secure funds from the development partners, Salehuddin said.

The development partners have pledged budget and project support if the government continues going forward on the path it has taken, he added.

MONEY LAUNDERING

Salehuddin also vowed action against money launderers, saying the government has heard about flights of foreign currencies from the country and it will look into the matter seriously.

The government has a committee on money laundering but it has not held a single meeting in the past two and a half years.

The committee sat on Wednesday within a week of the interim government taking charge.

Salehuddin said the committee has a list of money launderers and that it was asked to include names of old launderers alongside new ones.

Also, the government has ordered investigation authorities to make their job visible by conducting quick probes into allegations of money laundering.

Salehuddin said he has directed the National Board of Revenue to fix the collection system since revenue is crucial for the country's economy and the government's operations.

Although the digitalisation of revenue collection has been talked about for a long time, it has not been completed. The government will solve this problem soon, Salehuddin said.

He also said the current government will allow the universal pension scheme, introduced by the Hasina administration, to continue as many developed countries have strong social safety schemes, including health insurance.

However, some of the components of the universal pension scheme will be revisited, he added.

Hurricane Ernesto pounds Bermuda as it moves slowly away

REUTERS, *Bermuda*

Hurricane Ernesto pounded Bermuda on Saturday with powerful winds and 35-foot (10-meter) waves while drenching the British island territory with rain that could produce deadly flooding.

Power was out for more than 70% of the territory's 36,000 customers.

The eye of the storm passed over the west end of the archipelago early Saturday as it moved toward the north-northeast and as of 11 a.m. EDT (1500 GMT) it was 50 miles (75 km) away from Bermuda, the U.S. National Weather Service said.

Yunus pledges fair polls

FROM PAGE 1

out vital reforms in our electoral system, judiciary, local government, media, economy, and education," 2006 Nobel Peace Laureate Yunus said.

Prof Yunus, along with heads of governments from different countries, including India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Fiji, Oman, and Vietnam, joined the summit virtually.

He invited all who joined the summit to visit Dhaka soon.

"I invite you to visit Dhaka soon. Otherwise you may miss something important. Much of Dhaka has turned into the graffiti capital of the world."

Mentioning that much of Dhaka has turned into the graffiti capital of the world, the economist said young students and children aged as young as 12-13 have been painting the walls of the 400-year-old city with images of a "new, democratic, environment-friendly Bangladesh."

There is no central planning or guidance for that. No budget support from anybody. It is just an outpouring of their emotions and commitment to the goals of the "Second Revolution," he went on to say.

"The messages they are painting will thrill anybody. Anyone can read in them what the youth are dreaming of. It is our job to make their dreams come true," he said.

"We must place the youth and students, who constitute a significant portion of the Global South's population, at the heart of our strategies. Two-thirds of our population is youth. They are the most powerful segment of society. They are different. They are committed to creating a new world. They are capable. They are technologically far ahead of the previous generation. They can make all the impossible possible."

Prof Yunus said, "Our education system and financial system are built only for creating job seekers and providing jobs for them. We have to redesign our system."

"My life-long experience has been that our financial system was created to promote wealth concentration. We have to redesign our financial system to make sure wealth is shared by all. It should not be a one-way path to wealth. We must ensure financial services for all people, particularly women and youth," he added.

He said that in 1952, the Bangladeshi students sacrificed their lives for their mother tongue. It inspired struggles for the right to speak in their mother tongues all over the world.

"Some seven decades later, our student-led second revolution is inspiring youth throughout the global south to raise their voice for democracy, human rights, dignity, equality, and shared prosperity."

Prof Yunus further said, "I am honoured to be the oldest 'young person' to take part in this revolution and help them make their dreams come true. They need support from all of you. Wish them all the success."

Will I ever play football again?

FROM PAGE 1

raised by his aunt.

"I was hungry and wanted to eat something. I went outside and saw that the shop was closed. Then I heard commotions and gunshots. Everyone was saying the police were shooting at people," Rifat said.

He saw people running and he started running too.

"Then I fell to the ground and saw blood coming out of my leg. Then I stood up and tried to walk but fell to the ground again. This time, I was unable to move again. After some time two older boys came and carried me away from the street," he added.

In another bed of the hospital, 14-year-old Muhammad Sifat was struggling to hold back his tears.

A bullet hit his right knee. Doctors told his parents that he may never be able to walk normally again.

On July 18, Sifat, who is a student of class eight of Pallabi Majedul Islam Model High School, joined a procession with his friends. He got shot when the police opened fire.

"I don't know when my son will be able to walk again. Three surgeries have been done and doctors said another one is needed," said his mother Rekha Akhtar.

There are at least 12 children with gunshot wounds being treated at Nitor. They were shot between July 18 and August 5. One or more surgeries were needed for all of them.

The limbs of some of them had to be amputated.

Twelve-year-old Muhammad Soliman loves football. As his poor parents could not afford to pay for school, he used to work at a knitting factory at the capital's Shonir Akhra for Tk 5,000 a month.

On July 19, he was playing football in an open space with other boys in the area after work. All of a sudden, he saw people running towards the field.

"We ran when we saw the protesters and police coming towards the playground. Within moments, I got shot in the leg. Please ask the doctors if I will be able to play again," the boy eagerly told these correspondents.

Most of the children treated at the hospital are from poor families. They are struggling to bear the cost of treatment.

At just 17, Muhammad Minhaj is the breadwinner of his family. He was shot in the left leg on July 18 near Jatrabari kitchen market where he worked.

Four surgeries have been done on his leg and more will be needed. His parents have already incurred loans to pay for the treatment.

"I used to pull a rickshaw. My son has been taking care of the family since I became ill. Solaiman used to earn Tk 500 to Tk 800 a day by working at the fish market. He was the only earner in the family," said his father Bachchu Miah.

He said he has no idea how Minhaj's treatment will go on as he has no money and no means of earning.

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LOCAL BODIES

Govt now can remove elected representatives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government can now appoint administrators to the local administrations like city corporations, zilla and upazila parishads in special circumstances.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday approved the advisory council's recommendation to amend four related laws.

According to a gazette

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

TK 3.11CR RECOVERY

Former senior secretary held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police last night arrested Shah Kamal, former senior secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

"DB arrested him in Mohakhali," said a DMP text message.

On Friday, DMP conducted a raid and recovered cash worth around Tk 3.11 crore, including local and foreign currencies, from an apartment, belonging to Kamal, in Mohammadpur. Kamal served as secretary from 2015 to 2019 and senior secretary from 2019 to 2020.

Gun looted in Dhaka found in Noakhali

STAR REPORT

A youth was arrested early yesterday from Noakhali with a firearm looted from a police station in Dhaka during the August 5 violence.

Arrestee Monir Ahmad, 22, is from Senbagh, Noakhali.

In primary interrogation, Monir claimed his neighbour

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Fake freedom fighters to be brought to book

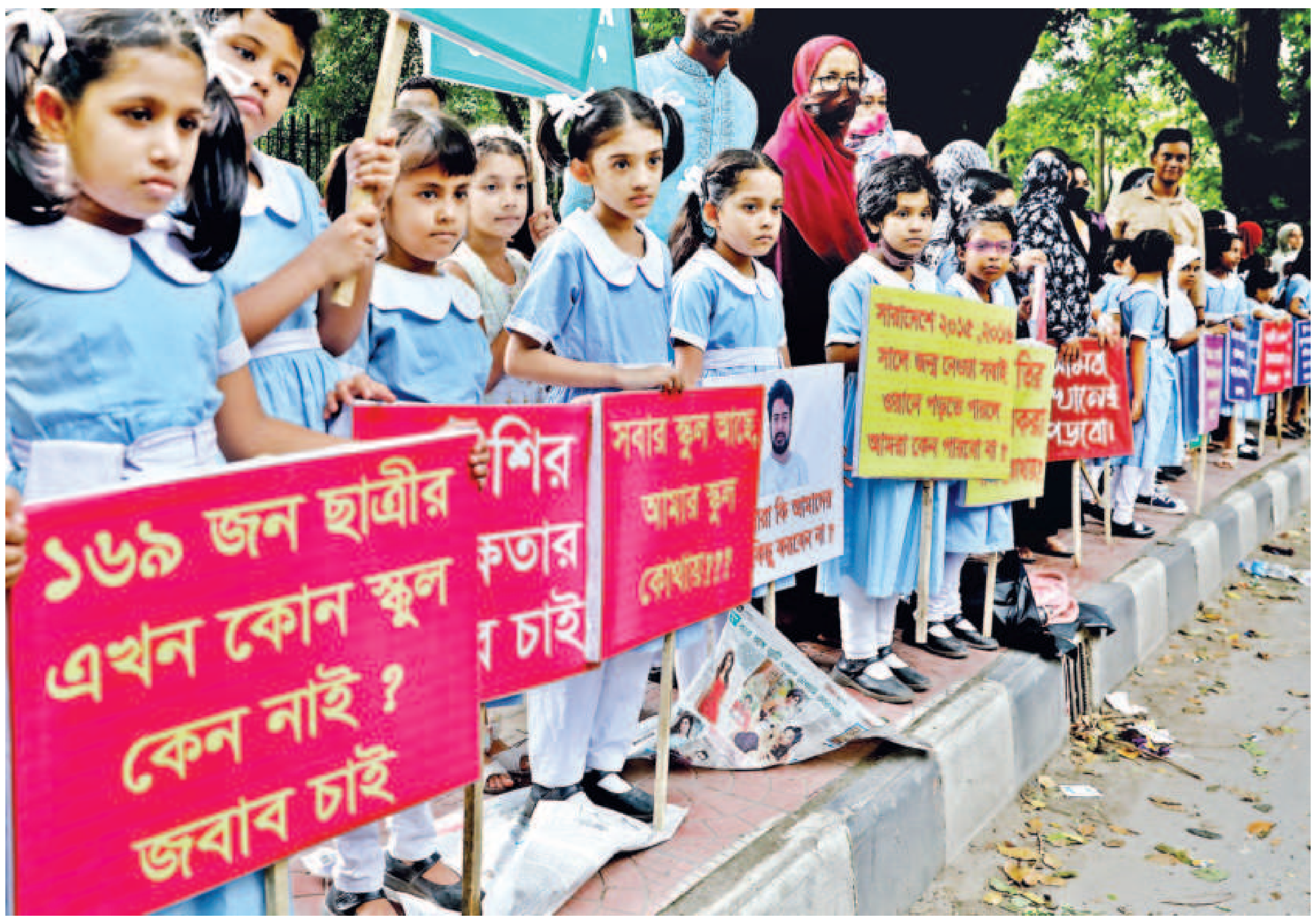
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Fake freedom fighters will be brought to book, said Liberation War Affairs Adviser Farooq-e-Azam yesterday.

"Those who became freedom fighters with fake certificates will be brought under the law. They have enjoyed state allowance for so long. They would be punished for defrauding the state," said Farooq-e-Azam, a freedom fighter.

He said this while addressing a meeting in Chattogram the district's Circuit House.

Following the meeting, he visited the Kotwali Police Station, which was vandalised and torched on August 5.


১৬৯ জন ছাত্রীর এখন কোন স্কুল কেন নাই? জবাব চাই
সবার স্কুল আছে আমার স্কুল কোথায়???

At least 169 first graders and their parents formed a human chain in front of the office of the chief adviser on Minto Road yesterday afternoon. A High Court verdict cancelled their admission to Viqarunnisa Noon School and College recently. So they are now demanding that they be allowed to attend school. After around 30 minutes, the press secretary came out of the office, spoke to the parents and assured that he will raise the issue with the education ministry.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

DENGUE IN 2024

August deadliest month so far

At least 18 dead; experts urge immediate action

HELEMUL ALAM

At least 18 dengue patients have died in the first 17 days of August, the highest monthly death toll in 2024 so far.

Meanwhile, 2,897 people have been admitted to hospitals during the same time, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Last year, Bangladesh recorded its highest-ever dengue toll since the first outbreak in 2000, with 1,709 deaths and 3,21,179 cases.

Experts warn that the number of cases could rise further in September if immediate action is not taken.

Prof Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist at Jahangirnagar University, said inadequate response from local government bodies, and absence of any anti-mosquito drives during the recent political upheaval has contributed to the deteriorating dengue situation.

"Anti-mosquito drives across the country are not being conducted properly. Even in Dhaka, the efforts are insufficient," he said.

He urged for comprehensive measures to control the spread of the dengue virus nationwide.

Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, said the number of patients with dengue shock syndromes has increased recently.

He urged everyone to remain wary of dengue warning signs, as early intervention can reduce fatalities.

The World Health Organization introduced the term "expanded dengue syndrome" in 2012 to describe patients exhibiting atypical symptoms in vital organ systems, such as the cardiovascular, neurological, renal, gastrointestinal, and hematological systems. Dr Nazmul pointed out that a large number of patients last year were admitted with dengue shock, a critical stage of the disease.

"Many people do not realise they have symptoms and delay seeking medical attention, increasing their risk of developing shock syndrome," he said.

Shock syndrome in dengue patients can be categorised into two types: compensated shock and decompensated shock.

In compensated shock, blood pressure may appear low or normal, with a narrow pulse pressure of 20 or less.

Decompensated shock, however, is more severe, with disorientation, cold clammy skin,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DENGUE THIS YEAR

MONTH	DEATH	HOSPITALISED
August	18	2,897
July	12	2,669
June	8	798
May	12	644
April	2	504
March	5	311
February	3	339
January	14	1,055

UK shouldn't offer asylum to Hasina

Says British MP Rupa Huq

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh origin British MP Rupa Huq has said it would be unwise for the UK to give refuge to Sheikh Hasina.

"As a British Bangladeshi MP, my inbox is a lightning rod for Bangladeshi issues worldwide. At the moment, pleading mails ask me to 'ban the butcher' and similar requests as it is rumoured London is her next destination," she wrote in an opinion column published by the Standard newspaper of UK on Friday.

"I personally think given the deep unpopularity of her bloodthirsty regime and political sensitivities around immigration, it'd be unwise for the UK to give refuge to such a high-profile asylum seeker who is subject of an International Criminal Court application," Huq opined.

Huq wrote that the recent student unrest, where hundreds of unarmed minors were

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Two former AL MPs held, four more sued

Cases filed against hundreds of party men

STAR REPORT

Two former Awami League lawmakers were arrested yesterday, while cases were filed against at least four other ex-parliamentarians in separate incidents across Chattogram, Dhaka, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Cox's Bazar and Rangpur.

In Chattogram, Md Abdul Latif, the former Awami League lawmaker from Chattogram-11, was placed on a three-day remand by a court in connection with a case involving the shooting and injuring of a protester during the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

Chattogram's Metropolitan Magistrate Jewel Deb granted the remand after police presented Latif with a 10-day remand prayer.

Latif was arrested in the Baizid Bostami area early yesterday, said Fazlul Quader Patwari, officer-in-charge of Double Mooring Police Station.

The arrest followed a case filed by Md Ershad, accusing Latif and others of opening fire on protesters on August 4.

The former MP was allegedly hiding at a relative's house in Madarbari before being picked up by the army on August 10.

Meanwhile, in Thakurgaon, former Water Resources Minister and Thakurgaon-1 lawmaker Ramesh Chandra Sen, was detained at his ancestral home in Ruhea Ramnath village by a police team from Dhaka.

Officer-in-Charge Gulfamul Islam Mandal reported that law enforcers from Police Headquarters claimed they were taking the political leader for his safety.

Sen's wife Anjali Rani Sen said police assured her they would bring him back within half an hour, despite her pleas not to take him due to his illness.

A photograph of the former lawmaker, tied with a ribbon or rope, soon went viral on social media.

The family insisted that, to their knowledge, no case had been filed against him.

He was later produced before a Thakurgaon court in a case filed over attack on protesters on July 16 by BCL activists.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

ARRESTED EX-MPS

Md Abdul Latif (Ctg-11)
Charge: Firing on protesters on August 4

Ramesh Chandra Sen (Thakurgaon-1)
Charge: Attack on students on July 16

SUED EX-MPS

Muhammad Saiful Islam (Dhaka-19)
Talukder Tauhid Jang Murad (Dhaka-19)
Charge: Death of student

Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury (Dinajpur-1)
Charge: Attack on students

Shaimun Sarwar Komol (Cox's Bazar-3)
Charge: Attack on student demonstration

METRO SERVICE RESUMPTION

Work abstention behind the delay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Uncertainty looms over metro rail service resumption as a group of its employees vowed to continue their work abstention until all six of their demands are met.

Authorities will meet newly appointed adviser of the road transport and bridges ministry today to end the stalemate, said MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd.

Once the employees rejoin, operations can be resumed within five days, he said.

Operations of metro rail have remained suspended since July 18 after two stations were vandalised during the quota reform protests, which later turned into an uprising that toppled the Hasina-led government on August 5.

On July 19, attackers vandalised two metro stations -- Mirpur-10 and Kazipara.

The government directed DMTCL on August 11 to complete necessary technical checks in seven days to resume services, without the two vandalised stations.

On the same day, the advisory council of the interim government decided to resume metro rail services on August 16.

But, DMTCL, in a press statement on August 15, said it would not be possible to resume metro rail operation as they could not start necessary technical checks due to an unavoidable situation.

Sources said the authorities failed to start the trial runs as around 700 of the DMTCL employees of grade 10 to 20 have been on work abstention since August 6 to press home their six-point demand, including pay hike.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

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Expedite visa for journos who want to come here

Press secretary tells missions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has asked all missions abroad to expedite visa approvals for any journalists who want to visit Bangladesh, according to a Facebook post by Shafiqul Alam, press secretary of the chief adviser.

Anyone who wants to report on Bangladesh and the performance of the interim government is most welcome, Shafiqul wrote yesterday.

"Yesterday, during his telephone conversation with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus has said Indian journalists are welcome to Bangladesh and report from the ground here," he added.

"It is better they see the situation themselves and do reports accordingly rather than being dictated by any secondary -- and sometimes very exaggerated -- reports."

"We want to build an open society where freedom of press is non-negotiable."

150-year-old British ship found in Karnaphuli riverbed

MD NAZRUL ISLAM, *Ctg*

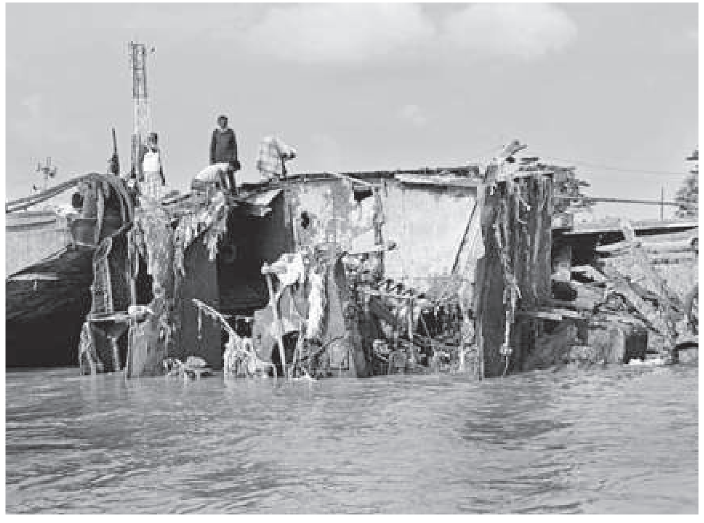

PHOTO: COLLECTED

A century-old British merchant ship has been discovered at the bottom of the Karnaphuli River during dredging operations for the Chattogram Port Channel.

The 350-foot coal-powered vessel was found on August 15 in the Dangarchar area between Jetty 6 and 7 and has since been salvaged.

Artifacts recovered from the ship include silver coins from 1862-82 AD, silver furniture, binoculars, and a substantial stock of coal. The ship is estimated to be around 150 years old.

Officials reported that the vessel was cut into two parts for removal. Initial attempts by two organisations to salvage the ship failed, but Hiramoni Salvage Ltd was later successful.

Capt Faridul Alam, deputy conservator of the Chattogram Port Authority, confirmed the recovery, saying the vessel posed a risk to container ship movement in the Karnaphuli Channel.

Md Abul Kalam, manager of Hiramoni Salvage Ltd, stated, "We salvaged and removed the ship as per our agreement with the port. There are also two more sunken ships in the riverbed that will be removed to enhance the safety and efficiency of the port."

Artifacts recovered from the ship also include furniture, plates, bowls, water pots, spoons, candle holders, flower vases, and various items made from ivory, copper, brass, and silver. The ship is believed to have sunk during the British period while engaged in trade in the Indian subcontinent.

Senior diver Md Zahir explained that the ship was submerged 60 feet deep, leading to significant silt accumulation. Salvage operations involved dredging the silt and using skilled divers to cut the ship into two parts, which were then brought to the riverbank using four salvage barges.

Jihad Hossain, director of Hiramoni Salvage Ltd, said the artifacts recovered have not yet been examined by experts.

Dr Ataur Rahman, deputy director of the Directorate of Archeology and keeper of the Chattogram Ethnological Museum, confirmed the historical significance of the recovered coins.

He pointed out that the coins, predating Queen Victoria's direct rule over India, are of considerable archaeological value.

Dr Rahman added, "According to regulations, archaeological artifacts should be handed over to the Directorate of Archeology. The authorities involved in the salvage operation should have informed us to ensure the artifacts are preserved and no items are lost."

Two former AL MPs

FROM PAGE 3

A Chhatra Dal activist filed the case on Friday night. The court of Judicial Magistrate Rajib Kumar Roy later sent him to jail.

In Dhaka, a total of 119 Awami League members, including two former Dhaka-19 lawmakers, have been sued in connection with the death of Ash-Sabur, a 16-year-old student killed during anti-government protests in Savar on August 5.

The case was filed by Sahid Hasan alias Mithu at Ashulia Police Station on Friday night.

The accused include former MPs Muhammad Saiful Islam and Talukder Tauhid Jang Murad, Ashulia Thana Awami League President Farooq Hasan Tuhin, Savar Municipality Mayor Abdul Ghani, and several union parishad chairmen.

The complaint alleges that Ash-Sabur was beaten and shot dead by Awami League cadres and their affiliates.

His body was found at Bypile intersection after he had been reportedly attacked while returning from a shop.

In Dinajpur, Afsar Ali, chairman of Bochaganj Upazila Parishad and General Secretary of Bochaganj Upazila unit of Awami League, was arrested and sent to jail after an altercation with students at the Bochaganj Police Station.

The students, present near the police station, accused Afsar of threatening them.

Afsar, who had gone to the station to file a complaint about his house being vandalised and set on fire, was subsequently arrested based on a case filed by Faisal Mostak, a student from Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University.

The case was filed for attacking protesters on July 18. It named former state minister for shipping and ex-Dinajpur-1 lawmaker Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, along with 99 others as accused.

Additionally, in Natore, two cases of attempted murder were filed against former lawmaker Shafiqul Islam Shimul.

The cases, filed by district BNP joint convener Farhad Ali Dewan Shahin and BNP member Saiful Islam Aftab, accuse Shimul and others of orchestrating attacks against them.

The police are reportedly working to arrest the accused following the investigations.

In Cox's Bazar, a case has been filed against 150 individuals, including a former whip of the parliament, over shooting at protesters during the quota reform protest.

The case was filed against leaders and activists of AL, Jubo League and Chhatra League. Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Sub-inspector Md Salim Mia filed it early yesterday.

The case statement alleged that quota reform activists, engaged in a peaceful march in Cox's Bazar, were attacked and shot in Gungachtola area, resulting in the death of one activist.

OC Rokibuzzaman said no arrests were made by yesterday evening.

Among the accused are former MP and whip Shaimun Sarwar Komol, district AL General Secretary Mujibur Rahman, and Cox's Bazar Municipality Mayor Mahabubur Rahman Chowdhury.

A man casts a net into the Kirtankhola at the river port in Barishal city yesterday. Due to the ongoing situation, launch transportation in Barishal has decreased significantly. As a result, many workers are passing idle times. PHOTO: TITU DAS

Administrative deadlock

FROM PAGE 5

The Local Government Division in Bagerhat has been urged for restoring these services promptly to alleviate public suffering.

Visiting Gotapara, Bemarta, Karapara, Shatgumbuj, Raripara, and Banagram UPs on Thursday, this correspondent found only a few public representatives present at the offices, with most services on hold. A similar situation was observed at Bagerhat Municipality office as well.

"I came for my citizenship certificate for an urgent need, but failed to collect it as it cannot be issued in absence of the mayor," said Nasir Sheikh, a resident of ward 9 in the municipality.

Kohinur Akter Dalim, a female councillor, admitted that the mayor and councillors have not been coming to the office for several days.

"Without the mayor, official work cannot proceed. I am occasionally visiting the office," she added.

Saiful Islam, a representative from Karapara UP, echoed her, saying, "Many citizens have been coming for services, but we are unable to provide any as the chairman has not been coming to office."

Dr Md Fakhrul Hasan, deputy director of Local Government Division in Bagerhat, said they have submitted a list of absentee public representatives in the district to the ministry.

According to the report, at least 50 percent of the public representatives are absent from their workplaces.

"We will take further decisions based on directives of the ministry," he added.

UK shouldn't

FROM PAGE 3

killed by police under a "shoot on sight" policy resembling that of stormtroopers, sparked protests by expatriates in Paris, Rome, Manchester, Trafalgar Square and Middle East.

Many Bangladeshis think she should return to face charges there, she said.

Huq said there is a collective sense of relief among her Bangladeshi cousins, as the atmosphere of fear surrounding any criticism of the government seems to be easing.

However, risks remain, she said. The deposed camp argues they maintained stability, but as elections approach, it's time for a change, she added.

Instead of the ongoing feud between two families that has marked Bangladesh's history, the country should aim for a fresh start, she said.

August

FROM PAGE 3

unrecordable blood pressure and pulse, and an inability to urinate.

"Many patients die within minutes if they experience such shocks," Dr Nazmul warned.

He said the death rate is higher among high-risk groups, including obese and elderly individuals, pregnant women, infants, and those with comorbidities.

Dr Nazmul also said severe stomach aches, breathing difficulties, severe weakness, bleeding from gums or nose, and vomiting are symptoms that require immediate hospitalisation.

"Failure to hospitalise patients showing warning signs can lead to shock syndrome," he added.

Govt now can

FROM PAGE 3

notification, two provisions have been added to the Local Government (city corporation) Ordinance-2024, enabling the government to remove mayors and councillors of city corporations.

The other clause allows the government to appoint "competent persons or officials" as the administrators to the city corporations until further notice.

Similar amendments have been made to three other ordinances allowing the government to remove elected representatives of municipalities, zilla and upazila parishads and appoint administrators.

Damages worth Tk 23cr

FROM PAGE 5

Directed by the Police Headquarters, CMP has prepared a list of affected police establishments and estimated the damages to infrastructures to be worth about Tk 21 crore.

CMP's Traffic Police Department has prepared a separate report on the damages, which was not included in the aforementioned amount.

Abdul Warish, additional commissioner of CMP, said, "We have prepared a report on the damages sustained from the recent attacks on police establishments. The Police HQ will respond further in this regard."

District police sources said around Tk 2 crore worth of infrastructural damages were sustained in the attacks.

"We are compiling a comprehensive report in this connection," said Kabir Ahmed, additional superintendent of police (admin) of Chattogram District Police.

Meanwhile, around 50 of the looted firearms and around 3,000 rounds of ammunition have been recovered by members of the Bangladesh Army, Bangladesh Ansar, and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-7) from different areas.

Still, at least 450 different firearms and around 12,000 rounds of ammunition remain missing, including those looted from the central armory at Dampara Police Lines, Kotwali, Double Mooring, Pahartali, EPZ, Patenga, Raozan and Lohagara police stations, said sources.

Niskriti Chakma, deputy commissioner (crime) of CMP, said, "We are working on recovering the looted firearms. Some have been recovered so far. After receiving full reports from the police stations, we will be able to confirm the number."

Gun looted

FROM PAGE 3

Quaiyum looted a semi-automatic pistol from a police station in Dhaka, said Mohammod Asadhuj Zamman, superintendent of police in Noakhali.

Later, Quaiyum handed over the pistol to Monir and asked him to sell it.

Acting on a tip-off, police arrested Monir from his residence with the firearm, the SP added.

A case was filed against Monir and Quaiyum.

Work abstention

FROM PAGE 3

Mohammad Abdur Rouf, company secretary of DMTCL, said they have already started meeting five of the six demands.

"We also assured them of meeting their demands for salary hike, as we [DMTCL authority] cannot fulfil this demand unless DMTCL board takes a decision in this regard. But they [employees] were adamant about not rejoining unless an order in this regard is issued," said Rouf.

The agitating employees said while DMTCL employees from 1st to 9th grade earn 2.3 times the national pay scale, employees from 10th to 20th grade earn only 2 times more than the pay scale. They want this "discrimination" to be removed.

MAN Siddique said they have, in writing, assured the employees that their demands will be met once a new chairman of the DMTCL board takes charge.

The interim government has cancelled the contract of the immediate past secretary of the road transport and highways division, who was the ex-officio chairman of the board.

He said the interim government appointed a secretary for the division yesterday, so they hope to hold a board meeting soon.

"We will inform the adviser on the issues. We hope that the problem will be solved very soon," he added.

The Daily Star was unable to reach any of the protesting employees for comments.

বাণিজ্যিক প্লট বিক্রয়

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বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বাংলাদেশ প্রকৌশল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের স্নাতকোত্তর (Postgraduate) প্রোগ্রামের এপ্রিল-২০২৪ সেমিস্টারে ভর্তির আবেদনের সময়সীমা ১৮-২৫ আগস্ট, ২০২৪ পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হলো। এ সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত তথ্য বুয়েটের ওয়েবসাইটে (http://pgadmission.buet.ac.bd) পাওয়া যাবে।

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GD- 198

রেজিস্ট্রার

বাংলাদেশ গম ও ভুট্টা গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
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কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

টেলিফোন : 02588817734
ই-মেইল : dg.bwmri@gmail.com

Memo No: 12.26.0000.019.07.001.22-199 Date: 17.08.2024

e-Tender Notice/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of

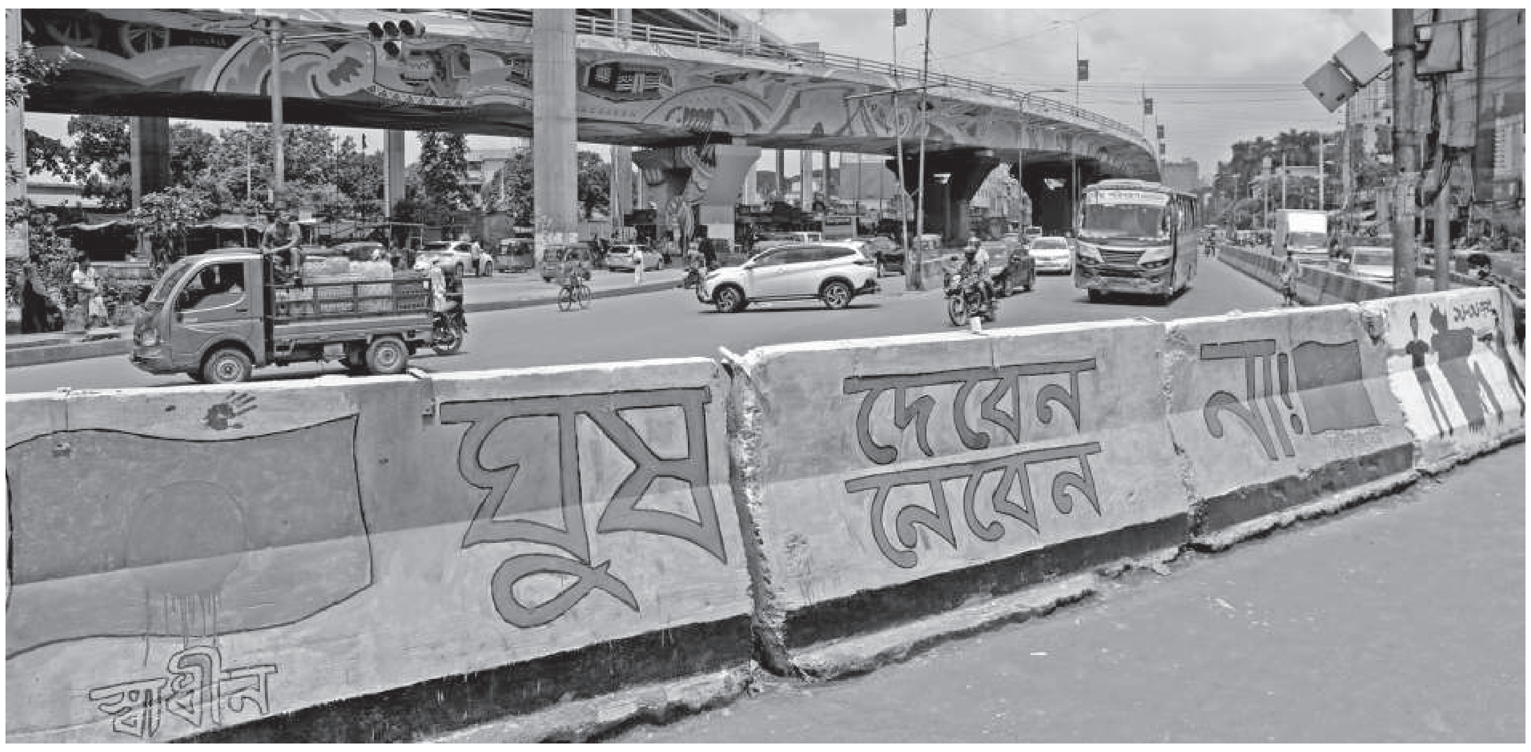
Tender ID No.	Name of Works	Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
1008954	Repair & Seal coat work at internal roads (Office premises) of Bangladesh Wheat and Maize Research Institute (BWMRI), Nashipur, Dinajpur	18-August-2024 15:30	02-September-2024 14:30

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no Offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). The procuring entity deserves the right to accept or reject any/all tender(s) without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Dr. Md. Mahfuz Bazzaz
Principal Scientific Officer
Nashipur, Dinajpur

GD- 196



This divider has been painted with the message "Ghush Diben Nah, Niben Nah" (Don't give or take bribes). Since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, people from across the country have called for the new Bangladesh to be free of all kinds of discrimination and illegal practices that have plagued past governments. The photo was taken in the capital's Mohakhali area recently. PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

ATTACKS ON CTG POLICE ESTABLISHMENTS

Damages worth Tk 23cr, 500 firearms looted

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, *Ctg*

The spree of attacks on numerous police establishments in Chattogram district following the resignation of the Awami League-led government on August 5, caused infrastructural damages worth around Tk 23 crore, said police officials.

The estimated value of other damages, including those caused to vehicles, is still being assessed.

Also, at least 500 firearms of different types, including SMGs, shotguns, Chinese rifles, gas guns, rifles, pistols, and more than 15,000 rounds of ammunition were looted from police stations, raising concerns as only a few of those could be recovered so far.

According to Chattogram Metropolitan Police and Chattogram District Police sources, 12 of the 16 police stations in the district and 11 other police outposts sustained damages in the recent spate of attacks and violence. Of those, Kotwali, Sadarghat, EPZ, Patenga and Lohagara police stations sustained significant damages after being set ablaze, while Hathazari and Raozan also came under mob attack and underwent considerable damage due to vandalism.

"My station, set up in an old building, was completely destroyed in the violence and is now unusable. We have begun setting up a new office in an outpost near the Karnaphuli Tunnel," said Md Mahfuzur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Patenga Police Station.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Administrative deadlock in Bagerhat

Residents struggle as most offices remain inactive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bagerhat*

An administrative stagnation persists in Bagerhat due to suspended operations of union and municipal offices following the resignation of the Awami League-led government on August 5.

Bagerhat district comprises of nine upazilas, three municipalities, and 75 unions, employing a total of 1,041 public representatives, including mayors, councillors, upazila chairmen, vice-chairmen, union parishad members, and female UP members, most of them being affiliated with the AL and its front organisations.

Since the fall of the government following a mass upraising, most of these AL-affiliated public representatives have gone into hiding over security concerns.

Their prolonged absence has been disrupting services such as issuance of birth and death registrations, citizenship certificates, trade licences, and inheritance certificates.

As such, residents are being deprived of essential services.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Bhashani univ bans politics on campus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

The authorities of Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University (MBSTU) in Tangail yesterday banned all forms of political activities for students, teachers, officials, and employees on the campus.

In addition, all the university dormitories have been reopened, and academic activities will resume today, said an office order, signed by the Registrar Dr Md Tauhidul Islam.

On August 5, following the fall of the then government, MBSTU Vice Chancellor Prof Farhad Hossain, along with six teachers, resigned.

Ustad Mihir Lala no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Ustad Mihir Lala, 83, the veteran singer of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, is no more. He passed away at his residence in the port city at 7:30am today.

He is survived by his wife, Jayanti Lala, a celebrated artiste known for her performances in Nazrul Sangeet, as well as by their son and daughter.

Mihir Lala served as the principal of Arjya Sangeet Chattogram until his passing.

He was accorded state honours at the JM Sen Hall premises in the city, and his funeral took place at the Baluar Dighi Moha Shamshan in Chattogram.

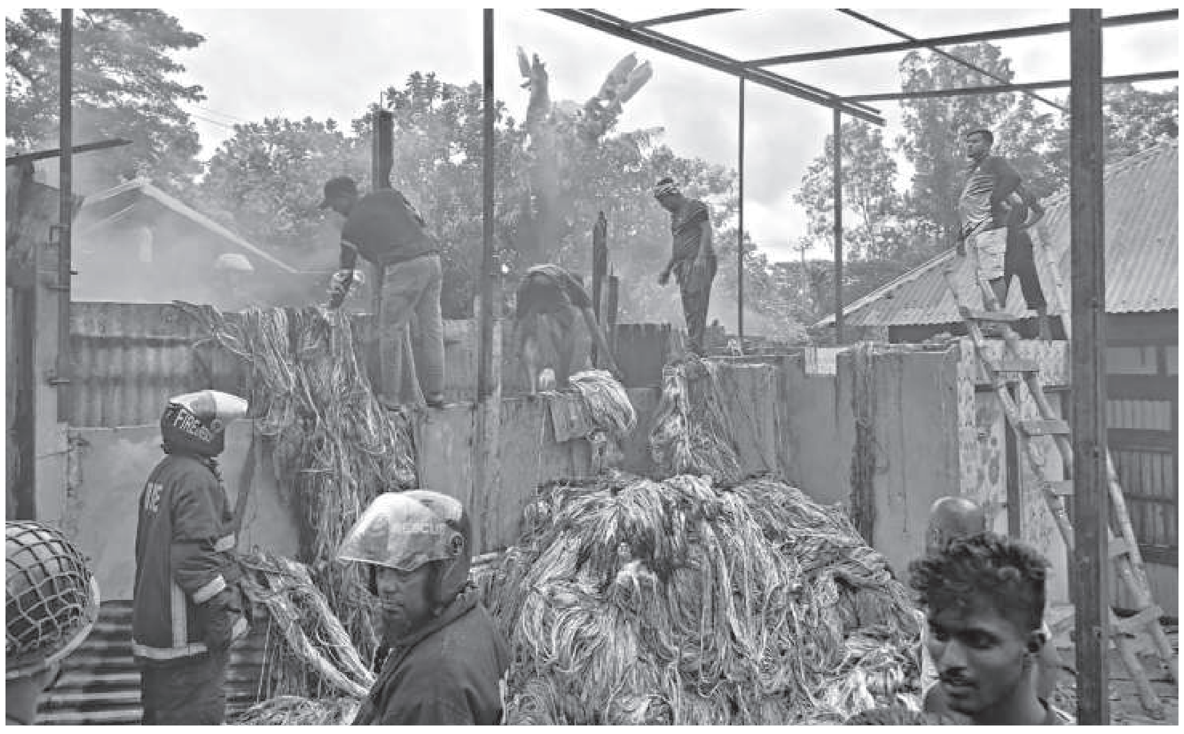
Mihir Lala was born on January 4, 1941. Although he was born in Cox's Bazar, he grew up in Boalkhali.

Mihir Lala's deep passion for music blossomed early in his childhood. He began his musical journey under the guidance of Ustad Abu Bakr Siddiqui and later learned from some of the most revered maestros of the subcontinent.

He also studied under Ustad Amanat Ali Khan. Ultimately, it was under the tutelage of Pandit Barin Majumdar that he emerged as a prominent figure in the world of classical music.

During the Liberation War, he played an active role as a vocal artist for Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra.

He was honoured with the Shilpakala Padak in 2018.



Workers, along with fire service members, trying to salvage whatever they can after 200 tonnes of jute were burnt in a fire at a warehouse in Munshiganj yesterday. The reason behind the blaze is yet to be determined and no one was injured in the incident, said officials. PHOTO: **STAR**

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 18

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-38	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-41	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Protect children and their rights

UN calls on interim govt

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A high official of the UN has called on the interim government to seize the current transition as an opportunity to address existing gaps in laws and methods to protect children from all forms of abuse and exploitation, and from arbitrary detention.

The call comes as, according to the latest verified figures by Unicef, more than 65 children were killed during the crackdown on peaceful demonstrations leading to the fall of Awami League regime on August 5.

"Youth and children in Bangladesh have been at the forefront of the recent protests in the country. They have achieved a lot, but they have also paid a huge price," said Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, Najat Maalla M'jid, on Friday.

"I add my voice to those of the UN Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights underscoring the need for a full, independent, impartial, and transparent investigation into all acts of violence.

"In particular, I would like to stress the importance of ensuring adequate safeguarding mechanisms for children and young people who have been victims of violence, arbitrary arrests and detention."

Maalla M'jid encouraged the interim authorities to expand and strengthen institutions and social programme so that they are easily accessible to all children.

She recalled the critical importance of a child-friendly justice system, including independent courts for minors, even more so considering the high number of children and youth that were detained during the recent protests.

"I welcome that the release of children has begun, and call for the swift release of all children," she said.

"It is critical that all charges against them are lifted, especially under the cybercrime and anti-terrorist legislation, and that there are guarantees of no further prosecution."

The UN official also called on the authorities to protect youth and children's right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Three die as microbus falls in canal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Cumilla*

Three persons were killed and another was injured when a microbus hit a roadside tree and fell into a canal in Cumilla yesterday.

The accident occurred around noon at Madhaia in Chandina upazila as the driver of the microbus, traveling from Dhaka to Cox's Bazar, lost control of the vehicle, according to police.

Monjurul Alam, officer-in-charge of Eliotganj Highway Police Station, said, "The road was slippery due to rainfall, which led to the accident."

The three deceased -- Mozammel, 42, Shakhawat, 40, and driver Tarek, 38, all employees of Trust Life Insurance Co Ltd -- died on the spot, police said.

The injured was admitted to Chandina Upazila Health Complex.

The bodies will be handed over to the families after legal procedures.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Central Police Hospital
Rajarbag, Dhaka

Invitation for Tender

Sealed tender are hereby invited from the Suppliers/Local Agents in their official pad for the purchase of the following items for Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka for the financial year 2024-2025.

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs/Public Security Division
2	Agency	Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka
3	Procuring entity name	Director (DIG), Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
4	Invitation for	Purchase of Office Equipment.
5	Invitation Ref No.	CPH/Tender-3/2024-2025/3447
6	Date	17/08/2024
KEY INFORMATION		
7	Procurement method	OTM (Frame work)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
8	Budget and source of funds	Revenue Budget (GOB).
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
9	Tender publication date	18/08/2024.
10	Tender last selling date	02/09/2024
11	Tender submission date and time	At 12.00 Noon on 03/09/2024.
12	Tender opening date and time	12.30pm on 03/09/2024.
13	**Name & address of the office**	
	Selling tender document	Office of the Director (DIG), Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
	Receiving tender document	Office of the Director (DIG), Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
	Opening tender document	Office of the Director (DIG), Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
14	Eligibility of tenderer	1. Photocopy of up-to-date trade license. 2 Up-to-date bank solvency certificate. 3. Photocopy of up-to-date Income tax certificate. 4. Photocopy of VAT certificate. 5. Original money receipt paid for purchasing tender document. 6. Photocopy of up-to-date bank statement certificate. 7. Experience certificate. 8. Other documents (as per Schedule).
15	Brief description of goods	

	Name	Price of tender document	Tender security in Taka	Completion time in days
	a) Office Equipment.	Tk. 1000.00	3,50,000.00 (three lakh fifty thousand)	15 (fifteen) days.

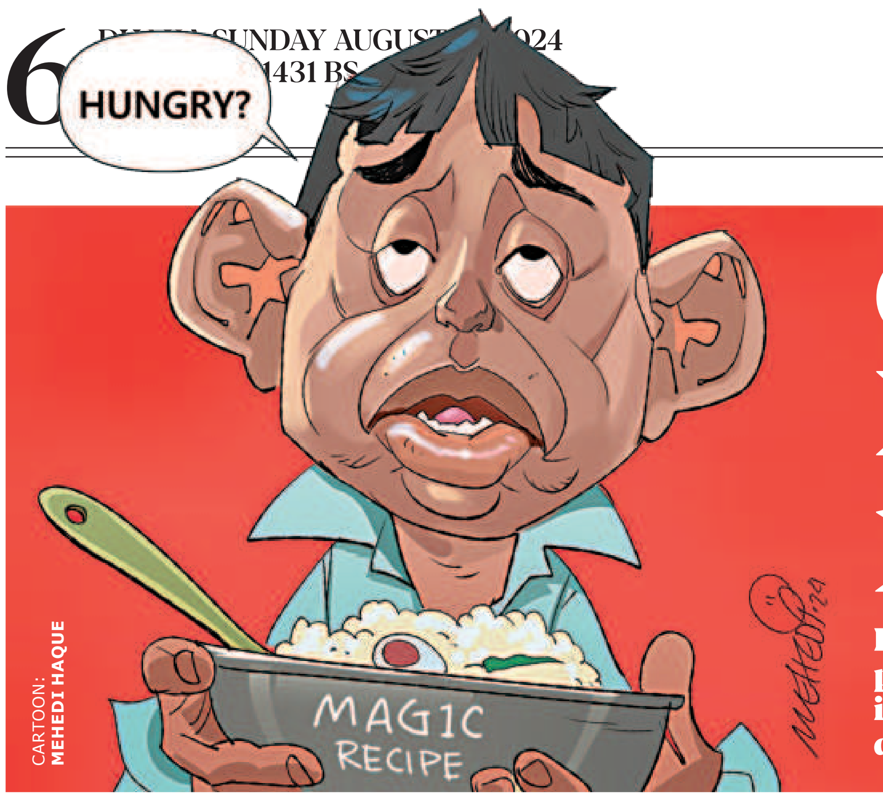
PROCURING ENTITY DETALLS		
16	Name of official inviting tender	Dr. Md. Emdadul Haque
17	Designation of official inviting tender	Additional DIG (A & F)
18	Address of official inviting tender	Additional DIG (A & F), Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
19	Contact details of official inviting the tender	Tel: 88-02-8312075 Fax 88-02-9342297
20	Special instructions	
	a) No tender will be received after the deadline for submission.	
	b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceeding.	
	c) Tender will be evaluated item by item basis.	
	d) All Items will be purses after allocation of budget.	
21	i. If it is not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received/opened on the next working day at the same time same venue. ii. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept any tender partly of fully and reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.	

17-08-24

Dr. Md. Emdadul Haque
Additional DIG (A & F)
For-Director (DIG)
Central Police Hospital
Bangladesh Police, Rajarbag, Dhaka
Phone: 8312075, Fax: 9342297

GD- 197

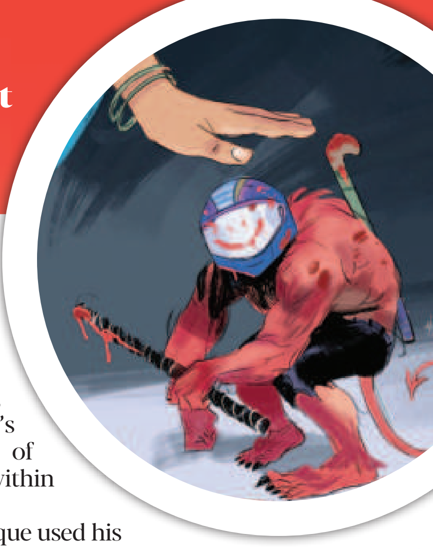
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



CARTOON: MEHEDI HAQUE

CARTOON EY BIDROHO
Drik celebrates revival of political cartoons

History has its own grim sense of humour. When power betrays the very people from whom it arose, it ignites like a furious blaze, consuming anyone who dares to threaten its inherent drive for freedom.



CARTOON: MAHATAB RASHID

Cartoonist Mehedi Haque used his art to strike the authorities directly. "An artist's job is to do what's right at the right time. We paid a debt to the countless deaths and assaults suffered by cartoonists like Ahmed Kabir Kishore," Haque stated.

DOWEL BISWAS

The history of revolution is almost always shaped by artistic resistance. While some fought in the streets, artists wielded pens and pencils as weapons, inspiring and mobilising the masses with their creations. Political cartoons played a pivotal role in the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, transforming the revolution with artistic brilliance and courage.

Acerbic political cartoons—hundreds of them—flooded social media. Drik honored this tradition through their exhibition ***Cartoon Ey Bidroho*** (Rebellion in Cartoons), held at their photo gallery in the capital's Panthapath. The exhibition brought together distinguished cartoonists, showcasing the incredible artistic contributions of these revolutionary figures. The initiative is timely, serving artists, spectators, and the cultural 'renaissance' currently being witnessed.

"There was a time when political cartoons, caricatures, satires, graffiti, and other artistic forms of vigilante justice were deeply rooted in our culture to critique and question authority. Cartoons and caricatures used to grace the front pages of every newspaper, delivering potent messages against malpractice and corruption," said ASM Rezaur Rahman, general manager of Drik and curator of the exhibition. "However, due to undue censorship and the culture of fear perpetuated by the former government, this artform was stifled, threatening to become nearly obsolete."

Rahman also emphasised the shift in power dynamics with the rise of social media and citizen journalism, particularly during the youth protest movement. Authorities, shaken by the power of this movement, found the usual rules of political engagement upended. Ordinary people, through their phones and personal devices, risked their lives on the front lines to reveal ground realities often beyond the reach of traditional journalists.

Drik's exhibit showcased the unprecedented draughtsmanship and satirical verve of 82 cartoonists, featuring a well-curated collection of 175 artworks in the Drik Picture Library. One cartoon published on July 15 captured the spirit of the movement perfectly: it depicted the figure of Shontrash Birodhi Raju Sharokh Bhashkorjo, with a red sun at its apex, covered in blood while a black boat floated gloriously amidst the red waves. Another work from the same day portrayed a grotesque red creature, battered with hockey sticks, being blessed by a hand adorned with blue bangles—a vivid critique of authority.

Mahatab Rashid, a cartoonist at The Business Standard, whose work took centre stage at the exhibition, explained his motivation: "I, along with my friends, was involved in the protests. As a cartoonist, I felt bound to create something that spoke to the tyranny we were witnessing. When the Chhatra League brutally attacked my friends and fellow protesters, I felt an unstoppable urge to create. When they killed Abu Sayed the next day (July 16), I had no choice but to resist through my art."

PHOTO: **ARSHADUL HOQUE ROCKY**

Another of Rashid's cartoons, which became iconic, depicted a stout woman flying through the air, clinging to a rope with only one sandal on her feet. She flew above a wooden throne placed atop countless corpses. This character, seen repeatedly in Rashid's work, became symbolic of the oppressive forces within the movement.

Cartoonist Mehedi Haque used his art to strike directly at the authorities. "An artist's job is to do what's right at the right time. We paid a debt to the countless deaths and assaults suffered by cartoonists like Ahmed Kabir Kishore," Haque stated. In one of his artworks, a woman is shown fleeing with only one sandal on her feet, as hands throw trophies named "Muktijuddho" after her. His work captured the inevitable collapse of an oppressive regime, inspiring hope among the protesters.

Reflecting on his work, Haque explained, "As political observers, we know from history that nothing beats the mobilization of middle-class urban people who have nothing to lose. When they take to the streets, the government cannot subjugate their spirit."

Simu Naser, Founder and Editor of Earki and a curator of the exhibition, praised the unity and determination of the artists. "The first works of art came from cartoonists. Newcomers joined in, posting their works on social media and filling the pages of newspapers. Some were drawn anonymously, others bore signatures, but all of them spread across the internet and took their place in history," Naser said.

This exhibition, while only featuring a fraction of the political cartoons created during the movement, remains a tribute to the power of art in shaping resistance.

All the cartoonists featured in the exhibition, including, Abdullah Al Zunayed Shadat Mahbub, Mehedi Hasan, Eeha Nawar, Natasha Jahan, Purnota Sondhi, Raeid Hossen, Miskatun Jinat Tonni, Tuba Tanjum and many others only asked for only one thing and that is the end of censorship in their art.

Political cartoons have long served as powerful tools for challenging authority, exposing injustice, and mobilizing the masses. The exhibition highlights the essential role that these satirical artworks play in moments of resistance and revolution. However, censorship threatens to stifle this artistic form, as history shows that oppressive regimes often seek to silence the voices that challenge their power. The freedom to create and express without fear is fundamental to both art and society. When censorship prevails, it not only undermines artistic expression but also stifles the spirit of revolution, muting the voices that dare to speak truth to power.

NEWS

DGHS issues

FROM PAGE 12

muscle aches, backache, lack of energy, swollen lymph nodes and skin rash or lesions. Swelling of the lymph nodes is a distinctive feature of Mpox, according to the DGHS guideline.

According to the guideline, mpox spreads mostly in direct physical contact, liquid of vesicle and pustule, body fluid, sneezing, coughing and physical intercourse.

Those who have previously been vaccinated against smallpox are significantly protected from mpox infection. The mpox vaccine is not available, however, the smallpox vaccine is largely effective in combatting mpox.

The last time the smallpox vaccine was administered in the country was in 1980, according to DGHS.

"If someone has the symptoms of mpox or comes into contact with an infected person, or develops any symptoms within 21 days of travelling to a country where the disease has been reported, please contact 16263 or 10655," said the DGHS in a press release yesterday.

About the treatment of mpox, DGHS said that in most cases, the symptoms of mpox are relieved on their own, so specific treatment is not required for it.

The DGHS asked people to eat nutritious food and drink enough water if anyone is infected with mpox.

"Consult a doctor and take medicine if the mpox-related complications get worse," said the guideline.

5 secretaries appointed on contract

FROM PAGE 12

service. The was made to retire while being on special duty (OSD), which is seen in the civil service as a punishment.

Meanwhile, Dr Abdur Rashid was appointed secretary to the education ministry. He stood first in the 1982 Bangladesh Civil Service exams, Public administration ministry sources said.

A former additional home secretary, he had been OSD for nearly seven years.

Meanwhile, Ehsanul Karim was made the secretary to the Road Transport and Highways Division.

Ehsanul was private secretary to Fakhruddin Ahmed, former chief adviser to the 2007-'08 caretaker government.

Ajmol Hossain Azad has been appointed as the secretary to the railways ministry while Nasimul Gani has been given the responsibility of the President's Office (Public Division).

Nasimul, a former private secretary to former Speaker and BNP leader Jamiruddin Sircar, was forced to retire on May 29, 2013. Before that, he had been OSD since the AL government came to power.

Meanwhile, the contractual appointment of Wahidul Islam Khan, secretary, (Public Division), President's Office, Bangabhaban, has been terminated.

The directors general of the Bangla Academy and the Shilpakala Academy also lost their contractual appointments.

The government also scrapped the contractual appointments of at least four officials at the foreign ministry.

Indian doctors go on strike

FROM PAGE 12

their daughter was gang-raped.

One man, who worked at the hospital helping people navigate busy queues, has been detained.

However, Kolkata's police were accused by an angry public of mishandling the case and the city's High Court transferred the investigation to India's top Central Bureau of Investigation to "inspire public confidence".

Those in government hospitals across several states on Monday halted elective services "indefinitely", with multiple medical unions in both government and private systems backing the strikes.

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) escalated protests on Saturday morning with a 24-hour "nationwide withdrawal of services", and the suspension of all non-essential procedures.

"We ask for the understanding and support of the nation in this struggle for justice for its doctors and daughters," IMA chief R.V. Asokan said in a statement ahead of the strike.

The IMA called the killing "barbaric".

"The 36-hour duty shift that the victim was in and the lack of safe spaces to rest... warrant a thorough overhaul of the working and living conditions of the resident doctors," the IMA said in a statement.

Doctors are demanding the implementation of the Central Protection Act, a bill to protect healthcare workers from violence.

"There is a lack of proper infrastructure," said 29-year-old Akanksha Tyagi, a resident at the Lady Hardinge Medical College in New Delhi who took part in one of the multiple protests around the country.

"After working for 24-36 hours at a stretch, there's no proper place for us to rest," she said.

The strike disrupted outpatient services.

At Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia public hospital, one of the city's busiest, many who had turned up for their scheduled appointments were turned away.

Shivdev Kumar, 50, had travelled over 20 kilometres (12 miles) with the tuberculosis reports of his daughter, only to find the doctor's room locked.

"I had no idea, otherwise I would not have such a long way," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanded on Thursday swift punishment for those who commit "monstrous" deeds against women.

Sexual violence against women is a widespread problem in India -- an average of nearly 90 rapes a day were reported in 2022 in the country of 1.4 billion people.

For many, the gruesome nature of the hospital attack has invoked comparisons with the horrific 2012 gang rape and murder of a young woman on a Delhi bus.

That woman became a symbol of socially conservative India's failure to tackle sexual violence against women.

Her death sparked huge, and at times violent, demonstrations in Delhi and elsewhere.

Under pressure, the government introduced harsher penalties for rapists and the death penalty for repeat offenders.

Several new sexual offences were also introduced -- including for stalking -- and officials who refuse to register rape complaints can now be jailed.

Public univs 'reopen' today

FROM PAGE 12

"As far as we know, students of different universities raised some demands. These have to be resolved," he added.

Prof Tarikul Islam, acting registrar at Rajshahi University, said, "The order to reopen was issued to the VCs. But we have no VC here. We have not decided how to resume academic activities. We will decide once a VC is appointed."

Azizur Rahman Mukul, deputy registrar at Jahangirnagar University, said, "We are facing numerous challenges as several key administrative positions are vacant."

The government on July 16, closed all educational institutions amid student protests. Hasina resigned and fled the country on August 5 in the face of a mass upsurge.

But classes at public universities have been suspended since July 1 when teachers went on strike in protest of a new pension scheme.

Prof Akhtarul Islam, president of the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association, said, "We called off the strike and are ready to take classes."

President Mohammed Shahabuddin, also the chancellor of the public universities, on August 14 accepted the resignations of 16 VCs, five pro-VCs, and three treasurers.

The VCs who resigned are from Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, Bangladesh Agriculture University, Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture University, Islamic University, Begum Rokeya University, Chittagong University, Sheikh Hasina University, National University, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Bangamata Sheikh Fojilatunnesa Mujib Science and Technology University, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Jagannath University, Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology, Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, Islamic University and Islamic Arabic University.

The government on July 16, closed all educational institutions amid student protests. Hasina resigned and fled the country on August 5 in the face of a mass upsurge.

"For smooth operation, VCs will be needed first. The government can temporarily give the responsibility to someone. The decision has to be prompt," said Prof Alamgir.

Others who resigned at different universities are six dormitory provosts and the entire proctorial body at DU; the proctor, 11 assistant proctors, the student adviser, and 62 others at RU; pro-VC, treasurer, entire proctorial body, all provosts and assistant provosts at SUST; pro-VC, registrar, a provost, the proctor, 13 assistant proctors, and two house tutors at JnU; pro-VC and treasurer at Islamic University; pro-VC and registrar at JU.

Former DU VC Prof SMA Faiz said, "Many people will be needed to fill the vacancies. But one needs the right and qualified individual. Unqualified persons should not be appointed."

All secondary schools and colleges are also set to reopen today after almost a month. Primary schools reopened on August 14.

Make all probe reports public

FROM PAGE 12

Noor Taposh, and Sheikh Selim were directly involved in the Pilkhana massacre. Others were also involved behind the scenes. If an independent investigation commission is formed, their names will also come up," Rakin alleged.

He further said that he was unaware of any historical precedent where a country's prime minister (Sheikh Hasina) conspired with a foreign nation to orchestrate the killing of 57 army officers in the capital.

Advocate Saquib Rahman, son of slain Col Quadrat Elahi Rahman Shafique, said two investigative committees were formed at that time. Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, who is currently serving as the Home Affairs Advisor to the interim government, headed one of the probe committees.

Saquib said that the report that was released to the media had been revised three times before its publication.

He called for the release of the entire report.

The killings at the Pilkhana headquarters of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on February 25-26, 2009, which resulted in the deaths of 74 people, including 57 army officials, left the nation in shock.

The families of the victims requested that everyone refer to the event not as the "BDR Mutiny" but as the "BDR Massacre."

Among other demands, the families proposed that February 25 be officially recognised as "Shaheed Shena Dibosh" through an official gazette, with all fallen officers acknowledged as "Shaheed" (martyrs).

They also called for the national flag to be flown at half-mast every year on this day and for the inclusion of a chapter on the BDR Pilkhana tragedy in school textbooks, ensuring that future generations learn about the sacrifices made.

Furthermore, the families appealed to the interim government to ensure that no innocent former BDR soldiers remain imprisoned and to reinstate or compensate Bangladesh Army officers who lost their jobs for advocating for justice.

The day white
aprons turned
RED
The 78 years of
Independence
Made no sense
R.G.
JUSTICE.
R.G
RED
The 78 years of
Independence
Made no sense

Medical professionals hold posters amid a nationwide strike by doctors to condemn the rape and murder of a young medic from Kolkata, at a hospital in Bengaluru yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

POST-COUP MYANMAR

US pledges to expand support to opposition

REUTERS, *Washington*

US officials met virtually with members of Myanmar's opposition movement on Friday and pledged to expand direct support to help a transition to civilian government and agreeing on the need to maintain pressure on the military junta, the State Department said.

News of the meeting came after Washington's regional rival China urged neighbouring countries to help war-torn Myanmar advance its peace and reconciliation process when its foreign minister met counterparts from Laos, Myanmar and Thailand.

A US statement said Friday's meeting involved State Department Counselor Tom Sullivan, USAID Assistant Administrator Michael Schiffer and leading members of Myanmar's pro-democracy National Unity Government, the National Unity Consultative Council, and key resistance organisations, the Karen National Union, Karenni National Progressive Party, and the Chin National Front.

Myanmar's state media said on Thursday that China had promised technical support to conduct a census, followed by an election, signalling Beijing's backing to a junta cornered by an armed rebellion and steadily losing ground.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since 2021 when the military ousted an elected civilian government in a coup, abruptly ending the impoverished country's tentative steps towards becoming a full-fledged democracy.

DROUGHT IN AFRICA

Nearly 68m suffering

REUTERS, *Harare*

About 68 million people in Southern Africa are suffering the effects of an El Nino-induced drought which has wiped out crops across the region, the regional bloc SADC said yesterday.

The drought, which started in early 2024, has hit crop and livestock production, causing food shortages and damaging the wider economies.

Heads of state from the 16-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC) were meeting in Zimbabwe's capital Harare to discuss regional issues including food security.

Some 68 million people, or 17 percent of the region's population, are in need of aid, said Elias Magosi, SADC executive secretary.

"The 2024 rainy season has been a challenging one with most parts of the region experiencing negative effects of the El Nino phenomenon characterised by the late onset of rains," he said.

It is Southern Africa's worst drought in years, owing to a combination of naturally occurring El Nino - when abnormal warming of the waters in the eastern Pacific changes world weather patterns - and higher average temperatures produced by greenhouse gas emissions.

Ukraine 'strengthening' positions in Russia

Says Zelensky; Germany to cut Ukraine military aid in 2025 budget

AFP, *Kyiv*

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday said his forces were "strengthening" their positions in Russia's Kursk region, where Kyiv has been mounting a major ground offensive for more than 11 days.

His comments came a day after Moscow accused Ukraine of destroying a key bridge over a river in the border region, as Kyiv seeks to disrupt supply routes and the movement of Moscow's troops in the area.

Ukrainian army chief Oleksandr Syrsky "reported on the strengthening of the positions of our forces in the Kursk region and the expansion of stabilised territory", Zelensky said in a post on Telegram.

"As of this morning, we have replenished the exchange fund for our country," Zelensky said, referring to Russian soldiers Ukraine has captured to be used in future prisoner swaps.

"I thank all the soldiers and commanders who are taking Russian soldiers prisoner and thus bringing the release of our soldiers and civilians held by Russia closer," Zelensky said.

Kyiv claims to have taken control of more than 80 settlements in the lightning incursion, which caught the Kremlin off guard almost two and a half years into its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The Russian defence ministry said on Saturday it had pushed back Ukrainian forces near three settlements in the Kursk region, and was searching for "mobile enemy groups" trying to pierce deeper into the country.

Russian officials on Friday accused Ukraine of striking a strategically important bridge just a couple dozen kilometres away from fighting in the Kursk region.

The region's governor, Alexei Smirnov, said on Friday evening the bridge was in the Glushkovsky district, some 11 kilometres (seven miles) away from the border.

An aerial video published by Ukrainian air force commander Mykola Oleshchuk appeared to show the bridge being hit by a projectile at high speed before collapsing in a cloud of smoke.

"Ukrainian pilots are conducting precision strikes on enemy strongholds, equipment concentrations, as well as on enemy logistics centres and supply routes," he said on Telegram.

Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said the bridge was "completely destroyed" and that "volunteers providing assistance to the evacuated civilian population were killed".

"All those responsible for these inhumane acts will be severely punished," she said.

Russia yesterday also accused Ukraine of dropping an explosive charge on a road near the occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine.

The plant, which was seized by Russia's forces early in the war, has come under repeated attacks that both sides have accused each other of carrying out.

Russia meanwhile attacked at least four Ukrainian regions yesterday, according to officials, including the northeastern region of Kharkiv, where prosecutors said shelling killed a 49-year-old woman.

While the incursion has delivered a major morale boost to Kyiv, it appears to have had little impact on the larger battles raging in Russian-occupied parts of eastern Ukraine.

Zelensky yesterday said there had been "dozens of Russian assaults" on Ukrainian positions near the towns of Pokrovsk and Toretsk, where Moscow has made a string of advances in recent weeks.

Thai ex-PM Thaksin gets royal pardon

REUTERS, *Bangkok*

Thailand's billionaire former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra received a royal pardon shortening his parole by two weeks, his lawyer said yesterday, a day after his daughter was elected premier by parliament.

Thaksin has been at the heart of a two-decade power struggle between the Shinawatra family and its allies on the one hand, and, on the other, a nexus of royalists, generals and old-money families that have long wielded influence over Thai governments and institutions.

After a dramatic return last August from self-exile to avoid jail time in the wake of his overthrow in a 2006 military coup, Thaksin served six months in hospital detention, due to health reasons, before being released on parole in February.

After his return, he was sentenced to eight years in prison for abuse of power and conflicts of interest during his time in office from 2001 to 2006. His sentence was commuted to one year by King Maha Vajiralongkorn last September.

"Thaksin is among the prisoners that received the royal pardon" for prisoners in honour of the king's birthday last month, his lawyer, Winyat Chartmontri, told Reuters. "It will take effect on Sunday."

Parole, granted in February, was due to end at the end of the month, but was shortened to Sunday as part of the royal pardon, Winyat said.

Thaksin's daughter Paetongtarn Shinawatra, 37, was elected on Friday as Thailand's second female prime minister and the third Shinawatra to hold the office, winning with nearly two-thirds of the Thai parliament.

US PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

Rivals to hold rallies in key state

AFP, *Wilkes-Barre*

Donald Trump and Kamala Harris are holding duelling campaign stops in the crucial battleground state of Pennsylvania this weekend, as new polling shows the US vice president making major gains ahead of her big moment at next week's Democratic National Convention.

Trump will hold a rally in the small town of Wilkes-Barre on Saturday, while Harris is taking her tour bus on several stops around Pittsburgh on Sunday before heading to the convention in Chicago.

The momentum in the White House race has shifted dramatically since President Joe Biden abruptly pulled out on July 21, with Harris's whirlwind entry energizing the Democratic Party base.

A survey by the New York Times and Siena College published Saturday had Harris storming back into contention in four critical battleground states that Trump had looked set to win comfortably against Biden.

The Republican has struggled to find an effective counter to the Harris surge, and the new poll will likely trigger further consternation in his campaign team, with the vice president now ahead in Arizona and North Carolina, and getting closer in Nevada and Georgia.

The stakes will be high for Trump to find some fresh impetus at Saturday's public rally, after a series of distinctly low-energy events held at his Florida resort home and a golf club he owns in New Jersey.

People look at animated kites soaring over the sky on the third day of the Tamil Nadu International Kite Festival on the outskirts of Chennai yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Unearth all banking sector irregularities

Bring those involved in financial crimes to book

Since the fall of the Awami League government, increasingly alarming information about the banking sector has begun to surface. Most recently, it was reported in this daily that Tk 45,000 crore is tied up in dubious loans. In a questionable practice, eight banks have provided loans to directors of other banks, posing considerable risks to the entire sector. According to their financial reports, loans totalling Tk 25,000 crore were exchanged among these eight banks for their directors by the end of 2023. In addition, four of these lenders provided around Tk 20,000 crore to the relatives of the bank directors. This means the total reciprocal loans sanctioned for these directors and their relatives amounted to Tk 45,000 crore, with most of these loans changing hands over the last five years.

It has been known for some time that the banking sector experienced massive irregularities under the AL government. However, the true extent of these irregularities—despite various issues being regularly reported—seems to be beyond anyone's wildest imagination. For example, these eight banks were known for their questionable practices and were allegedly linked to the recently ousted AL government. During Hasina's 15-year rule, powerful business groups with banking assets, including S Alam, Beximco, Nassa, and Sikder Group, thrived on murky politics and routinely bent banking rules, exposing the entire financial sector to serious risks. The names of these business groups have once again surfaced in relation to the irregularities that have occurred at these eight banks.

What is further concerning is that the combined contribution of the eight bank directors to the lenders' paid-up capital is only Tk 2,400 crore, or about five percent of the Tk 45,000 crore in loans they have taken from each other. Since most of these groups would have been unable to secure loans if their business practices and financial health had been properly assessed, and given that central bank rules prohibit a bank from lending to its own directors, they engaged in reciprocal lending. Moreover, many of these loans were approved based on the direct orders of the directors, with bank officials playing a minimal role, according to some mid-level bank officials. In other words, the bank directors essentially made up the rules as they pleased, putting depositors' and national interests at risk in the process.

However, it is unlikely that they could have carried out such risky manoeuvres without "managing" the regulator in one way or another. This represents another disastrous outcome of the politicisation of our regulatory authorities. Therefore, it is essential that the interim government continues to uncover such irregularities and identify those responsible for these corrupt lending practices. The truth about the health of our banking sector needs to be revealed, and those responsible for financial irregularities must be held accountable. Additionally, steps must be taken to protect depositors' interests and recover these loans from politically connected businesses and individuals.

When will Ctg elevated expressway open?

The CDA must answer for the delay

We are disappointed by the unexplained delay of the authorities in opening the much-anticipated elevated expressway in Chattogram, which is supposed to ease traffic congestion and boost the port city's economy. Even though eight months have passed since its inauguration by the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in November 2023 (when it was still incomplete), it remains uncertain when the elevated expressway will open to the public. The Chattogram Development Authority (CDA), which constructed the 16-kilometre-long expressway—from the port city's Lalkhan Bazar to Patenga—has remained silent about its opening. Although the project director hinted in March this year that the expressway would be partially opened to the public within two months, this did not happen. Now, in mid-August, the continued uncertainty about its opening has frustrated the people of Chattogram.

Unfortunately, like most other mega projects in the country, the Chattogram elevated expressway has also faced cost and time overruns.While the project was originally scheduled for completion by June 2020, its deadline has been extended twice—with its deadline set for June 2024 the last time. Naturally, this delay has significantly increased the project's cost, which rose from Tk 3,250 crore to Tk 4,298.95 crore. Moreover, a dispute over land acquisition among the CDA, Chattogram Port Authority, and railways further delayed the work. As a result, the CDA had to alter the expressway's original design.

We would like to ask: Why was the project hurriedly inaugurated if it couldn't be opened to the public? Why do such projects always face time and cost overruns? Why are issues like land acquisition not resolved before the start of the project? Why do we repeatedly encounter these questions about most such projects? We urge the interim government to take a strong stance to address these anomalies in project implementation.

Over the past few decades, a culture of inefficiency, incompetence and irregularities have plagued all our government institutions. And the CDA is no exception. It has a record of failure in many projects it undertook over the years—and it cannot continue in this manner. We urge the CDA to open the first elevated expressway in Chattogram as soon as possible. This will not only provide commuters with some relief from unbearable traffic congestion, but also reduce travel time and cost and hopefully usher in a new era of connectivity and trade in the port city.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Pervez Musharraf resigns

On this day in 2008, facing possible impeachment, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf resigned from office.

Can the new leadership save the economy?

OPEN SKY

Dr Birupaksha Paul
is professor of economics at the State University of New York in Cortland, US.

BIRUPAKSHA PAUL

It is welcome news that Dr Ahsan H Mansur is going to lead Bangladesh Bank (BB). Former BB governor and current finance advisor to the interim government, Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, will serve as a knowledgeable advisor on finance and banking. The recent addition of a prominent economist like Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud as another new advisor has created a golden opportunity to correct the course of the economy, which is currently in disarray. It would be equally encouraging if the government appoints another expert to lead the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC), to represent the country's capital market.

Finally, Dr Muhammad Yunus, head of the interim government and a globally recognised pro-poor growth economist, has the potential to create a powerful leadership team that can not only rescue the economy from a possible downturn, but also guide us toward recovery. Their first task is to address the three groups of looters: bank defaulters, tax dodgers, and money launderers—who have formed a "devil's triangle" and have been coddled by politicians in power, nearly ruining the country's institutions.

Never has this country seen such a scholarly leadership team for economic policymaking in its history. At times, BB governors were duly qualified, but often the finance ministers or leaders in the capital market were not. On other occasions, both governors and finance ministers were inadequately qualified, placing the wrong people in key positions. This situation weakened the leadership triangle and undermined the effectiveness of the economy.

We know that the leadership team during this interim period is likely to be short-lived, as pressure for new elections is mounting. However, people expect to see a series of reforms in recruitment policies to ensure that only qualified individuals can become BB governor, BSEC chair, or finance ministers—not merely those who curry favour with big-ticket bank looters or who are sycophantic to the regime. People hope that future elected governments will choose scholarly leaders, especially for key financial institutions, whom the public can respect and rely on.

Controlling inflation in the short term and addressing massive youth unemployment in the medium term are their two main challenges. The previous two governors, who questionably held the leading position at the central bank, have made the task for the new governor significantly more difficult. The primary hurdle is to bring clarity and accuracy to the definition of defaulted loans, which were reported as much lower than their actual amount due to looter-friendly definitions. For example, a loan was considered "regular" if only 5 to 10 percent of it was repaid. This is a mockery, and the previous regime approved it easily, primarily so that these defaulters can participate in the one-sided election.

The parliament has largely become a club of corrupt businesspeople who occupy 61 percent of the seats, with the remainder filled by retired bureaucrats, elderly party stalwarts who still crave power, and a few promising youths. Politics has corrupted central-bank policymaking. The finance minister from 2019 to 2023 orchestrated this definitional perversion to favour delinquents, and the past two governors merely complied with the finance minister's wishes without assessing any merit or ethics. The new governor will face resistance from the beneficiary groups when attempting to implement best global practices in loan administration. However, since the finance advisor is not affiliated with any business mafia, the governor will receive wholehearted support from Salehuddin Ahmed whenever corrective measures are undertaken.

Full transparency of information and data should be maintained within the pentagon of leaders to break the "devil's triangle." Governor Mansur is right to emphasise that he will take necessary steps to ensure that financial hooligans who siphoned off millions of dollars from the country face serious consequences. Since the interim government is not concerned with political popularity, it is crucial for it to reveal true figures on inflation, unemployment, defaulted loans, written-off loans, money trafficking, and revenue gaps. This transparency will aid other agencies and researchers in working effectively. Hiding data has caused serious damage to the economy, though ministers adopted this tactic to remain politically expedient.

This is the time to abolish the Financial Institutions Division at the ministry. Its establishment after 2009 has caused more harm than good by weakening the central bank and empowering finance ministry officials who often served politically connected top-ranking oligarchs, including those who closely supported the former prime minister. Moral hazards have reached such a point that making a U-turn will be one of the toughest tasks for the interim government. It is also crucial to establish "Revenue" as an independent ministry, as it represents more than 10 percent of GDP. This is a significant weak point in Bangladesh's finance sector that has been long ignored. Leading such a crucial department with just non-expert bureaucrat has proven ineffective and will continue to do so.

In other countries, defaulted loans rise when the economy performs poorly. Bangladesh's growth continued to rise until 2019, reaching nearly 8 percent. Growth has become lacklustre after Covid-19, not due to global factors but because of increased wilful defaults and rampant corruption across all sectors. Still, growth has hovered around 5 to 6 percent, which does not justify requests for loan rescheduling or default. The nature of defaulted loans varies widely based on ownership structure, indicating that they are primarily institutional and political in nature, rather than being related to the real economy.

The share of defaulted loans out of total outstanding loans is as low as 3.38 percent in foreign banks, while it is as high as 22 percent in private banks. The corresponding figure for public banks is abnormally high at 38.56 percent, vindicating that the issue is primarily one of poor governance and political looting. The new governor is expected to address this problem. All boards of directors at both public and private banks must be reshuffled, and the directorship law should be revoked.

Professor Rehman Sobhan mentioned in a seminar on the banking sector on July 7 this year that Bangladesh Bank (BB) enjoyed a rich tradition of having scholars as governors, such as Dr Mohammed Farashuddin, Dr Fakruddin Ahmed, Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, and finally Dr Atiur Rahman. This tradition collapsed in 2016, leading to less favourable results in the banking industry. However, with the appointment of Ahsan H Mansur as governor, we hope that BB will regain its knowledge-based leadership and that subsequent regimes will uphold this standard, which is crucial for the economy to thrive.

VISUAL: **REHNUMA PROSHOON**

It could've been any one of us in Moumita's place

Benazir Elahee Munni
is a lecturer of English at the Department of English, University of Dhaka.

BENAZIR ELAHEE MUNNI

In cases of being subjected to violence, being the woman in the story is difficult. She is constantly at risk of getting her narrative hijacked by the nit-pickers, power-holders, so-called well-wishers, pacifiers, prestige-rescuers, and of course, men. As I had started writing this, I was still reeling from the news of Dr Moumita Debnath from the neighbouring country, who met her demise in the most gut-wrenchingly painful and inhumane way imaginable. Moumita was a trainee doctor on duty when she was brutally raped and murdered. Even in her final hours, she was denied the slightest ounce of decency. The pain they inflicted on her was put on display in cold blood, snipping some invisible wings here and there across borders, setting us back just a little further and serving us once again, a grotesque reminder of what awaits if we dare to "act too smart."

I don't think it is possible for the "dominant sex" to even begin to fathom how deep such a piece of news can cut a woman. Women live their lives watching over their shoulders everywhere they go because their struggles have added layers, layers that can deeply wound them. They cannot show their fear because that makes them weak, they cannot assert their strength because that suggests they are "asking to be taught a lesson." They walk on eggshells which say, "You asked for independence, there you have it" or "That's equality for you."

Women, no matter how old or young, are always on somebody's radar. It's terrifying how anyone from any part of society can have almost the same power over a woman and her choices as the men in her life. That is only because they are women; viewed as prey first, humans later. Women seeking help on social media, a platform frequented by many supposedly "woke" individuals, are often met with curses and conspiracies that seek to invalidate their struggles. Once a rumour starts spreading, the original incident is never viewed the same way again, and, ironically, in the end, women often find themselves apologising for the injustices done to them.

When it comes to providing a viable solution for women's safety, people are quick to prescribe home arrest, a change in the way they dress, and ultimately, fall back to despair over how the "system" functions. Animosity toward all matters feminine among the general public has always been critical, contributing to toxic masculinity and identity crises among many men who perhaps genuinely wanted to do the right thing. Returning to the idea that the tragic news of one woman can have a ripple effect, shaking every woman, if not every person, to the core, it's women who suffer the most in all of this. When they protest, it is easy to reduce them to noisy, opinionated, over-educated, and "feminist-type" cliches, what is not easy is to see past their demeanour and feel the pain it caused them. How their knees grow weak at the thought of that girl in whom every woman right now sees herself.

For every precautionary step a girl is taught to take before going out, every man should be trained to ensure that such precautions are never necessary for women. For every #MeToo statement, there should be 10 people who come forward pledging to protect all women in need, not just the ones in their own families.

This message should have been written in Bangla, and, if possible, in regional dialects. It should have been printed as leaflets, and distributed among the masses, who often remain hidden and are only occasionally disturbed by a woman "who didn't know her place." Rural areas, quiet alleys, busy markets, and crowded vehicles should be covered with posters until the message has been received.

Some women have this idea that speaking out makes them a "bad" girl, it makes them an accomplice to the rebel. This tendency has been an ancient tactic used to control the womenfolk. It has earned women the notorious labels of being prone to "cat-fights" or "being their own worst enemies." A "good" girl gets the degree, a "good" girl has a great husband, and a "good" girl is put on a pedestal because she said nothing. A "good" girl basically can have everything as long as she never questions anything. Were these "good" girls never victims of abuse? The answer is, almost every single one of them has had such an experience.

Perhaps we are still far away from freeing our stories from the grasp of patriarchy. However, our right to live an equal life, free of gender-based violence has been overdue for a long time. The next best time to advocate for it is now.

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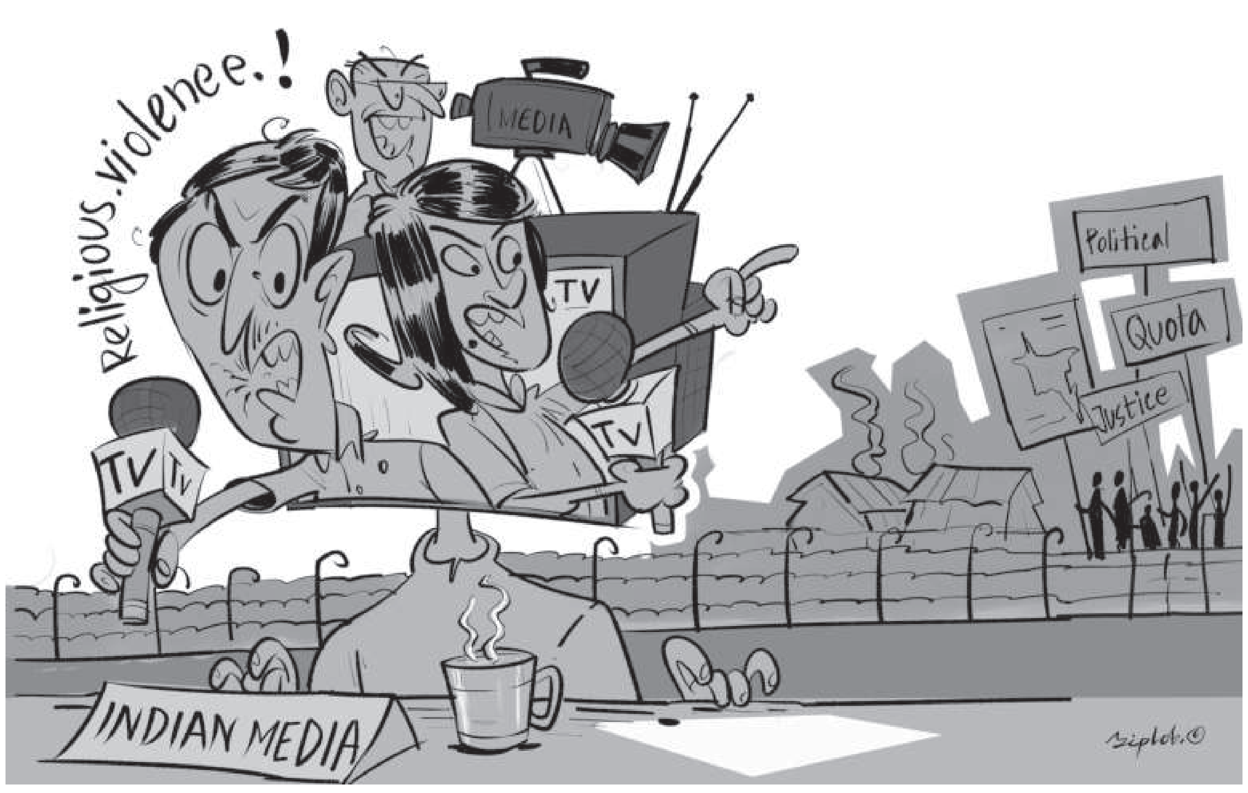

VISUAL: **BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY**

Canards of a prejudiced neighbour

ON THE SHORES OF (IN) JUSTICE

Dr CR Abrar
is an academic with an interest in human rights issues.

C R ABRAR

The July massacre and the consequent second liberation of Bangladeshis have taken the world by surprise. At a time when millions in Bangladesh are celebrating the overthrow of Hasina's brutal dictatorship, when several hundred families including those of Abu Sayed, Mugdho, and Faiyaaz, are beginning to sense that the wheels of justice have begun to roll, when various countries, international development and rights bodies, civil society organisations and the global media are beginning to absorb and appreciate the courage, tenacity, and commitment of the young heroes, various actors in Bangladesh's next door neighbour (political leadership and the mainstream media, in particular) are busy crafting a narrative denying and undermining the magnificent achievements of the new generation of "freedom fighters."

In the final days of Hasina's regime, the decision to unleash armed Awami goons on the defenceless protesters and the subsequent mobilisation of the security forces with the order to "shoot on sight" (duly executed on a number of occasions, killing scores of people), and the indiscriminate use of tear gas, sound grenade, armoured personnel carriers and helicopters to disperse and terrorise the protesters made it amply clear to the people of Bangladesh and discerning international observers that the Awami regime has reached its nadir. The state's myopic policy of resorting to intimidation and brute force only contributed to further hardening the resolve of the protestors. By August 3, their nine-point demand coalesced into one-point, the unconditional resignation of the government.

On the fateful day of August 5, the students' Dhaka siege programme in realisation of the one-point demand was countered by the state by imposing a stringent curfew backed by the threat of using lethal force. When the former prime minister ordered the siege be quashed "by any means," the armed forces' decision not to open fire on the unarmed protestors sealed the fate of the regime, leading Hasina to flee the country. While her departure triggered joyous celebrations all over the land, the news of killing of more than 100 people on the final two days let loose frenzied outrage, resulting in ransacking of the prime ministerial office and residence in Dhaka, and attacking and, in some instances, torching of the offices of the Awami League and homes and facilities of its leaders.

The violence that ensued was the result of a combination of outrage at the indiscriminate killing of fellow protestors and the venting of a long-drawn pent up frustration of a repressed, disenfranchised populace, who were left out of the "economic miracle" conjured by the regime and subjected to denial of fundamental rights including those of assembly, expression and dissent and also ill treatment, seizure of properties, denial of justice and humiliation by the ruling elite in cahoots with the state agencies.

The glorious struggle of the youth of Bangladesh that culminated in the overthrow of a despot through sacrificing several hundred lives received widespread felicitations from all over the world. Unity, resilience, and creativity demonstrated by the student leadership in steering through the movement against all odds became the topic for discussion in every quarter that value justice, freedom, and liberty, both at home and abroad. In contrast to such a dispensation of triumph and positive image of Bangladesh's new found freedom, the dominant and influential sections of Indian commentators (diplomats, strategic experts, and "Bangladesh observers") and that of the media conjured up a conspiracy theory claiming that the students' movement was being "manipulated," if not "steered" by opposition political parties, such as the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami.Nothing can be further from the truth.

The quota reform movement was an autonomous, organic movement of the students. Though it was initiated by the students of public universities, the atrocities committed against them by the ruling party thugs, blatantly aided by the members of law enforcement agencies, galvanised the students of schools, madrasas, colleges and private universities to join the ranks. As the casualties mounted as a result of trigger-happy response of the state, siblings, parents, guardians and mass people from all walks of life joined the students, swelling the ranks of the protesters. By then they had overcome the fear to face live ammunition. All along there was conscious effort by the student "coordinators" (leaders) not to provide the government any pretext to brand the movement as proxy of the opposition parties. During this entire episode, being mindful of likely public backlash for usurping the movement, political parties such as the BNP and Jamat-e-Islami had little option but to maintain a low profile, let alone had any opportunity to direct or manipulate it, as claimed by Delhi and Kolkata based pundits.

Some Indian observers also beat the drum that the Pakistani spy agency, ISI, had a hand in orchestrating the protests to dislodge the Hasina government. Others have pointed fingers at China. If indeed such collusion existed, is it not incumbent on those observers to furnish credible evidence to establish the veracity of such claims?

Collective leadership with designated coordinators in major educational institutions and districts was a distinguishing feature of the movement. As and when top leaders got arrested, detained, or were forced to hide, the next tier of coordinators assumed the role and steered the struggle, often by declaring programmes that ensured the continued engagement of the masses. The unflinching commitment to unity and resilience frustrated all efforts (detention, abduction, and torture) of the state agencies to bring about a fissure in the leadership. After the state violence reached its zenith, the one-point demand for the resignation of the government was taken by the students and the students alone. Therefore, to ascribe the success of the protest movement to opposition political parties or external elements not only reflects the stark failure to recognise the depth of the students' agency and ingenuity, it also manifests the wretched level of understanding of the "Bangladesh observers" of India as to the ground realities of Bangladesh politics.

The claims of widespread violence targeting the Hindu minority were another issue of concern of the prejudiced Indian media and the intellectual elite. The matter also featured in the Indian prime minister's message to the newly installed chief adviser of Bangladesh. It is true, that public backlash against the Awami League leaders and activists engaged in excesses during the party's 15-year rule did impact on some members of the Hindu community. On August 9, Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad reported that 205 cases of persecution, which includes the burning of temples, sexual assault, and even murders, on minority communities took place in 52 districts since the former prime minister's resignation occurred four days prior.

However, there is also burgeoning evidence that the issue was blown out of proportion by the vested quarters. Images of a prominent Hindu cricketer's home being torched, of Hindu women being gang raped and killed; of Hindu community members trying to cross the border en masse to escape engulfing violence that was rife in the social media were subsequently proven to be fake.

Fact checkers have found that many of the fake posts on social media about "widespread persecution" of Hindus in Bangladesh were posted from various Indian accounts. They noted, "While some attacks on Hindus did occur, houses were also vandalised and burned in Muslim communities." Instead of viewing them as incidents of "communal violence" the attacks were targeted at Awami League leaders and supporters rather than at individuals based on their religious identity. For political expediency "these events were given a communal colour rather than being portrayed as politically motivated." After reaching out to sources in some of the affected districts, Al Jazeera "discovered that the attacks on Hindu households were not driven by religious identity but by political affiliations." The BBC's fact-checking unit, BBC Verify, also arrived at a similar conclusion.

The prejudiced Indian intellectual elite and the media outlets' hypocrisy is palpable by their collective silence about the atrocities committed by the Awami League goons and members of the law enforcement agencies. From their interventions in the TV talks shows, opinion pieces and statements, it is obvious that the killing of hundreds of unarmed youths by illegal use of firearms by Hasina government and injury of several thousand have hardly been reported and thus far failed to stir the conscience of these champions of liberalism who interestingly have passionately condemned the mob vandalism of private and state property, including statues of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Such insensitive and undesirable reaction by the mainstream Indian intellectual elite and its cohort media to the July massacre should not come as a surprise to ordinary Bangladeshis. They are well aware that it was the Indian government that continued to provide critical support to a regime that usurped power by conducting three sham exercises (falsely dubbed as general elections) in 2014, 2019, and 2024. Time has come for the Indian political establishment to discard its myopic policy of trying to shore up the fallen regime that was overthrown by a popular revolution of freedom loving Bangladeshis, particularly the young people, who aspire to be treated with dignity and respect by its neighbour.

The tasks ahead for Bangladesh

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SELIM JAHAN

As Bangladesh is settling after the unprecedented events over the past weeks—the mass movement, hundreds of lives lost, the overthrow of Awami League government—one of the critical questions before us is what next. What needs to be done in today's Bangladesh, as the country is trying to move forward? The actions needed has an immediate perspective, a short-run one, as well as a medium-term and a long-term context.

Immediately, the broken structure of the law and order-enforcing police administration must be restored. No doubt increasing politicisation of the police force over time, and the recent police actions led to much anger and hostility of the common mass against the police. As a result, the police force is in a state of fear.

Second, social resistance to all kinds of violence must be ensured and legal actions taken. One aspect of this violence is the destruction of public property and buildings, which is not desirable because they belong to people. Measures must be taken to avoid all kinds of revengeful acts and looting. The other kind of violence manifests in the attacks on the lives and properties of minorities, especially religious minorities, and their places of worship. It is gratifying to observe that the collective and concerted efforts of student-public alliances are ensuring the safety of minorities and the protection of their properties and places of worship. Such efforts need to be consolidated.

One of the critical questions before us is what next.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Third, the destruction of historic national symbols, such as pictures and photos, paintings, sculptures, and museums, can never be beneficial. They are part of national heritage and identity. To understand where we want to go as a nation it is essential to know where we have come from. Setting fire to the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi Road Number 32, the desecration of sculptures of the Father of the Nation, and other notable figures represent the destruction of our historical journey as a nation. These are unpardonable crime, which deserves due punishment.

One immediate task of the interim government would be to undertake an objective inquiry into the killings over the past weeks, to bring them to justice and punish them. Similarly, actions should be taken against those who are responsible for the destruction of public properties, symbols of national history and national heritage.

After the immediate actions, the first task to be undertaken in the short-term involves the creation of a democratic, transparent and participatory platform for citizens' dialogue. In such dialogues, there has to be an effective representation of all groups in the society—women, young people, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, people of third gender, etc.

Those dialogues may have three aspects: one, a political dialogue which should raise questions such as should the future parliament of Bangladesh have two houses; should there be proportional representation in it; should there be term limits on government, etc. There can be public debates in the context of constitutional reforms as well—issues of reverting to the 1972 Constitution of Bangladesh or formulating a new constitution, reflective of the hopes and aspirations of the new generation. The latter issue, however, would require a constituent assembly.

Economic issues may constitute the second aspect of the public debate. The LDC graduation of Bangladesh would possibly be finalised during the tenure of the interim government, and as a result, some of its determinants would be relevant for them. Therefore, the interim government has to confront, in the scenario of changed realities, the issue of Bangladesh's readiness for the graduation, the negotiations with our trading partners, and formulation of a blueprint for protecting the interests of the country.

Issues of social harmony, human rights, social inequities, social violence and terrorism may be at the core of the third aspect of public debates. Dialogues on poverty, deprivation and issues of marginalisation may represent the major part of the social inequities. There should be an open and honest discussion on communal harmony, issues of minority insecurities, and the responsibilities of the majority.

While short-term reforms are required in various areas, they must align with the future medium-term reforms. One critical reform in the short-term should be in police administration so that even in the short-term, an apolitical, people-friendly, public service-oriented police force can be constituted. The other necessary short-term institutional reform is required in such entities as the election commission. The independence and neutrality of the commission must be enhanced to the highest level so that it can duly perform the mandates bestowed on it. Three, in the financial sector, short-term reformatory measures may be undertaken to combat money laundering and wealth exodus, which would increase the country's resource-base.

Because of the changed realities, there may be a need for reconstructing the collaborative and trusting relationship with various countries and international organisations. The interim government will have to perform these tasks in the short-term.

The most important task in the short-term will be to organise, on the basis of public debates and dialogues mentioned earlier, a free, fair, neutral and participatory election. In fact, this would be the prime responsibility of the interim government, which should delegate the reformed election commission this responsibility and oversee the election process.

In the medium-term, Bangladesh would need multidimensional reforms. It is well known that the political and economic institutions of the country have been increasingly suffering from fundamental institutional weaknesses due to years of neglect and politicisation of the system, making these institutions less and less effective. An important mandate of the post-election representative government will be institutional reforms in the country.

The scope of the reforms will have to be widespread. On one hand, such reforms would encompass the independence of the judiciary, the rule of law, and various aspects of public administration, e.g. law and order enforcing institutions, the Public Service Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission. On the other hand, they would also be in different economic and social areas. The economic sector would include the banking system, monetary and fiscal policies, the tax structure etc. Reforms are also necessary in economic institutions such as the Bangladesh Bank and the Planning Commission. Ensuring a structure and a culture of transparency and accountability should be at the core of the reform so the evils of nepotism and corruption can be combatted. In the social sector, reforms have to happen in the education and health sectors.

One critical aspect of the mass movement is the focus on a disparity-free Bangladesh. In our society, disparities have many faces and exist not only in outcomes among various socioeconomic groups and regions but are present in opportunities, in education, health and in employment. In fact, disparities in employment were one of the major complaints of young people. In the medium-term, different reformatory measures are essential to reduce the multidimensional disparities in Bangladesh.

One of the most important tasks in the medium-term would be formulating a long-term vision for Bangladesh, which would identify the path for tomorrow's Bangladesh. Today's youth would be the main architect of that vision, which would motivate and guide the future of Bangladesh. Today's young people would no longer remain the "future of the country," rather they would be the "present of the country."

Let us conclude with three observations. First, an interim government cannot be an alternative to an elected government. In that context, the tenure, mandate and scope of the work of an interim government must be limited and must be duly defined. A large part of the citizens of Bangladesh feel that the tenure of an effective interim government should not be more than two years.

Two, whether election first and reform second or whether it should be the other way round is an unproductive question. Since the fundamental reforms are to be undertaken by the elected representatives of the people, election should precede fundamental reforms. This is because, without the approval of an elected government, fundamental reforms would not receive the required political legitimacy.

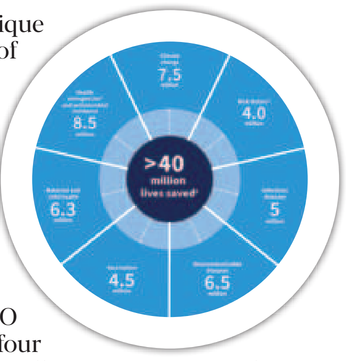
Finally, there are some interim proposals for reforms and actions as Bangladesh moves forward. There should be more dialogues, debates and discussions on such proposals. The intention of this article is to initiate that process.

A lifeline for global health

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is taking bold steps to tackle global health challenges with the launch of its first-ever investment round. This innovative approach aims to secure steady and flexible funding for WHO's core work from 2025 to 2028.

Supported by a coalition of nations, including France, Germany, Norway, Brazil, and South Africa, this initiative highlights the critical need for fully funding WHO's efforts. The investment round is not just about raising funds—it is about ensuring that these resources are used efficiently to make a tangible impact on global health.

Through the strategy for the next four years (2025-2028), the Fourteenth General Programme of Work (GPW 14), WHO will catalyse action to deliver results in the final push to the health-related SDGs, addressing global health challenges, setting the agenda on access and innovation, accelerating universal health coverage through a primary health approach, and better supporting countries in their differentiated needs based on the world's best standards.



WHO's unique infrastructure of data, country coordination, and priority-setting provides the conditions for global and regional health partnerships to set and drive investment and progress. WHO will, over the next four years, save at least 40 million lives through concrete actions, including:

- increasing the number of vaccines delivered to priority countries;
- providing access to health services to more than 150 million people in humanitarian settings in 30 countries;
- bringing solar electrification to 10,000 health facilities;
- supporting 55 countries in educating and employing 3.2 million health workers;
- helping 84 countries reach targets for eliminating malaria, mother-to-child HIV transmission, and other diseases;
- strengthening access to timely and reliable health data; and
- prequalifying 400 health products per year

With a fully and sustainably funded WHO, decisive steps can be taken in the next 4 years to tackle emergencies and outbreaks that threaten lives and jeopardise global health security, to reduce disease, and to continue working to improve well-being for everyone, especially for the most vulnerable.

Source: *World Health Organisation*

Global health emergency declared for Mpox

STAR HEALTH DESK

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has determined that the upsurge of mpox in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and a growing number of countries in Africa constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) under the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR).

Dr Tedros's declaration came on the advice of an IHR Emergency Committee of independent experts who met earlier in the day to review data presented by experts from WHO and affected countries. The Committee informed the Director-General that it considers the upsurge of mpox to be a PHEIC, with potential to spread further across countries in Africa and possibly outside the continent.

In declaring the PHEIC, Dr Tedros said, "The emergence of a new clade of mpox, its rapid spread in the eastern DRC, and the reporting of cases in several neighbouring countries are very worrying. On top of outbreaks of other mpox clades in the DRC and other countries in Africa, it is clear that a coordinated international response is needed to stop these outbreaks and save lives."

This PHEIC determination is the second in two years relating to mpox. Caused by an orthopoxvirus, mpox was first detected in humans in 1970, in the DRC. The disease is considered endemic to countries in central and west Africa.

In July 2022, the multi-country outbreak of mpox was declared a PHEIC as it spread rapidly via sexual contact across a range of countries where the virus had not been seen before. That PHEIC was declared over in May 2023 after there had been a sustained decline in global cases.

Mpox has been reported in the DRC for more than a decade, and the number of cases reported each year has increased steadily over that period. Last year, reported cases increased significantly, and already the number of cases reported so far this year has exceeded last year's total, with more than 15,600 cases and 537 deaths.

The emergence last year and rapid spread of a new virus strain in the DRC, clade 1b, which appears to be spreading mainly through sexual networks, and its detection in countries neighbouring the DRC is especially concerning and one of the main reasons for the declaration of the PHEIC.

Several outbreaks of different clades of mpox have occurred in different countries, with different modes of transmission and different levels of risk.

The two vaccines currently in use for mpox are recommended by WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation and are also approved by WHO-listed national regulatory authorities, as well as by individual countries including Nigeria and the DRC.

The Director-General triggered the process for emergency use listing for mpox vaccines, which will accelerate vaccine access for lower-income countries that have not yet issued their own national regulatory approval. Emergency Use Listing also enables partners, including Gavi and UNICEF, to procure vaccines for distribution.

WHO is working with countries and vaccine manufacturers on potential vaccine donations and coordinating with partners through the interim Medical Countermeasures Network to facilitate equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and other tools.

To allow for an immediate scale-up, WHO has released US$ 1.45 million from the WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies and may need to release more in the coming days. The organisation appeals to donors to fund the full extent of the needs of the MPOX response.

Source: *World Health Organisation*

New HIV prevention breakthrough

Globally, women account for nearly half of all HIV infections, yet they remain under-represented among those using pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). A recent study published in The New England Journal of Medicine, PURPOSE-1, sheds light on a promising new approach to HIV prevention: twice-yearly lenacapavir.

In this manufacturer-sponsored study, nearly 5,340 sexually active cisgender women in sub-Saharan Africa were divided into three groups: one received lenacapavir injections every six months, while the others took daily oral PrEP medications—FTC-tenofovir alafenamide (FTC/TAF) or FTC-tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (FTC/TDF).

The results are striking. The incidence of HIV among those receiving lenacapavir was zero, in stark contrast to the background rate of 2.41 per 100 person-years and the rates in the FTC/TAF (2.0) and FTC/TDF (1.7) groups. Adherence to oral PrEP was notably low, as many who contracted HIV were not using these daily medications.

Individuals who acquire HIV while on long-acting cabotegravir may exhibit a delayed immune response and low viral loads—a phenomenon known as long-acting early viral inhibition (LEVI). Some of these individuals develop resistance to cabotegravir.

The impressive results of lenacapavir could signal a new era in HIV prevention. If it proves effective in other populations, it may soon be approved by the U.S. FDA for PrEP. With broad and affordable access, this breakthrough could be pivotal in ending the HIV epidemic.

Stroke rehabilitation by occupational therapy

RABEYA FERDOUS

Stroke is the second leading cause of death in the world. After stroke, patients face different challenges to cope with the new situation. Stroke rehabilitation is the crucial part of treating the patient appropriately.

A group of healthcare professionals like neurologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech and language therapists, social workers, acupressure specialist, and nurses work for it.

Occupational therapy is a client-centred health profession that involves ongoing assessments to understand what activities you can do (and those you want to do), including any current limitations, your goals/motivations, and also to offer advice/techniques about how to do something more easily and safely.

Stroke is nearly linked with proper care and supervision. According to a study, about 43% of adults with strokes have neurological deficits. Rehabilitation after stroke is very crucial to minimise the disability. Early rehabilitation after stroke improves the limitations in performing activities of daily living (ADLs).

So, rehabilitation is not possible without occupational therapy. The vital aim of an occupational therapist is to prepare the disabled people to work in different ways. According to duration and patient's condition, the occupational therapist provides treatment in the following phase:

1. Acute Phase
- Positioning
- Maintaining joint range of motion
- Pressure care
- Splinting

2. Active phase
- Bed mobility
- Bed sitting
- Lying, sitting
- Transferring practice

3. Rehab phase
- Retraining ADL's
- W/C skills (if needed)
- Functional mobility
- Advance transferring
- Follow up on the role and responsibilities
- Career education and training

When occupational therapy is needed, it depends on the severity of the stroke. The overall goal of this therapy is to relearn everyday activities that have been lost after stroke. Most of the patients receive physiotherapy, but they do not take occupational therapy. That is why their improvement in daily activities may hamper. When any patient have difficulty doing daily activities after stroke, then contact a qualified occupational therapist.

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Aiming to bridge the global health equity gap

The health equity gap remains a pressing issue, particularly affecting people in lower-income countries. These nations, despite shouldering 70% of the world's disease burden, receive only a fraction of global health investments. The consequences are dire, with reduced access to quality medicines and care leading to over 5 million deaths annually in low- and middle-income countries.

In response to this critical issue, Pfizer has launched the Accord for a Healthier World, an initiative designed to tackle these disparities. Through the accord, Pfizer pledges to provide its entire portfolio of medicines and vaccines on a not-for-profit basis to 45 lower-income countries. This commitment is a significant step towards improving access to essential health resources where they are most needed.

To ensure these resources effectively reach those in need, the accord involves collaboration with governments and stakeholders in eligible countries. The focus is on exploring comprehensive solutions to overcome system-level barriers that hinder patient access. This includes pursuing more efficient regulatory pathways, enhancing supply chain logistics, and advancing health workforce training and development.

The ultimate goal of Pfizer's Accord for a Healthier World is to address the multifaceted challenges that limit access to care and to align with each country's national health priorities. By addressing these barriers, Pfizer aims to significantly improve patient access and contribute to closing the global health equity gap.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Are schools meeting students' dietary needs?

FARAH DIBA

You are what you eat! The age-old phrase holds the idea that health, happiness, well-being, and a sense of contentment are inseparably interconnected with what we eat.

Modern people lack a strong relationship with food. Children, are now consuming food that is unhealthy and comes with minimal to zero nutrition. In other words, we have made a recipe for disaster for children's health.

The Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2022 found that about 50% of children aged 6–23 months consume unhealthy foods like soft drinks and processed foods high in salt and sugar. This means over 2.3 million children in this age group eat unhealthy foods.

When these children transition to schools, they are further bombarded with unhealthy foods, as most schools offer third-party-sourced food items that lack the right nutrition blend for students. The shift towards more processed and fast foods over traditional healthy options indicates that school canteens are failing to meet the nutritional needs of students as well as potentially hindering their educational outcomes and long-term health. What children consume affects their physical health, mental development, mood, and learning capabilities. Eating habits that are built at a young age become a lifestyle well into adulthood.

The ideal calorie intake of students aged 2-16 is around 1,400-1,600 (age 2-4), 1,500-1,700 (age 5-10), and 1,400-2,400 overall (age 2-16). Calorie need varies based on a child's age, sex, and activity level. To meet the calorie and nutrient requirements, children need to eat a range of foods daily in the recommended amounts from each of the five food groups: vegetables, fruit, cereals, poultry, and dairy products. School meals are a major source of daily calorie and nutrient intake for students, and that is why schools must monitor the nutritional quality of these meals to ensure students receive the necessary vitamins, minerals, and macronutrients.

In addition to teaching about the value of nutrition in the classroom, schools are responsible for providing nutritious food in the canteen.

Schools need to emphasise providing an energy-focused breakfast to fuel students for the day ahead and a protein, vitamin, and mineral-rich lunch for brain, concentration, and memory development. Most importantly, as one of the biggest contributors to a child's growth, schools should be mindful of students' allergies, removing mushrooms, beef, brinjal, nuts, shrimp, etc., which are known to be common allergens.

The government of Bangladesh is planning to reintroduce midday meals at primary schools in 150 upazilas after a gap of 2 years, aimed at supporting the physical and cognitive development of underprivileged students. The commendable initiative will provide nutritious meals, guaranteeing these children receive the essential nutrients they need to thrive.

Taking inspiration from the government, private schools can also partner with nutritionists who will give guidance on meal choices and nutritional values, helping to create a comprehensive nutrition policy for each school. This policy should be strictly followed to ensure that students receive well-balanced, nutrient-rich meals. After all, a clean and nutrient-rich diet comprising whole foods helps students build cells that work, learn, and live better. For students to feel healthy, they must eat healthy.

The writer is a nutritionist at the Glenrich International School.

Unveiling hidden risks: Maternal obesity and sudden infant death

In the quest to safeguard infant health, uncovering hidden risks is paramount. One significant concern that has emerged is the impact of maternal obesity on infant outcomes. As obesity rates among expectant mothers rise, understanding its implications for infant health becomes increasingly important.

A recent nationwide study in the US sheds light on this critical issue. Utilising data from the CDC's National Centre for Health Statistics, researchers explored the connection between maternal obesity and sudden unexpected infant death (SUID). The study, published in JAMA Paediatrics, covering birth cohorts from 2015 to 2019, provides compelling insights into how varying degrees of maternal obesity can affect infant risk.

The findings reveal that infants born to mothers with higher levels of obesity face a greater risk of SUID. This risk escalates with more severe obesity.

These findings underscore the importance of addressing maternal obesity as a critical factor in preventing SUID. The research highlights a need for targeted interventions and support for expectant mothers.

Star
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What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
English Premier League
Brentford Vs Crystal Palace
Live from 7:00 pm
Chelsea vs Man City
Live from 9:30 pm

T SPORTS
The Hundred Final
Live from 11:00 pm

Mushfiqur prepares for a new experience in Tests

SPORTS REPORTER

In a Test career spanning over 19 years, Mushfiqur Rahim has accomplished more in the red-ball format than most Bangladeshis.

In his long career, which began in May of 2005 at the age of 18, the wicketkeeper-batter has emerged as the country's greatest accumulator of runs in Tests (5676 runs), has featured in the highest number of Test matches (88) and has Test centuries in five countries, most by a Bangladeshi.

At 37, well into the twilight stage of his career, Mushfiqur's chances of experiencing new challenges in Test cricket are slimmer compared to younger players like Zakir Hasan or Shadman Islam.

But in one sense, the veteran batter and the two youngsters mentioned above are on equal terms. Just like Zakir and Shadman, Mushfiqur is right now in Pakistan for the first time as part of the Bangladesh squad for the two-Test series, beginning with the first Test in Rawalpindi on August 21.

"This is my first time in Islamabad. It is beautiful. The facilities are also quite great," Mushfiqur said in a clip sent by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday.

Mushfiqur has played Tests in eight countries including Bangladesh. The two notable omissions in his resume are Australia and Pakistan.

Not having played a Test in Australia is a common feature in the careers of all active Bangladeshi cricketers barring Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, as the Tigers have not toured Down Under for a Test series since 2003.

Mushfiqur did have an opportunity to play Tests in Pakistan in 2020 when the Tigers last toured the country.

However, at that time the wicketkeeper-batter had opted out of the series, citing concerns over safety. He was the only Bangladeshi player who refused that tour.

Mushfiqur, however, has played white-ball matches for Bangladesh in Pakistan before, having taken part in the 2008 and 2023 editions of the Asia Cup, playing a total of seven ODIs.

Mushfiqur was amongst the five players of the 16-member Test squad that went to Pakistan ahead of time to take part in Bangladesh 'A' team's first four-day match against Pakistan Shaheens in Islamabad, which ended in a draw on Friday, as part of preparation for the upcoming series.

However, those plans got dented a bit owing to poor weather during the four-day game and to make matters worse, the right-hander also copped a blow on his finger in a net session, which kept him from batting in the second innings.

Limited involvement in the build-up to the series seems to have only made Mushfiqur more eager to make his first Test experience in Pakistan more memorable.

"We wanted to come here and have some sessions before the rest of the Test side comes... The training was interrupted due to a couple of rainy days. So, we couldn't properly practise. In the first couple of days, we only had one net session and it was also not a proper one.

"I tried my level best [in the match], but the first innings it didn't go our way. I hurt my fingers in the nets so I didn't bat in the second innings. Hopefully, I will recover very soon and will play the first Test," he added.

Rabby guides HP into semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby's unbeaten 13-ball 32 blitz powered Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) High Performance to a three-wicket win over Perth Scorchers and sealed them a place in the semifinal of the nine-team Top End T20 series in Darwin, Australia yesterday.

Rabby's knock, which included a couple of fours and sixes each, was supported by skipper Akbar Ali's 35 off 33 balls and opener Jishan Alam's run-a-ball 26, which helped their side reach 130-7 in 19.3 overs.

Perth pacer Matthew Kelly had rocked HP with early strikes and finished with figures of three for eight from his four overs, however, he could not eke out a victory for his side.

Earlier, fielding first, the HP restricted Perth to 129-5 with Ripon Mondol and Rakibul Hasan claiming two wickets each.

Perth opener Teague Wyllie hit the lone half-century of the match, making a run-a-ball 56.

Chasing 130, the HP were reduced to 15-3 in 5.4 overs after Kelly removed Tanzid Tamim (one), Parvez Hossain Emon (0) and Ariful Islam (two) in quick successions.

HP were staring at defeat when Rabby came to the middle as the eighth batter of the innings, with his side needing 41 runs off 23 balls. He smacked 20 runs in the 18th over and hit a four in the next to guide his side home.

HP will face Northern Territory in the first semifinal today.

Travel warning puts WC hosting in jeopardy

SPORTS REPORTER

The chance for Bangladesh to host the Women's T20 World Cup in October this year hinges on the withdrawal of travel advisories from four participating teams: India, Australia, England, and New Zealand.

"Being the host nation, we are regularly communicating with the ICC [International Cricket Council] regarding this issue, and even in our last communication yesterday [Friday], they expressed concern over the travel advisories from four participating nations," said a BCB official, who is maintaining the communication, on condition of anonymity.

These four countries issued travel advisories following a massive student-led movement, which ultimately resulted in the resignation of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

"See, if these countries don't withdraw their travel advisories, there is no chance for us to host this event. While Australia initially advised reconsidering travel plans to Bangladesh, it now suggests 'do not travel to Bangladesh.' So, you can understand the situation," he said.

"Time is running out, and the ICC will not wait long because there is a huge risk of financial setbacks if we ultimately fail to host the tournament due to security reasons."

A final decision is expected to be made by the ICC board on August 20.

According to the cricket website ESPNcricinfo, Zimbabwe has emerged as one of two options being considered to host the event, which is due to start on October 3. The UAE is the other option being considered, after India ruled itself out.

"Actually, the ICC always selects an alternative host nation for any global event, but unfortunately, that's not the case for this tournament, and that's the reason they are now searching for a host country," informed a BCB director.

Footballers demand BPL with all clubs

SPORTS REPORTER

A significant number of footballers from various clubs, including those at risk of missing the upcoming season, urged the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday to convince clubs to form squads.

Nearly 50 players from top-tier clubs, under the banner of "Professional Football Players," held a press briefing at the BFF House and presented a seven-point demand list to general secretary Emran Hossain Tushar.

Their demands include deferring the transfer window, holding the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) with all clubs participating and without foreign players, and arranging a meeting with the sports adviser of the interim government as soon as possible.

While none of the 12 clubs slated to join the BPL have officially notified the BFF of their intent to withdraw, insiders from at least two clubs remain pessimistic about participation. Several clubs had requested the BFF to defer the August 19 cut-off date for pre-season transfers, citing difficulties in securing funds due to a lack of sponsors following the ouster of the Awami League-led government on August 5.

After repeated requests, the world football governing body, FIFA, agreed to extend the cut-off date to August 22.

However, with only four days left until the extended deadline and with most clubs far from securing their squads, it is highly unlikely that the BPL will feature all 12 teams in the upcoming season. That is why the players have urged authorities to ensure that all the clubs participate.

Former national team goalkeeper Ashraful Islam Rana, who played for Chittagong Abahani last season, said they are "willing to play even with a cut in wages" while urging sponsors not to back out.

Raihan Hasan asked what will happen to "100-120 players as three or four clubs don't want to form teams."

When contacted, Chittagong Abahani manager Arman Aziz told The Daily Star that he had called the club president, Shamsul Alam Chowdhury, yesterday, but the call was not picked up. The former national team footballer also said that he heard the club president had picked up a call from the BFF in the afternoon, saying they were still willing to participate in the league. Shamsul, however, could not be reached by The Daily Star for a comment on the issue.

While there is still hope for Chittagong Abahani, the fate of Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, and the players who were in the process of going to these clubs, hangs in the balance.

A source inside Sheikh Russel said that despite the withdrawal of their chief sponsors, they were intent on forming a squad, but the main roadblock is political. He added that it is highly unlikely the club could participate in the league under its current name, the change of which would be a long and arduous process.

BFF general secretary Emran gave the footballers some assurance, saying he would forward the letter to the professional league committee to decide on a course of action. He also said they would try to arrange a meeting by today with Asif Mahmud, the sports adviser to the interim government, where representatives of the players would be present.

Need to help Mbappe adapt: Ancelotti

AFP, *Madrid*

With Kylian Mbappe set to make his La Liga debut for Real Madrid on Sunday against Real Mallorca, coach Carlo Ancelotti said the superstar needs to adapt to his new club.

The France captain scored on his long-awaited first Madrid appearance as Los Blancos beat Atalanta to win the UEFA Super Cup on Wednesday.

The 25-year-old striker, who arrived at the end of his PSG contract, was not at his best but finished lethally after Fede Valverde sent the reigning Spanish and European champions ahead.

"Mbappe is an extraordinary talent, we have to help him adapt as quickly as possible," Ancelotti told a news conference Saturday ahead of the team's opening La Liga clash.

"He has started well in the dressing room, very focussed, with humility."

Mbappe was asked if he was planning to score 50 goals this season after the Super Cup triumph and the forward said there was "no limit" to what he might achieve.

Ancelotti said he was avoiding setting a target for the former PSG hitman, whose arrival at his dream club Madrid was years in the making.

"I will never tell a player how many goals he has to score, what I ask of them is to give everything they have for the team, nothing more," added the Italian coach. "Everybody has their qualities, whether they are technical, tactical or motivational, and have to harness them for the team."

City's unprecedented quest begins at chaotic Chelsea

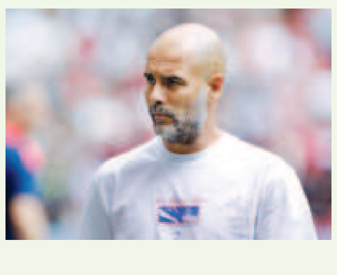
AGENCIES

As it has been the case for a number of years in recent history, Manchester City remain the team to beat as Pep Guardiola's men begin their quest for an unprecedented fifth straight Premier League title on Sunday afternoon when they travel to Stamford Bridge to face Chelsea in their opening fixture of the season.

It will definitely be a tough task for the reigning Premier League champions, but more so because of the unpredictability that surrounds a Chelsea squad that have more than 40 players at their disposal – something that will also be a headache for Chelsea's new coach Enzo Maresca.

As Maresca attempts to solve the jigsaw puzzle of whom to stick with for the starting eleven, some clues might be on offer today when Chelsea players emerge from the tunnel with their first competitive line-up after yet another summer of mind-boggling spending.

Around 160 million pounds ($205.10 million) has been splashed out on players such as winger Pedro Neto from Wolverhampton Wanderers, midfielder Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall from Leicester City and goalkeeper Filip Jorgenson from Villarreal.



Directing a huge squad proved beyond Mauricio Pochettino for the majority of last season before an impressive end to the campaign hinted at the identity he had been seeking to forge.

But then Pochettino was replaced by Italian Maresca and Chelsea fans will hope that things fall into place quicker this time.

"At the moment if I start to think I have 43 players it is not a good thing," Maresca said on Friday.

Sunday's game is quite the baptism of fire for Maresca, a former Man City assistant under Guardiola who takes charge of a Chelsea side seeking to end a six-game winless run against the Citizens. The Blues have, however, picked up more points (67) than any other Premier League club from their opening matches of a new season.

Tasked with managing such a huge squad in his very first season, Maresca could be calmed by the words of his former boss.

"All the managers need time," said Guardiola on Friday.

"I don't know if Chelsea is the place to do this but give him time and it will work."

Meanwhile, Guardiola also has headaches of his own ahead of the crucial fixture as key midfielder Rodri and Norwegian forward Oscar Bobb, who set up the only goal in City's tiebreaker win over Manchester United in the Community Shield, will be sitting out due to injuries.

Bobb could miss up to four months after breaking his leg in training while Rodri is still recovering from an injury sustained at Euro 2024.

Liverpool's Mohamed Salah (c) celebrates scoring their second goal with Luis Díaz and Diogo Jota, who netted the opener, during their 2-0 win over newly promoted Ipswich Town in a Premier League fixture at Portman Road yesterday, marking a strong start to their season in the post-Juergen Klopp era under the leadership of Arne Slot.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

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Public univs 'reopen' today

20 VC, 10 pro-VC posts remain vacant

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR *and* **ARAFAT RAHAMAN**

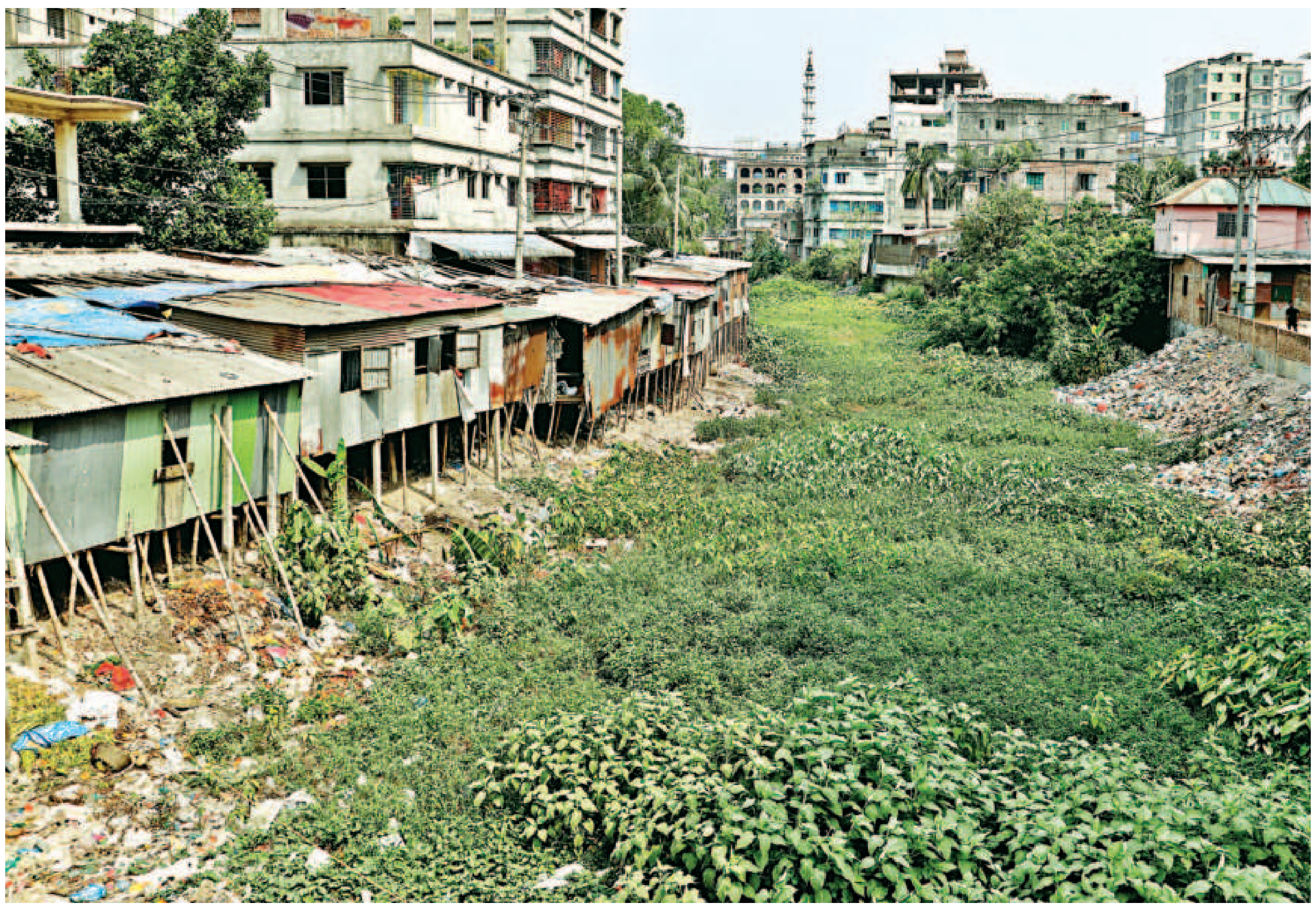
Public universities are set to reopen today amid a vacuum in the administrations after the resignation of at least 20 vice-chancellors, 10 pro-vice-chancellors, and many other officials.

Classes and other academic activities have been disrupted for more than one and a half months. When the universities reopen, academic activities may not be at full swing due to the vacancies at key posts.

The wave of resignations in different institutions in the wake of the fall of Hasina-led government has put the interim government in a challenging situation.

"I hope academic activities will fully resume later this week or early next week," said Prof Muhammed Alamgir, acting chairman of the University Grants Commission, adding that discussions with students will be needed to fully resume the academic activities.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Traders have set up tin-roofed shops encroaching upon the Shubhadya canal in Keraniganj's Purbapara area. The canal has become clogged with waste and construction debris. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

5 secretaries appointed on contract

They were earlier forced into retirement; existing contracts of many scrapped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five additional secretaries, who were forced to resign during the Awami League government, were appointed as secretaries yesterday on a contractual basis.

The new administration, which took charge after the student-led uprising earlier this month, also terminated several top officials who had been appointed contractually by the ousted Sheikh Hasina administration.

All the newly-appointed secretaries are from the 1982 batch (regular) of the admin cadre, said sources in the public administration.

The Ministry of Public Administration issued circulars on these appointments.

Dr Mohammad Abdul Momen has been appointed secretary to the Public Security Division under the home ministry.

Md Mokabbir Hossain, who was appointed as the senior secretary to the division just three days ago, was transferred to the science and technology ministry.

Dr Momen had reportedly been sent on compulsory retirement on June 6, 2013, after he completed 25 years in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

DGHS issues guidelines for mpox

Asks people with symptoms to contact 16263 or 10655

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days after the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the mpox outbreak a global public health emergency, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) yesterday issued a guideline to control the disease.

It detailed the dos and don'ts of preventing mpox. It also described the symptoms and treatment of the disease.

The DGHS also advised people to contact 16263 or 10655 immediately, if any symptoms of mpox appear. However, no mpox patient has been found in Bangladesh so far.

Meanwhile, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) yesterday started screening the temperature of the passengers who arrived from abroad.

Mpox was first identified in monkeys in Denmark in 1958. WHO said that the disease has already spread to Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, Sweden and Kenya. Mpox was also detected in Pakistan for the first time on Thursday.

WHO declared a state of emergency for the disease twice in the last two years. Last Wednesday, it declared mpox a global public health emergency over the upsurge of the disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and a growing number of countries in Africa.

Regarding the spread of the animal-borne disease, DGHS said that mpox virus was initially transmitted from animals to humans. But now it is being transmitted from person to person. Mpox belongs to the same class of viruses responsible for smallpox, but it is much less harmful than smallpox.

Mpox's typical symptoms include fever, headache,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Gaza truce an 'illusion'

Says Hamas as US president says deal closer than ever; death toll in Palestinian territory crosses 40,000 mark

AGENCIES

A senior Hamas official yesterday dismissed optimistic talk by US President Joe Biden that a Gaza truce is nearer after negotiations in the Gulf emirate of Qatar.

"To say that we are getting close to a deal is an illusion," Hamas political bureau member Sami Abu Zuhri told AFP. "We are not facing a deal or real negotiations, but rather the imposing of American diktats."

He was responding to Biden's comment on Friday that, "We are closer than we have ever been."

Biden spoke after two days of talks in Qatar where Washington tried to bridge differences between Israel and Palestinian Hamas militants. The two sides have been at war for more than 10 months in the Gaza Strip.

Previous optimism during months of on-off truce talks has so far proven futile.

But the stakes have significantly risen since the killings in quick succession in late July of Fuad Shukr, a top operations chief of Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement, and Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh.

Their deaths led to vows of vengeance from Hezbollah, Iran and other Tehran-backed groups in the region which blamed Israel.

Western and Arab diplomats have been shuttling around the Middle East to push for a Gaza deal which they say could help avert a wider regional conflagration.

Biden's secretary of state, Antony Blinken, was scheduled to head to Israel yesterday in a bid to finalise an agreement.

As efforts towards a truce continued, so did the killing on Saturday in Gaza and Lebanon.

Lebanon's health ministry said an Israeli air strike in southern Lebanon killed 10 people including a Syrian woman and her two children.

The strike was among the deadliest in southern Lebanon since the onset of near-daily exchanges of fire between Israel and Hezbollah following the start of the Gaza war in October.

- Hamas rejects 'new' Gaza truce conditions
- Israeli strike in south Lebanon kills 10
- Gaza rescuers say Israeli strike kills 15 from same family
- First polio case recorded in Gaza in 25 years

Israel's military said it struck a Hezbollah weapons storage facility.

In Hamas-run Gaza, civil defence rescuers said an Israeli air strike killed 15 people from a single Palestinian family. The fatalities in Al-Zawaida helped push the Gaza health ministry's war death toll to 40,074.

"We are in the morgue seeing indescribable scenes of limbs and severed heads and children who are dismembered," said Omar al-Dreemli, a relative.

The Gaza war has displaced most of the territory's population, destroyed much of the housing and other infrastructure, and left diseases spreading.

The United Nations on Friday appealed for seven-day pauses in the fighting so it could vaccinate children against polio, after the Palestinian health ministry reported Gaza's first polio case in 25 years.

Israel claimed the killing of Shukr, in a strike in south Beirut, but has not commented directly on the killing of Haniyeh while he visited Tehran.

On Friday Hezbollah released a polished video appearing to show its fighters trucking large missiles through tunnels at an underground facility.

On his visit to Israel, Blinken will seek to "conclude the agreement for a ceasefire and release of hostages and detainees", the State Department said.

Egyptian, Qatari and US mediators are working to finalise details of a framework agreement initially outlined by Biden in May. He said Israel had proposed it.

In a joint statement after two days of talks in Qatar, the mediators said they presented both sides with a proposal that "bridges remaining gaps".

Talks aiming to secure a deal are to resume in Cairo "before the end of next week", they said.

Hamas did not attend the Doha talks. An official of the Islamist movement, Osama Hamdan, had told AFP the group would join if the meeting set a timetable for implementing what Hamas had already agreed to.

BDR CARNAGE

Make all probe reports public

Victims' families demand, call for independent probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The families of the victims of the 2009 Pilkhana carnage demanded that all investigation reports related to the tragedy be made public and that an inquiry commission be formed to uncover the truth behind the brutal killings.

At a press conference held yesterday at Skyline Restaurant in Dhaka's Mohakhali, the families of those killed presented a series of demands, seeking justice and transparency, urging the interim government to take decisive action to this effect.

They claimed that a neighbouring state was involved in the massacre. They also said that the narrative of a dispute over "Operation Dal-Bhat" led to the killings is false, adding that it was spread with the intention of diverting attention away from the actual motives behind the massacre.

Rakin Ahmed Bhuiyan, son of Maj Gen Shakil Ahmed and Naznin Ahmed, both of whom were murdered during the carnage, made accusations against prominent political figures of the Awami League, including the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

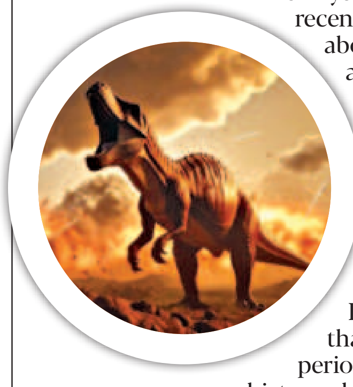
"Sheikh Hasina, Sheikh Fazle

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Scientists find origin of asteroid that wiped out dinosaurs

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists may have finally found where the object that wiped out the dinosaurs came from.

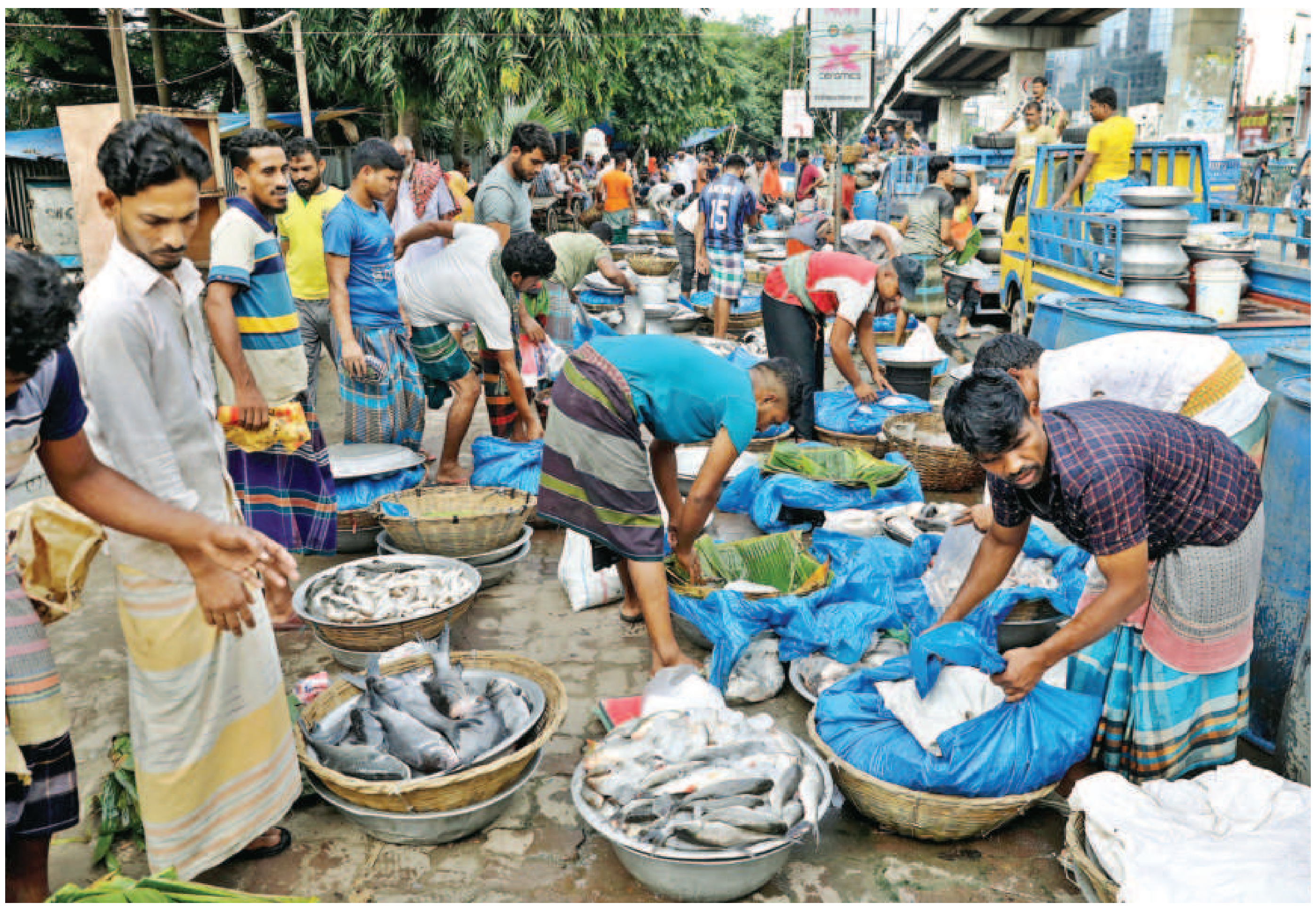


The mass extinction event that occurred 66 million years ago – the most recent on Earth – came about when a rare kind of asteroid collided with Earth, researchers say.

In that incident, about 60 per cent of the Earth's species including all of its non-avian dinosaurs were wiped out. Researchers believe that it led to a horrific period in the planet's history, during which its planets were lit on fire, the Earth was covered in ash and the climate would have turned deadly.

And it all began in the distant outer solar system, beyond Jupiter. There, a C-type asteroid formed that would give rise to what scientists call the Chicxulub impactor, which crashed into Earth and left the vast crater after which it is named.

Scientists say the discovery should help solve long arguments about the history of the Earth, as well as the objects that have collided with it from elsewhere in space.



While the Karwan Bazar wholesale fish market is overflowing with various types of fish, including hilsa, prices have not dropped at the local markets as one would expect. The photo was taken yesterday around 7:00am. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

COLLEAGUE'S RAPE, MURDER

Indian doctors go on strike

AFP, *New Delhi*

Indian doctors held a nationwide strike yesterday, escalating protests after the "barbaric" rape and murder of their colleague that has channelled outrage at the chronic issue of violence against women.

The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata on August 9 sparked furious protests in several cities across the country.

Many have been led by doctors and other healthcare workers but also joined by tens of thousands of ordinary Indians demanding action.

In Kolkata, thousands held a candle-lit vigil into the early hours of Saturday morning.

"Hands that heal shouldn't bleed," read one sign held by a protester in the eastern city.

"Enough is enough," read another at a rally by doctors in the capital New Delhi.

"Hang the rapist," another said.

The murdered doctor was found in the teaching hospital's seminar hall, suggesting she had gone there for a rest during a 36-hour shift.

An autopsy confirmed sexual assault and, in a petition to the court, the victim's parents said they suspected

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

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KSRM
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Tribute to a fallen friend
P3

Harris easier than Biden to beat: Trump
P7

Time for the sunshine law
P9

Modernity, city, and soliloquy
P10

Election after vital reforms

Chief adviser tells foreign diplomats; 'I must succeed as there's no other option'

- Previous regime destroyed the institutions
- Armed forces to assist civil administration as long as needed
- Interim govt to uphold international legal obligations
- To promote national reconciliation

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The interim government will conduct a free, fair and participatory election after reforming the democratic institutions that had been destroyed by the previous regime, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus told the international community yesterday.

It is the interim government's mandate to make vital reforms in the Election Commission, judiciary, civil administration, security forces, and mass media, he said.

"We will also make sincere efforts to promote national reconciliation," he said.

Prof Yunus' first "meet and greet" event with more than 60 foreign diplomats and representatives of international organisations was held at the InterContinental Dhaka.

Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam briefed the media after the event.

The event scheduled to begin at 11:00am was delayed by nearly two hours. Prof Yunus said he was stuck in his office because some unruly government officials wanted their demand for permanent jobs fulfilled immediately.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

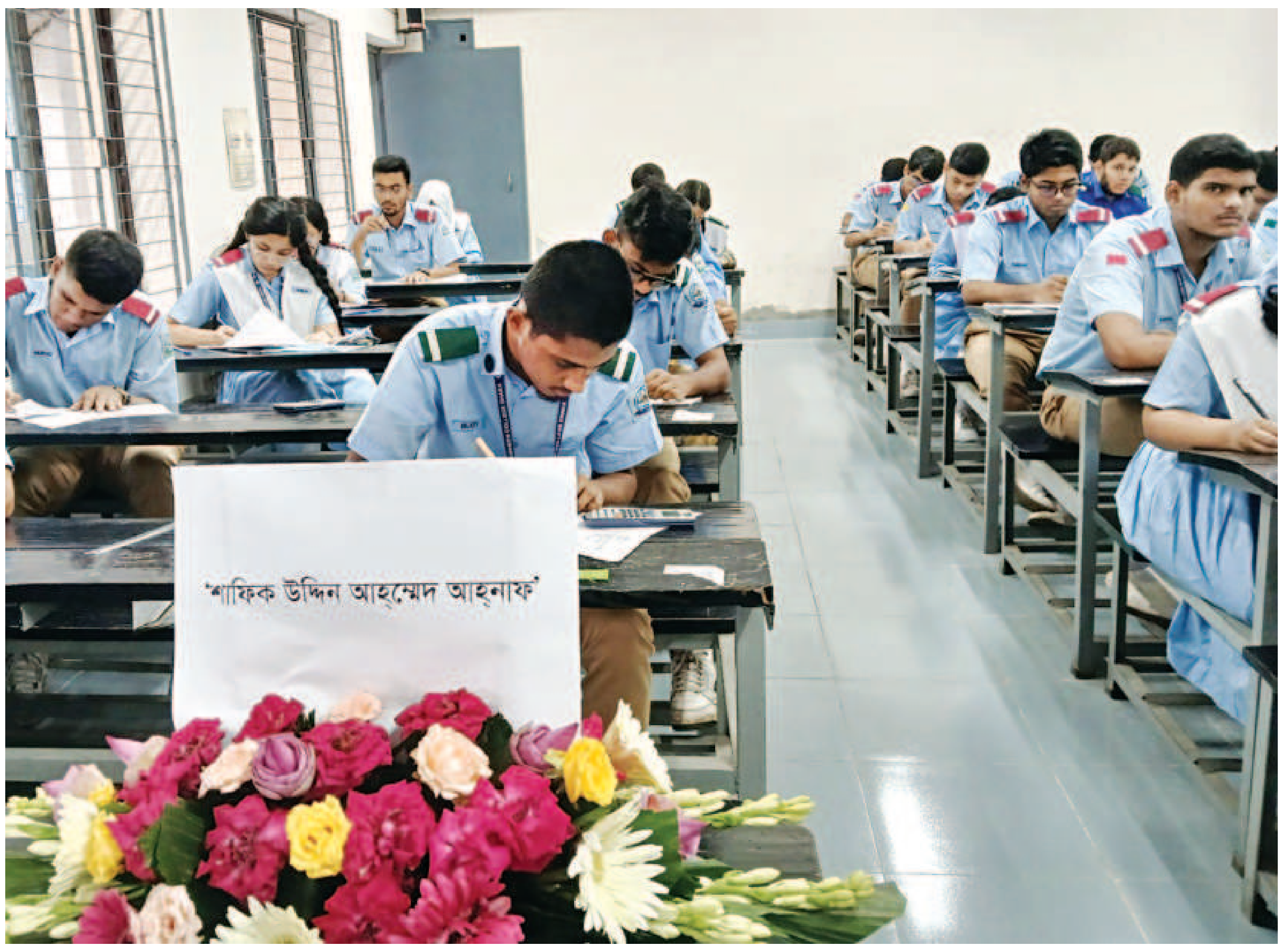

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BORHAN UDDIN

A bouquet of flowers on the bench where Shafiq Uddin Ahmed Ahnaf should have been as his classmates sit for an exam at the BAF Shaheen College in Dhaka yesterday. Ahnaf, 17, was shot dead at Mirpur-10 a day before Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country. His teachers placed the bouquet and the name tag in his remembrance. Story on page 3.

BUSINESS

BANKING COMMISSION IN THE OFFING

The interim government will soon form a banking commission, a longstanding demand from economists, to bring about reforms aimed at salvaging the financial sector. Besides, a paper on the overall situation of the financial sector and a roadmap for the reforms will be published within the first 100 days of the interim government's tenure, the chief adviser's office said in a statement yesterday.

STORY ON B1

Plunged into DARKNESS

Hundreds lost vision partially or completely

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR, SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* **NILIMA JAHAN**

Al Amin

Faruk

"Help me! I cannot see anything ...!" Al Amin Howlader cried moments before he lost consciousness and fell to the ground as police opened fire on quota reform protesters indiscriminately.

The seventh grader of a school in Barishal was rushed to a local health facility and then transferred to Dhaka, where the hospitals received hundreds of patients like him – blinded completely or partially by pellet wounds during the weeks of protests from mid-July to early August.

The National Institute of Ophthalmology and Hospital (NIOH) alone treated more than 700 patients who were shot in their eyes during the protests, according to its Director Professor Golam Mostafa.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

CPD suggests 3 steps to fix energy sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday proposed a three-step pathway for energy transition under the interim government that would holistically reform Bangladesh's energy sector.

The think-tank proposed an initial 100-day plan where the interim government would announce key priorities, followed by significant reforms over the next six months.

The reforms would include abolishing certain acts, implementing new policies such as energy audits, renewable energy laboratory and centralising databases on pricing and investment.

The CPD identified four critical acts and policies that need to be revised immediately to ensure competition, efficiency, transparency and accountability in the power and energy sector.

These are the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act, the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission Act, the Renewable Energy Policy and the Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan (IEPMP).

"These acts and policies were initiated to benefit vested interest groups in the sector," said Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of CPD, while presenting the keynote paper at a media briefing titled "Power and Energy Sector Reform Agenda for the Interim Government".

Under the Quick Enhancement Act, the government awarded public works to conglomerates without issuing any tender notices.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

CPD'S PLANS FOR ENERGY SECTOR

Phase 1 (Within 6 months) Assessment and Planning

- Revise, amend and formulate acts, laws, rules
- Review contracts of existing power plants
- Phase out inefficient and quick rental power plants
- Stop upcoming projects on LNG import and building FSRUs

SEE PAGE 2

Power sector's indemnity act suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the activities under the much-criticised Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act 2010, commonly known as the Indemnity Act, in the power and energy sector will remain suspended, said the newly-appointed energy adviser to the interim government.

Initiated in 2010 when the power sector was struggling to meet the country's demand, the act stipulates there is no need to float any tender to award any power plant construction activities.

Procurement under this act does not need to go through the standard Public Procurement Rules that are followed by other ministries.

Though the process was meant to be for a short time, the Awami League government never abolished it. In 2021, it was

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Ex-ministers Lotus Kamal, Javed Chy face ACC probe

Former top cops Asaduzzaman, Harun also under investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday launched probes into the alleged corruption by former ministers Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, AHM Mustafa Kamal, and three ex-MPs.

It also initiated investigations into former DMP commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia, and former Detective Branch (DB) chief Harun Or Rashid's alleged corruption.

A highly placed source in the ACC told The Daily Star that the graft watchdog would probe former land minister Javed in connection with amassing illegal wealth and money laundering.

He is alleged to have laundered thousands of crores of taka to the UK.

On August 12, Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit froze the bank accounts of Javed, his wife Rukhmila Zaman Chowdhury, their children, and the institutions under their names. Their credit cards were

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Six banks still in shortfall despite BB support

Their current account deficit stands at Tk 14,621cr

MD MEHEDI HASAN

PREMIER cement
ঢালাইয়ের রাজা

Six banks including four Shariah-based ones are still facing a deficit in their current accounts with the central bank despite special liquidity support.

The banks are National Bank, First Security Islami Bank (FSIBL), Social Islami Bank, Union Bank, Global Islami Bank and Bangladesh Commerce Bank. Chattogram-based business giant S Alam Group has controlling stakes in all banks save for National Bank.

As of August 7, the six lender's current account deficit with the Bangladesh Bank stood at Tk 14,621 crore. If their cash reserve ratio deficit is considered, their total shortfall is Tk 20,774 crore, according to data from the central bank.

The shortfall in the lenders' current accounts with the BB means they are in deep crisis, said a senior official of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Traffic barely moved in many parts of the capital yesterday due to demonstrations by different groups in the capital's Doyel Chattar, Uttara, Shahbagh, Science Lab, and Jatiya Press Club. The photo was taken near Kakrail intersection in the afternoon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Ex-IGP, 16 others sued over Abu Sayed killing

30-35 unidentified people also accused in the case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

A case was filed accusing 17 named people, including former inspector general of police Abdullah Al Mamun, and some unidentified people yesterday for killing Abu Sayed, a student at Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, during the quota reform protests last month.

At least 30-35 unknown people were accused in the case.

Ramjan Ali, elder brother of Abu Sayed, filed the murder case with the Rangpur Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

The 16 other named accused are former DIG of Rangpur Range Abdul Baten, former commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police (RMP) Md Moniruzzaman, Deputy Commissioner (crime) Abu Maruf Hossain, assistant commissioners Al Imran Hossain

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

MY DHAKA

PHOTO: **STAR**

Life without metro

ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

Dhaka residents have a bitter relationship with traffic jam where one can't go one day without falling into one. The congestion on the roads is usually much worse during peak office hours. In the midst of this perpetual torment, there was a small respite in the form of metro rail.

While the metro service is new to Bangladesh and the people of Dhaka has only been introduced to it for a little over a year, a large number of the population has already gotten used to it.

The residents of Uttara and Mirpur are probably the more enthusiastic ones. However, since its halt on 18 July, life without metro has been difficult for a lot of people.

Not surprisingly, Dhaka roads were noticeably congested over the last week. Regular metro rail commuters had to resort to other means for transportation, and it's been anything but pleasant.

"I used to leave home only 30 minutes prior to my work. Metro rail would take me about 10 minutes to reach Farmgate, where I work. Now I leave an hour early and it's still not enough", said one Ashraful Islam, who lives in Mirpur 10, within walking distance of the metro rail station. "It's been an exhausting week," he added.

The view isn't very different from the driver's seat either. Driving on the streets of Dhaka is no easy task. Whether you ride a motorbike, or drive something with four wheels, it's challenging all the same. With its dust, noise pollution, and the unavoidable traffic signal of Bijoy Sarani that spares no one, Dhaka is unforgiving on the streets, unless you can fly overhead on the metro.

"I have to take a U-turn at Panthapath to be on route to my home at Pallabi. Sometimes, it takes me 45 minutes to one hour just to get through the U-turn. Which is why I used to leave my car at home and took the metro instead. I could be home by the time I finished taking the U-turn. Now, once again, I sit at the driver's seat and count the taillights," joked Iqbal Hossain, who works at a private bank.

"Everyone who used the metro has now turned to bus, so as you can imagine getting a place on a bus isn't exactly easy these days either, and if you are driving, you better buckle up for the same old Dhaka jam," Iqbal added.

With high pressure of commuters over the last few days, reminiscing about the metro days has become a topic of conversation at workplaces. While many complained about the metro fare for shorter distances, now it seems like a small price to pay considering the time it saved. And there's no hassle of sitting in the traffic jam, wondering when the vehicles might move just a little so you don't lose all hope.

Authorities have announced that metro rail will resume operations as soon as possible. Residents will surely exhale a sight of relief and count the days when the metro is once again a daily part of the experience that we call Dhaka.

12-yr-old girl knocked unconscious, raped

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

Two men have been accused of raping a 12-year-old girl after giving her and her family sweets laced with sedatives in Habiganj's Chunarughat upazila.

They are Billal Miah and Farhad Miah are from the same village, said police.

On Saturday evening, the victim's father filed the case, accusing the duo, said Hillol Roy, officer-in-charge (OC) of Chunarughat Police Station.

Police are trying to arrest the accused, who are on the run, Hillol Roy told The Daily Star yesterday.

According to the case statement, the accused were acquainted with the family members of the 12-year-old victim.

On August 12, Billal and Farhad visited the victim's home and brought them sweets laced with sedatives. They gave the sweets to the family around 10:00pm, and the entire family fell unconscious shortly after.

Then, Billal and Farhad raped the girl while she was unconscious, said the case added.

The next morning, the family woke up and found their home in disarray and their daughter in distress. Realising something was wrong, they rushed her to the Upazila Health Complex for medical attention.

Billal is reportedly involved in criminal activities in the area, which further heightened the family's fear of speaking out. However, with community support, they could file the case.

Ex-IGP, 16 others sued

FROM PAGE 1

and Arifuzzaman, constable Sujan Chandra Roy, ASI Amir, university unit Chhatra League President Pomel Barua, General Secretary Shamim Mahfuz, Office Secretary Babul Hossain, and Organising Secretary Dhananjay Kumar Tagore, OC of Tajhat Police Station Rabiul Islam, in-charge of the university police outpost Bibhuti Bhushan Roy, associate professors Asaduzzaman Mondol and Moshiur Rahman, and Proctor's Office staffer Rabiul Hasan Russell.

Abu Sayed was killed in police firing in front of his university campus in Rangpur on July 16 when students clashed with police, activists of BCL and Jubo League.

The victim, a student of the 12th batch of the English department of Begum Rokeya University, was a resident of Babanpur Zafarpara village in Pirganj upazila. He was a key coordinator of the quota reform protests.

The image of Abu Sayed standing with arms outstretched in the face of police firing just before he was shot went viral and strengthened the protests that eventually led to the ouster of Hasina-led government on August 5.

Police had previously lodged a case alleging that Abu Sayed's death was caused by stones thrown by protesters.

Ex-ministers Lotus Kamal, Javed Chy

FROM PAGE 1

also suspended for 30 days, said the BFIU notice to banks.

The ACC also initiated probe into allegations that former finance minister Mustafa Kamal, AKA Lotus Kamal, and three ex-MPs were involved in a racket linked to the Malaysian labour market.

Kamal and ex-MPs Nizam Uddin Hazari, Lt Gen (retd) Masud Uddin Chowdhury, and Benjir Ahmed, allegedly overcharged jobseekers and made over Tk 20,000 crores over a year and a half by sending 4.5 lakh people to the southeast Asian country.

The ACC will also probe the roles of Kamal's wife Kashmiri Kamal and daughter Nafisa Kamal.

A three-member committee led by Deputy Director Mohammad Nurul Huda will investigate the allegations, according to ACC sources.

They said the ACC has prepared a summary of the allegations against them.

The ACC also decided to probe allegations of amassing illegal wealth against Harunor Rashid, who is now the additional police commissioner (crime and operations) of the DMP.

The bank accounts of Harun and his wife Shirin Akhter were also frozen by the BFIU yesterday.

The financial intelligence unit's letter to banks stated that any accounts held by Harun, his wife, and their privately-owned businesses must be frozen.

The BFIU also asked for all types of their account-related information and documents, and other relevant information within three working days.

The graft watchdog, following recommendations made in an intelligence report, launched a probe against former DMP commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia.

A complaint filed with the ACC stated that Asaduzzaman, along with his wife and three children, amassed illegal assets at home and abroad.

Meanwhile, the BFIU also instructed all banks to freeze accounts belonging to Amir Hossain Amu, a former Awami League lawmaker and industries minister, and his daughter Sumaiya Hossain.

The order was issued based on reports of suspicious transactions in their names, according to the letter issued by the BFIU.

On Thursday, the ACC decided to investigate allegations of bribery against former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan and Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat in connection with bank takeovers and embezzlement of funds from the stock market.

Election after vital reforms

FROM PAGE 1

He paid deep respect to the people who sacrificed their lives in the "Second Revolution" that led to the fall of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5.

Students of no other countryin recent memory had to pay so much for expressing their democratic aspirations and dreaming of a discrimination-free, equitable and environment friendly country where human rights are protected, he added.

"I took over a country which was in many ways a complete mess. In their efforts to stay in power, the Sheikh Hasina dictatorship destroyed every institution of the country.

"The judiciary was broken. Democratic rights were suppressed through a brutal one-and-a-half decade long crackdown. Elections were rigged blatantly. Generations of young people grew up without exercising their voting rights. Banks were robbed with full political patronisation. And the state coffer was plundered by abusing power."

In the new era that has dawned, he said, people, regardless of their political, religious or ethnic identity, will be able to fulfil their aspirations as the interim government will uphold democracy, justice, human rights, and freedom of speech.

The top priority now is to establish law and order at the earliest. The armed forces will continue to assist law enforcers as long as the situation warrants, he said.

Ensuring justice and accountability for all the killings during the mass upsurge is another priority, said the Nobel laureate.

"The revolutionary students want us to carry out meaningful and deep reforms, that will turn the country into a real and thriving democracy. The task is huge, but doable with the support of all people and the international community.

"I must succeed. We don't have any other option."

Robust and far-reaching economic reforms will restore macroeconomic stability and sustained growth, with priority attached to establishing good governance and combating corruption, he said.

He promised upholding the international humanitarian and human rights law and adhering to the international, regional and bilateral instruments.

Bangladesh will continue to be a proponent of multilateralism, with the UN at the core, and look forward to maintaining and enhancing Bangladesh's contributions to the UN peacekeeping, he said.

The interim government will continue to support the Rohingya people in Bangladesh, he said, seeking sustained support from the international community for humanitarian operations and eventual repatriation to Myanmar.

Urging the trade and investment partners to keep their trust in Bangladesh, he said, "For our part, we won't tolerate any attempt to disrupt the global clothing supply chain in which we are a key player."

He then promised to nurture friendly relations with all countries.

"Bangladesh stands at the crossroads of a new beginning. Our valiant students and people deserve a lasting transformation of our nation. It is a difficult journey and we need your help along the way. We need to fulfil their aspirations. The sooner the better.

"We have to create opportunities to build a poverty-free and prosperous new Bangladesh."

Press Secretary Shafiqul said there was no question-answer session at the event, but Prof Yunus greeted and interacted with the diplomats after the speech.

CPD suggests 3 steps to fix energy sector

FROM PAGE 1

"No public procurement rules were followed under this act. The faulty procurement and bidding process of the major power projects such as the Adani deal, Payra and Rampal power plants cost us an additional Tk 35,000 crore."

Moazzem also called for an international audit of all companies under the ministry of power, energy, and mineral resources to uncover anomalies and corruption from the past government.

"There was no transparency in the information available in this sector. Companies provided different information to different authorities, and all details were kept top secret during the Awami League-led government. All deal documents should be made public."

The data on power generation cost, power purchase tariff, efficiency level, plant factor, fuel cost, capacity payment, date of contract expiration, and oil and LNG import costs must be updated regularly on the respective websites.

CPD emphasised the need for all government activities to be conducted under the Public Procurement Act 2006 and Public Procurement Rules 2008.

They urged the government to review all procurement and bidding processes of power plants, phase out inefficient and quick rental power plants and prioritise the identification and assessment of renewable energy resources.

Additionally, CPD recommended forming a probe body to identify anomalies in pre-paid meters and restructuring the power, energy and mineral resources ministry to empower the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) as the sole authority for implementing upcoming energy transition issues.

In the final phase, spanning 12 to 36 months, CPD suggested the government prioritise investment in advanced grid technologies, modernise grid infrastructure and shift focus from LNG imports to domestic gas exploration.

"The past government has made Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission a toothless authority," Moazzem said.

The laws were amended to adjust gas and electricity prices without holding a public hearing multiple times a year.

Without the process, there are two types of problems: it creates a non-transparent market and frequent tariff changes discourage investors.

In the IEPMP, the government had projected faulty energy and power demand, the keynote paper said.

Besides, the policy paper incorporated hydrogen and ammonia co-firing with carbon capture and storage systems, which is a 'false solution' of energy transition.

CPD demanded the review of the market-based pricing formula saying the formula has anomalies. "We need to get rid of subsidy-based power and energy but under a transparent process."

CPD'S PLANS FOR ENERGY SECTOR

Phase 2 (between 6-12 months): Research, Development and Demonstration

- Overhaul SREDA as the lead authority for renewable energy
- Bring SREDA under Prime Minister/Chief Advisor's Office
- Pilot projects and feasibility studies in selected regions to test

Phase 3 (between 12-36 months): Infrastructure Development

- Upgrade existing grid to Smart Grid by 2041
- Shift priority to domestic gas exploration
- More gas well workover projects should be undertaken
- Revise tax and incentive structure

Six banks still in shortfall

FROM PAGE 1

the central bank on the condition of anonymity.

Generally, banks have to maintain a current account with the central bank for different clearing payment systems and they have to maintain a hefty balance in the account.

In theory, the central bank can restrict those banks from the clearing platforms due to their current account deficit, said the BB official.

"The shortfall means the lenders are in deep crisis," said another senior official of the central bank seeking anonymity.

The shortfall came despite the BB providing special liquidity support to the banks for more than a year, the official added.

The BB's special liquidity support was equivalent to the deficits in the lenders' current account.

As of August 7, the outstanding liquidity support to six lenders stood at Tk 14,621 crore.

Of the six banks, the highest current account deficit is of FSIBL, whose chairman is S Alam Group's chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam. The Shariah-based bank's deficit is Tk 6,693 crore, according to BB documents.

Alam's wife Farzana Parveen and four other relatives are on the board of FSIBL.

Social Islami Bank, whose chairman is Alam's son-in-law Belal Ahmed, has the next highest current account deficit: Tk 2,877 crore.

National Bank -- where Ratna Dutta, wife of S Alam Group executive director Subrata Kumar Bhowmick, is a board member -- came in at third spot with a deficit of Tk 2,586 crore, followed by Union Bank (Tk 2,097 crore).

Alam's siblings Halima Begum, Osman Goni and Md Rashedul Alam along with his wife Marzina Sharmin and nephew Mohammad Mostan Billah Adil are on the board of Union Bank.

Bangladesh Commerce Bank, which has had weak financial indicators for years, faces a deficit of Tk 336 crore in its current account, while Global Islami Bank's deficit stood at Tk 32 crore.

"A lender should never have a deficit balance in its current account," said Mohammed Nurul Amin, former chairman of the Association of Bankers Bangladesh, a platform of banks' chief executives and managing directors.

The central bank should penalise the bank if it ends up with a current account deficit.

"When that does not happen, and the central bank instead provides liquidity support, we can guess in which direction our banking sector is heading," said Amin, also the former managing director of Meghna Bank.

When a commercial bank's current account with the central bank turns negative, the BB can provide loans to the bank against "promissory note" for a short period of time, said three BB officials involved with the proceedings.

A promissory note, sometimes referred to as a note payable, is a legal instrument, in which one party promises in writing to pay a determinate sum of money to the other, either at a fixed or determinable future time or on demand of the payee, under specific terms and conditions.

However, the BB was providing special liquidity support to the banks without any securities on the instruction of former BB governor Abdur Rouf Talukder.

A few months ago, when asked why liquidity support was continually provided to the banks, Talukder told journalists that it was done at the governor's discretion.

"The support was provided in the interest of the country's banking sector," BB spokesman Md Mezbaul Haque told The Daily Star recently.

Power sector's

FROM PAGE 1

extended for another five years.

Thanks to this act, hefty amounts were paid as capacity charges to the power plants.

All previous activities under this act will be reviewed by the interim government, said M Fouzul Kabir Khan, the adviser to the ministry of power, energy and mineral resources, at a media briefing in the secretariat yesterday.

"It will be decided by the advisory council whether the act will be abolished or not. But from now on, the pending works under this act will remain suspended," Khan added.

Different media outlets published articles about the anomalies of the sector, especially under this act, which may raise questions among people, said a press release from the ministry.

Under this circumstance, all the negotiations, projects and purchase activities will remain temporarily closed.

However, the contracts that were done under this act will continue.

The interim government will not take any decision regarding hiking the power or energy tariffs by bypassing the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC).

Last year, the Awami League government amended the BERC Act and incorporated a clause to set the energy prices by themselves without any public hearing.

They have increased the power price several times since this clause was rolled out.

পূবালী ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং
শরী'আহ্ ভিত্তিক ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা
AAA Rated Bank
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Open your Account from anywhere
PI Banking - a Pubali Bank apps
Islamic Banking services are provided through online from all our branches and sub-branches

PROTESTS PARALYSE DHAKA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commuters in Dhaka city faced severe traffic congestion yesterday as various protests across multiple locations caused widespread gridlock.

Key roads including Dhanmondi, Mirpur Road, Khamarbari Road, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Uttara, Press Club, and Science Lab were heavily affected, leaving many stranded for hours.

The traffic chaos was primarily attributed to demonstrations by students, various organisations, and service holders, coupled with the reopening of educational institutions after a prolonged closure.

Anisur Rahman, a private job holder from Farmgate, said his usual 15-minute commute from Dhanmondi to his office took 45 minutes by motorcycle due to the congestion.

Abdullah, a trader from Karwan Bazar, struggled to find transportation and was unable to secure a ride sharing service, as drivers informed him it would take over an hour to reach him.

Protests at multiple locations added to the turmoil. Students blocked the Science Lab intersection and Uttara BNS centre, demanding the cancellation of the HSC examination.

Simultaneously, students of Home Economics College obstructed Mirpur Road near New Market, protesting for dormitory accommodations.

In front of Jamuna, near the residence of the interim government's chief adviser, women from the "Tothya

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Various groups formed human chains and held rallies across key locations, causing severe traffic congestion throughout the city yesterday. Protests by students, various organisations, and service holders blocked major roads in Dhanmondi, Science Lab, and Uttara, leaving commuters stranded for hours. The chaos was exacerbated by the reopening of educational institutions, intensifying gridlock throughout the city. PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

Case against former CJ Khairul dismissed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday summarily dismissed a case against the former chief justice and recently resigned Law Commission chairman ABM Khairul Haque on charges of fraud and altering the judgement that annulled the 13th amendment concerning the caretaker government, hours after filing of it.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Dilruba Afroze Tithi passed the order finding no cogent grounds to take cognizance of the charges brought against Khairul.

Earlier in the day, Md Imrul Hasan, a lawyer of Dhaka Bar Association, filed the case against Khairul, a staffer of the court told The Daily Star.

In his complaint, Imrul

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Tribute to a fallen friend

How classmates remembered Ahnaf, a 17-year-old killed in police firing

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Among the neatly arranged benches, one seat remained empty.

In place of a student, there was a bouquet of flowers and a white paper bearing the name, "Shafiq Uddin Ahmed Ahnaf".

Just a little over a month ago, Ahnaf, a student of BAF Shaheen College, gave exams in this very seat.

Shortly after, the government ordered closure of educational institutions as protests against attacks on quota reform protesters intensified.

Yesterday, the college finally reopened its doors, and Ahnaf's friends resumed their first-year final examination. But Ahnaf did not return. He won't ever, just like many other students killed by law enforcers' bullets.

The 17-year-old was shot dead when police opened fire on anti-government protesters in the capital's Mirpur-10 area on August 4.

He had already completed three of his exams when the violence erupted and led to the suspension of the remaining tests.

Yesterday, as his friends returned to take their final exam in accounting, Ahnaf's absence was felt deeply.

The sight of his empty seat, adorned with flowers, was a form of tribute from his friends and teachers, and was also a reminder of the human costs that contributed to Sheikh Hasina's fall.

The sight of his empty seat, adorned with flowers, was a form of tribute from his friends and teachers, and was also a reminder of the human costs that contributed to Sheikh Hasina's fall.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Iron cages being removed from all courtrooms

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI *and* **CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER**

The Public Works Department (PWD) has initiated the removal of iron cages from courtrooms nationwide, following directives from higher authorities.

As of Friday, at least five iron cages have been dismantled, according to PWD officials.

An executive engineer of PWD, confirmed that they received verbal instructions on Thursday to start removing the iron cages from courtrooms.

ASM Sanaullah, executive engineer of PWD's Dhaka division-2, said, "Five iron cages have been removed from courtrooms in Dhaka since Friday."

The decision to remove the cages was made on Wednesday, according to Md Baki Ullah, another executive engineer of PWD.

The move follows widespread criticism after images of former law minister Anisul Huq and PM's private industry affairs adviser Salman F Rahman, both arrested in a murder case, went viral on social media, showing them in an iron cage at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka.

On Thursday, former deputy speaker Shamsul Haque Tuku, state minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak, and Chhatra League General Secretary Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, also arrested in a murder case, were produced before the CMM Court.

They were not confined to an iron cage.

By Friday, two iron cages had already been removed from courtrooms at the CMM Court.

On the same day, former army officer Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan, arrested in a murder case, was produced in a courtroom where the iron cage had already been removed.

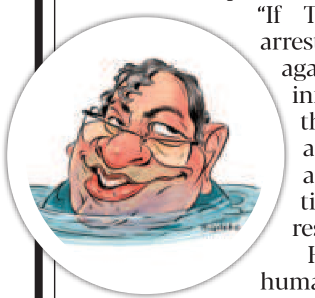
"There are still 26 iron cages in courtrooms under the CMM Court," said Md Rejowan Khondoker, nazir of the CMM

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Dhaka residents demand arrest of Taqsem

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some residents of Dhaka yesterday demanded that the authorities concerned immediately arrest Taqsem A Khan, former managing director of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, and ensure his punishment.



"If Taqsem is not immediately arrested and a case is not filed against him, he will use his influence and power to destroy the evidence of his corruption and misdeeds over the years, and may flee abroad at any time," said Mizanur Rahman, a resident of Dhaka's Jurain area.

He made the demand at a human chain in front of Wasa Bhaban in Karwan Bazar.

Mizanur was among several hundred residents from Jurain, Shyampur, Madhya Badda, Rampura and Tejgaon areas who earlier demonstrated in front of the Wasa Bhaban on April 23, 2019 demanding Taqsem's resignation.

The image of Mizanur carrying a jug full of dirty

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

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সঞ্চয় হবে বাংলাদেশে
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Form minority commission

Demands Sanatan Adhikar Parishad at meeting with Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Sanatan Adhikar Parishad has demanded a minority commission to investigate the attacks on the homes and places of worship of the Hindu community across the country.

Yesterday, a six-member delegation met Chief Adviser to the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus to present an eight-point demand, including the prosecution of attacks on the properties of the minority community and ensuring their security.

Yunus assured them that his government is committed to protecting the human rights of every citizen, including members of religious minorities.

"We have already taken several measures to provide protection against any attacks and violence targeting minorities...," he said.

Information Adviser Nahid Islam, and Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud were present at the meeting.

Emon's battle for life ends after 14 days

Shot at a protest rally on August 4, 21-year-old college student dies in DMCH

MIRZA SHAKIL, *Tangail*

Emon, 21, who was shot while participating in a student protest in Tangail on August 4, succumbed to his injuries yesterday at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Hailing from Tangail's Gopalpur upazila, Emon, a college student, was a beacon of hope for his poor family. After his father Julhas Sheikh, a rickshaw-puller, passed away when he was a sixth grader, Emon had been working alongside his studies to support his family.

His mother Rina Begum works as a house help.

After completing his HSC from Moniruzzaman Khan BM College, Emon got admitted to Hemnagar Degree College, and began doing tuitions to support educational expenses for himself as well as his three younger siblings.

"On August 4, Emon was shot by police in his stomach during a protest in the Gorai area of Tangail's Mirzapur upazila. He was first taken to Kumudini Hospital and later shifted to Lake View Hospital in Dhaka's Uttara. He was admitted to DMCH on August 6 as his condition deteriorated. He had been under treatment at the ICU there for 12 days," said his uncle Nawab Ali.

Emon's family had to borrow Tk 1 lakh to spend for his treatment, and with his untimely demise, they now find themselves in dire straits, Nawab added.

"We suffered a lot due to financial strains all these years, yet we had hopes as Emon had been working hard to help the family after his father's death. He was doing tuitions beside his studies to bear the educational costs for his three younger siblings. With his demise, all our hopes are lost," said Rina Begum.

Emon's first namaj-e janaja was held at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday noon before his body was taken to his village home and buried at a local graveyard.

Tribute

FROM PAGE 3

It was a gesture of respect, of mourning, and of the unspoken words that lingered in the minds of everyone present.

In the exam hall, the usual tension of an exam was replaced by a heavy silence. Occasionally, the cries of Ahnaf's friends broke through the silence as they broke into tears.

The invigilator's voice seemed softer, and the students' focus was often broken by the sight of that solitary bouquet.

As they filled out their answer sheets, Ahnaf's classmates knew that Ahnaf's murder would haunt them for a very long time.

"Ahnaf attended the last three exams, but today [yesterday] he wasn't here," said one student.

"It was hard to focus; three students cried in the room," another added.

Borhan Uddin, a teacher at BAF Shaheen College, who was invigilator of the exam hall, said, "We did not want Ahnaf's seat to remain empty. He sacrificed his life for the country. We decided to honour him with this gesture of placing flowers on his seat. Both teachers and students came together to lay floral tributes on his desk. Everyone was in tears during this time."

Vice Principal Shakila Nargis said, "His seat is empty, and it's painful for us all. We wanted to show that we haven't forgotten him."

The college plans to offer prayers on August 20 to honour Ahnaf's memory.

His father, Nasir Uddin Ahmed, said, "My boy is gone, but he has left many memories... There was no fear in him. I could not stop my son [from joining protests]."

Universities struggle

FROM PAGE 5

Mohema Islam, a student at Comilla University, said, "We have already suffered a lot since academic activities have been at a standstill at our university for months. We don't want this to continue. We demand that the government take immediate action to fill the gaps."

DU Pro-VC (Academic) Prof Sitesh Chandra said, "Many teachers have returned to their departments, but there was a noticeable absence of students. So, we were unable to hold any classes or examinations today (yesterday)."

The absence of a VC and other administrative officials is causing significant challenges. These positions need to be filled urgently, he added.

Prof Tarikul Islam, acting registrar at Rajshahi University, said, "The government's order to reopen educational institutions was issued to vice chancellors. But we currently have no VC or even a pro-VC. So we couldn't decide on resuming academic activities. We can only proceed once these positions are filled."

Education Ministry Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud acknowledged the crisis in public universities.

"We must address this situation swiftly. However, this is also an opportunity to appoint genuinely passionate and qualified individuals to lead these institutions," he said.

They must have both academic and administrative expertise, which has unfortunately been undervalued for a long time, he added.

Regarding the appointment of new VCs, he said, "It is extremely challenging to suddenly appoint new leadership in over 40 universities. Nevertheless, we will make every effort to quickly fill these positions, especially at major universities."

Following the government's directive, secondary schools, colleges, and madrasas across the country also reopened yesterday after a nearly month-long closure, while primary schools had resumed on August 14.

Tough to implement

FROM PAGE 5

Wahiduddin said the whole job will be done in phases.

He made the remarks at a time when many educationists criticised the new curriculum for a sketchy evaluation system.

Besides, due to a lack of sufficient training, many teachers were still confused about how to give classroom instructions, distribute group work for students, and evaluate the students' performances based on the new curriculum.

The last Awami League government chalked out the new curriculum, saying it would reduce emphasis on memorisation and prioritise experimentation and activity-based learning.

Phase-wise implementation of the curriculum started on January 1, 2023. Currently, the curriculum is followed in classes one, two, three, six, seven, eight, and nine, while classes four, five, and 10 are supposed to follow it from January 2025.

Under the new curriculum, there will be no public exam before class 10 and no exams for students up to class 3. Science, humanities, and business studies will be introduced in class 11 instead of class 9.

Dhaka

FROM PAGE 3

water as a sarcastic gift of "sherbet" to Taqsem still remains fresh in the memory of Dhaka dwellers.

Wasa recently terminated Taqsem after he remained as its managing director for over 15 years even as news over allegations of widespread irregularities, corruption and looting against him got regularly published in newspapers.

He was replaced by AKM Shahid Uddin.

Notably, complaints were filed with the Anti-Corruption Commission regarding Taqsem's amassing of huge wealth illegally and embezzlement of Tk 132 crore from the funds of Wasa Employees' Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited.

Even after so many allegations against him, no case has been filed against him and he has not been arrested, said Mizanur.

"Under Taqsem as managing director, Dhaka Wasa was run in a tyrannical manner, turning it into his playground for committing irregularities, misuse of power, and widespread corruption, among other charges," he also said.

Addressing the human chain, Mizanur also demanded replacing the newly appointed Wasa managing director AKM Shahid Uddin.

"AKM Shahid Uddin has long been an accomplice of Taqsem's corruption," Mizanur alleged, citing news reports.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 19

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-38	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-41	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Case against

FROM PAGE 3

said on August 13, Khairul resigned from the position of chairman of the Law Commission.

After retiring from the position of chief justice, he was appointed the Law Commission chairman for three years on July 23 last year. His tenure was subsequently extended three times as the chairman of the commission.

Khairul was elevated to the Appellate Division in July 2009.

A week before his retirement, he gave the verdict declaring the nonpartisan election-time government "illegal", ignoring strong pleas by eminent jurists such as Dr Kamal Hossain, Barrister Rafique-ul Huq, Barrister M Amir-ul Islam, former attorney general Mahmudul Islam, all of whom strongly argued for retaining the interim government system for the sake democracy.

His verdict gave Hasina the biggest political weapon to cling to power. The end of the caretaker system meant an end to the mechanism of checks and balances which ensured free and fair elections in 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2008, said the complainant.

Iron cages being removed

FROM PAGE 3

Court. The removal process is ongoing, he added.

Till yesterday noon, there are iron cages in most courtrooms under the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka, while the iron cages are set-up in nine special judge's courts, four speedy trial tribunals, nine women and children repression prevention tribunals, Anti-Human Trafficking Prevention Tribunal and Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal, said court staffers.

Legal experts have criticised the use of iron cages, arguing that it violates Article 35(5) of the Constitution, which prohibits torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment or treatment.

Supreme Court lawyer Zahirul Islam Khan Panna, chairperson of Ain o Salish Kendra, said, "There cannot be an iron cage in the courtrooms of a civilised state. Iron cages should be removed from all courts immediately."

The debate over the use of iron cages first came to fore on June 12 when Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus condemned the practice after attending a hearing in a graft case.

"It is very humiliating that an innocent person has to stand in an iron cage during a hearing. It's very condemnable ... it shouldn't be applied to anybody," Yunus said back then.

Protests paralyse

FROM PAGE 3

Apa" project formed a human chain, further exacerbating traffic woes.

Other demonstrations included HSC candidates and various organisations staging protests at Doyel Chattar, Uttara, Shahbagh, Mirpur Road, Science Lab, and Press Club, voicing issues ranging from job regularisation to institutional reforms.

Hundreds gathered near Shikkha Bhaban and the Press Club to demand job permanency, salary reforms, and the nationalisation of services. Dismissed BDR members also protested in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while village police gathered at the press club to oppose salary inequality.

Students of the Medical Assistant Training School (MATS) formed a human chain against corruption and discrimination, and the Bangladesh Family Planning Voluntary (Women) Demand Implementation Council called for job regularisation.

Further adding to the disruptions, the Bangladesh Independent Ebtedayee Madrasa Teachers Association protested against perceived discrimination by the Madrasa Board, while the Trinamool Nagorik Andolan held a rally demanding accountability from Sheikh Hasina and her government officials.

At Banglamotor, a group demonstrated in front of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, while in Karwan Bazar, another group protested in front of the Directorate of Family Planning.

Will inform UN team

FROM PAGE 5

the World's Indigenous Peoples 2024.

Hossain also protested against the security forces for obstructing efforts to paint graffiti on the abduction of Kalpana Chakma in different locations of Chattogram Hill Tracts region.

Speaking on reforms, she said, "We need reform in the judiciary, but we must ensure that we do not destroy everything in the name of reform."

The primary task of the interim government is to ensure the safety of those who are still insecure, she opined.

Addressing the event, Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International, Bangladesh, said the country needs to develop a framework based on the mass aspirations of a "new Bangladesh, new state structure, and new political understanding" that emerged following the recent mass uprising.

"We do not want any discrimination against indigenous people after the mass uprising. We do not want another authoritarian government," he said, calling for action over the attacks and violence on indigenous and minority communities recently and in previous years.

He also called for separate UN investigations into each rights violation against indigenous people in previous years and sought constitutional recognition of indigenous people.

Iftekharuzzaman also recommended overhauling the CHT Affairs Ministry and renaming it as "Indigenous Rights Affairs Ministry," saying that the ministry was created to facilitate militarisation in the CHT region.

Shamsul Huda, executive director at the Association for Land Reform and Development, noted that attacks on indigenous, marginalised communities, and women are a regular political phenomenon in the country.

He demanded the state to recognise the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, eliminate all discrimination against indigenous communities, ratify the ILO Convention 169, and formulate relevant laws accordingly.

Prof Robaet Ferdous of Dhaka University expressed concern that Bangalee people would outnumber indigenous populations in the CHT within 10 years at the current rate.

The abuses against indigenous people across the country hinder efforts to create a diverse, gender and language-neutral country, he noted, adding that the country's people's emancipation will remain incomplete without emancipation of indigenous peoples.

Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori, conducted the seminar.

CHTC calls for six key

FROM PAGE 5

location and release of missing Jumma activists, including Mayadhan Chakma, and the release of those detained on politically motivated charges.

Additionally, the commission demanded justice for Kalpana Chakma, pressing for action on the unresolved 1996 abduction case of the indigenous activist.

The CHTC further advocated for the retention of the CHT Regulation 1900, which is currently under legal scrutiny.

It also called for unrestricted access for national and international organisations to the region to ensure accountability and transparency.

The statement was signed by Sultana Kamal, Elsa Stamatopoulou, and Myrna Cunningham Kain, co-chairs of the CHT Commission.

OFFICE SPACE TO-LET

Ground floor 525 sqft, 7th floor 2700 sqft and 14th floor 1570 sqft. Office space available for rent in Banani. 3 Bathrooms, 2 Lifts and Basement Parkings.

Contact: 0173-6895822

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY
Progoti Foundation for Education and Development
Permanent Sanad Holder

TENDER INVITATION

Tender is invited from the bonafide/intending suppliers/firms for the following items:

1. **Procurement of Lab instruments for the Department of EEE**
2. **Supply, fitting and fixing of floor titles and replacement of false ceiling (Lab rooms) for the Department of Pharmacy**
3. **Deep Tube Well Foundation for Vadam Land (Tongi, Gazipur) of East West University**
4. **Plastering of boundary wall including maintenance work of Vadam Land (Tongi, Gazipur) of East West University**
5. **Procurement of 20 pcs Multiple Output DC Power Supply for Electrical Circuit and Electronics Lab, Department of EEE**

The schedule of the items with terms and conditions can be obtained from the Finance & Accounts Department (1st floor) of the University until **08.09.2024** during office hours (until 03:00 p.m.) on working days. The price of the tender schedule (non-refundable) is **Tk.500/-** (Taka Five Hundred) only.

The interested bidders are requested to submit the tender schedule **by 09.09.2024 within 02:00 P.M.** The tender (hard copy) must be dropped in the tender box kept at the 2nd floor of the office of the Treasurer (Room No-316) of the University. The tender(s) submitted within the deadline will be opened on **the same day (09.09.2024) at 02:15 P.M.** in the conference room (4th floor) of East West University in the presence of the representatives of the bidders.

The bidders must mention the **"name of the item"** at the top of envelope. Otherwise, the bid document will be treated as cancelled.

East West University authority reserves the right to accept any tender in full or part of it or reject all tenders without mentioning any reason thereof.

Chief of HR & Logistics

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Dacope, Khulna
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.4717.000.07.002.18-824 Date: 18-08-2024

Invitation for Tender (Works)
e-GP Tender Notice-02/2024-2025 (3rd Call)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works details are given below:

SL. No.	Tender ID	Name of works	Last selling	Closing & opening time	Tendering method
1	11002197	e-Tender/NBIDGPS/KHU/DAC/2023- 2024/W2-00387 Construction of Boundary wall and gate of Shingjora GPS under NBIDGPS-1 project at Dacope upazila, District-Khulna.	01-Sep-2024 17:00	02-Sep-2024 14:00	OTM

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal System and from and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

M. Jahangir Alam
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Dacope, Khulna
Mobile No. 01708-161516
E-mail: ue.dacope@lged.gov.bd

GD- 201

BANGLADESH ELECTION COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL ELECTION OFFICER
MYMENSINGH REGION, MYMENSINGH.
Email: reomymensingh106@gmail.com, Phone: 02-996664366

INVITATION FOR TENDER (OTM)

Memo No: 17.09.0000.11.415.24-778 Dated : 18/08/2024

1	Ministry/Division	Bangladesh Election Commission
2	Agency	Election Commission Secretariat
3	Procuring Entity Name	Regional Election Officer, Mymensingh Region, Mymensingh.
4	Procuring Entity Code	-
5	Procuring Entity District	Mymensingh
6	Invitation for	Procurement of Non-Consulting Service (Physical service)
7	Invitation Ref No	REO/MYM/NCS-1/2024
KEY INFORMATION		
8	Procurement Method	OTM
FUNDING INFORMATION		
9	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue Budget (GOB, Out sourcing)
10	Tender Package Name	Out Sourcing)/01.
11	Tender No	REO-01 /2024-2025/Service
12	Tender Publication Date	19.08.2024
13	Tender Last Selling Date	11.09.2024 up to 05.00 PM
14	Tender Closing Date and Time	12.09.2024, Time: 01.00 PM
15	Tender Opening Date and Time	12.09.2024, Time: 02.00 PM
16	Name & Address of the office(s)	
	Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Regional Election Office, Mymensingh Region, Mymensingh.
	Selling Tender Document (Others)	District Election Offices (Jamalpur, Sherpur, Tangail, Netrakona and Kishorganj).
	Receiving Tender Document	Regional Election Officer, Mymensingh Region, Mymensingh.
	Opening Tender Document	Regional Election Officer, Mymensingh Region, Mymensingh.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
17	Eligibility of Tenderer	1. Tender shall have the legal capacity to enter into the contract under the applicable law. 2.Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh. 3.Tenderers shall have to fulfil its obligation/obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh. 4. Detail information has been provided in the tender document. 5. Outsourcing supplier of any organization as per TDS & PCC.

18	Description of Works	Tender Prices	Tender Security	Duration
	Procuring Manpower for Upazila and District Election Offices under Regional Election Office, Mymensingh. [আউট সোর্সিং নীতিমালা ২০১৮ অনুযায়ী জনবল নিয়োগ (৬০ জন পরিচ্ছন্নতা কর্মী, ৬০ জন নিরাপত্তা প্রহরী এবং ০৪ জন ড্রাইভার)]।	Tk.2,000/-	Tk.7,00,000/- (Seven Lac)	09 (Nine) Months or Up to June 2025.

19	Special Instruction	a) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tender without assigning any reason thereof. b) If it happens any govt. holjdays or any strike on the dates mentioned in Document the next normal working day will be treated as the valid dates of dropping and opening of the tender as the case arises. Time & other terms and condition shall remain unchanged & no separate notice will be issued for this.

18.08.2024
(Md. Abdur Rahim)
Additional Regional Election Officer
Mymensingh Region, Mymensingh.

GD- 199

‘Will inform UN team on abuses against indigenous people’

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday said they would inform a visiting team of the United Nations about the human rights violations suffered by indigenous people in Bangladesh in recent years.

The UN team will be visiting Dhaka to investigate crimes against humanity committed by the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

“We know that a UN team will visit Bangladesh to investigate the allegations brought against the previous regime. We can raise the issue of the human rights violations, torture and other abuses faced by indigenous people over the years,” said Barrister Sara Hossain, honorary executive director of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust.

She made the remarks as a panel speaker at a seminar titled “The Responsibility of the State and the Broader Population on Overall Security, Including Land, Basic, and Human Rights of the Indigenous People,” held at the capital’s CIRDAP auditorium.

The seminar was organised by 14 indigenous organisations, including the Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, in observance of the International Day of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

CHTC calls for six key reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission yesterday called on the interim government to urgently prioritise six critical reforms in the CHT.

In a press statement, the CHTC emphasised the need for full implementation of the CHT Accord, highlighting key provisions such as recognising the CHT as an Indigenous-inhabited region, establishing mechanisms for resolving land disputes, rehabilitating returnee refugees and internally displaced persons, and demilitarising the area.

The commission urged the government to withdraw “Operation Uttoron” and recommended that all temporary military camps be dismantled without delay, except for the six permanent cantonments and installations of border security forces as outlined in the CHT Accord of 1997.

The CHTC also called for the immediate

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

With an open manhole lurking underwater, vehicles ply a submerged road near Dhaka College. A moment of carelessness can lead to an accident. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

ADMINISTRATIVE VACUUM

Universities struggle to restart classes

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Despite government directives to resume academic activities across all educational institutions, most public universities struggled to restart classes yesterday due to a significant administrative vacuum.

This crisis emerged after the resignations of at least 21 vice chancellors, 10 pro-vice chancellors, and numerous other key officials following the fall of Sheikh Hasina.

These vacancies have left universities unable to hold meetings or officially announce the resumption of academic activities, except for basic administrative tasks.

However, teachers at some departments took the initiative to hold classes independently, but a full-scale return to academic operations has yet to be possible.

Only a few departments across the universities, including Law department at Rajshahi University, held classes.

Similarly, limited classes were held at Mawlana Bhasani University, Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, and Barishal University, while student attendance was low at SUST, CU, Comilla University, and Begum Rokeya University.

At Jahangirnagar University, some 20 departments -- including Archaeology, History, Marketing, and Zoology -- held classes.

Meanwhile, classes were held in almost all 38 departments and two institutions of Jagannath University. However, student turnout was low there as well, said university Treasurer Humayun Kabir.

Different colleges affiliated with the National University also started holding classes, but with low student attendance.

Amid the situation, there has been a growing frustration among the students.

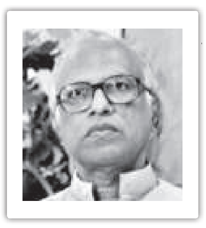
Jubayer Hossain, a student at JU, said, “We have already achieved our demands through the movement. Now it’s time to return to our classes. Otherwise, we will fall behind.”

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Tough to implement new curriculum

Says education adviser, hints going back to the old one

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Education Adviser Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud yesterday said the new curriculum, especially the evaluation method, does not seem to be implementable.

“Implementation of the new curriculum with existing teachers is tough... In many cases, this new curriculum is not suitable for our country,” Wahiduddin said while talking to reporters at his secretariat office.

“We will return to the previous curriculum as much as possible. But it will be done in such a way that students don’t feel any discomfort and no discontinuity is created,” he added.

Wahiduddin, an economist and Dhaka University professor, yesterday went to the education ministry for the first time after taking the oath of office on Friday.

He said the transition from the new curriculum to the old one would be a complex job, as many students already had books of the new curriculum.

“If we go back to the old curriculum, we will keep links to the new one,” he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Metro to resume within 7 days

Says Adviser Fauzul Kabir

UNB, *Dhaka*

Interim Government’s Road Transport and Bridges Adviser Muhammad Fauzul Kabir Khan yesterday said Dhaka metro rail services will resume within seven days.

He came up with the announcement during an introductory meeting with officials at the secretariat.

The adviser emphasised that there would be a renewed focus on development projects, ensuring that progress is not limited to Dhaka alone but also extends to neglected areas.

He stressed the importance of cost-efficiency in every project, noting that instructions have been given to adhere to budget constraints.

He also addressed the issue of inadequate parking spaces on major roads in Dhaka, adding that measures will be taken to address this.

প্রোঃ বিপ্লব চন্দ্র রায়
01728-340727
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Several ward councillors’ offices were vandalised and looted since August 5, including those of wards 20 and 22 in Barishal city. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: **TITU DAS**

BARISHAL CITY CORPORATION

Services disrupted as mayor, councillors flee

SUSHANTA GHOSH, *Barishal*

Services of Barishal City Corporation have been severely disrupted as the city mayor and most ward councillors have been absent following the ouster of the Awami League-led government on August 5.

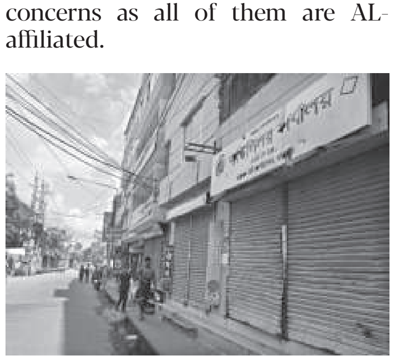
Of the 40 ward councillors under BCC, only eight have remained connected to their respective ward offices. All eight of them are BNP-backed.

Almost all services of the city corporation and ward councillors’ offices, including issuance of different certificates and other important documents, are on hold, causing much sufferings to the residents.

BCC sources said the situation deteriorated after miscreants looted goods and equipment from BCC’s annex building and set it on fire on August 5.

Gazi Naimul Hossain Litu, councillor of ward 19 and former panel mayor, was burnt to death by miscreants on the same day.

Since then, BCC mayor Abul Khair Abdullah, and 31 ward councillors, have been on the run over security concerns as all of them are AL-affiliated.



Visiting different wards across the city, this correspondent observed that several ward councillors’ offices were vandalised and looted since August 5, including those of wards 20 and 22. The residence of Munna Howladar, councillor of ward 2, was also attacked and looted.

“I went to the councillor’s office every day for the past one week to collect a birth certificate but to no avail. The office remains closed as pro-AL councillor Munna fled since August 5,” said Suvankar Chakraborty, a resident of ward 2.

A resident of ward 20 shared a similar plight.

Israel Hossain, chief executive officer of BCC, said they are trying to come up with alternative methods to resolve the issue.

Meanwhile, on August 14, the interim government decided to give CEOs full administrative and financial authority to run city corporations where mayors and panel mayors are absent.

The decision was yet to be implemented in Barishal.

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Director-cum- Professor
National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
E-mail: nimhr@hospi.dghs.gov.bd

Memo No.NIMH/Food & Linen/Tender/2024-25/3167 Date : 17.08.2024

Invitation for Tender (OTM)

KEY INFORMATION			
1	Ministry/ Division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	
2	Agency	Director General of Health Services	
3	Procuring Entity Name	Director, National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.	
4	Procuring Entity Code	1270208111118	
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka-1207	
6	Invitation for	(1) Supply of Foods for patients 2024-2025 (2) Linen Washing (with Iron) for 2024-2025	
7	Tender Invitation Ref.& Date	Memo No. NIMH/food & Linen/Tender/2024-25/3167 Date : 17.08.2024	
8	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM) according to PPA-2006, PPR-2008.	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
9	Budget & Source of Funds	Revenue Budget(GOB)	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
10	Office Code	1270208111118	
11	Office Name	National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital	
12	Tender Publication Date	19/08/2024	
13	Tender Document Last Selling Date	09/09/2024 (Office hour)	
14	Tender Closing Date & Time	10/09/2024, Time: 12.00 PM	
15	Tender Document Opening Date & Time	10/09/2024, Time: 12.30 PM	
16	Name And Address Of The Office’s		
	Selling Tender Document	**Tender Document will be available only on following web site:-** 1. **NIMH Website-www.nimh.gov.bd**	
	Receiving Tender Document	**a. Administrative block (2nd floor), National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.** **b. Office of the Deputy Police Commissioner, Tejgaon Division, 22/5, Khijli Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207**	
	Opening Tender Document	Room No-330, National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207 (In presence of the bidders or thier authoried agents who would wish to be present).	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
17	Eligibility of Tenderer	100% of the necessary papers to be submitted as per standard tender document, otherwise the tender will be treated non-respansive.	
18	Brief Description of Goods	Lot No- 01 : dry food items, spices, oil, dairy products, Lot No-02 : Meat, fish & egg etc., Lot No- 03 :- Vegetables & fruits, Lot No-04:- Bread & Confectionary, Lot No-05 :- linen Washing (With Iron) .	
19	Price of Tender Document taka	Office of the Director-cum- Professor, National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207 by the depositing money in the code no.**1-2711-0000-2366** of any schedule Bank through Treasury Challan in all. All working days from the date of publishing tender notice. The original copy of challan after doing C.T.R shall have to be submitted.	
20	Tender Security money	Tender Security money must be submitted along with the tender through Bank Draft/ Pay order from any schedule bank of Bangladesh in favour of Director-cum-Professor, National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital, Shere Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.	
Lot No.	Description of Materials according to groups.	Price of Tender documents (Non-refundable)	Tender Security Amount (Refundable)
01	Dry food items, spices, oil, dairy products	Tk.2000.00 (Two thousand) only	Tk.1,30,000.00 (One lac Thirty Five thousand) only
02	Meat, fish & egg etc	Tk.2500.00 (Two thousand Five hundred) only	Tk.2,00,000.00 (Two Lac) only
03	Vegetables & fruits	Tk. 1000.00 (One thousand) only	Tk.65,000.00 (Sixty five thousand) only
04	Bread & Confectionary	Tk. 1500.00 (One thousand Five hundred) only	Tk.1,10,000.00 (One lac Ten thousand) only
05	Washing and ironing of linen items	Tk. 1000.00 (One thousand) only	Tk.25000.00 (Twenty Five thousand) only
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
21	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Prof. Dr. Avra Das Bhowmik	
22	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Director-cum-Professor	
23	Address of Official Inviting Tender	National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.	
24	Contact Details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel: 02-223374408 E-mail: nimhr@hospi.dghs.gov.bd	
25	a. Authority is not bound to accept the lowest tender/rate. Authority may cancel the whole tender/part of the tender without assigning any reason. b. Work Order will be issued according to available budget		
26	If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is disturbed under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.		

ABhowmik.
17.08.2024
Prof. Dr. Avra Das Bhowmik
Director-cum-Professor
National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital

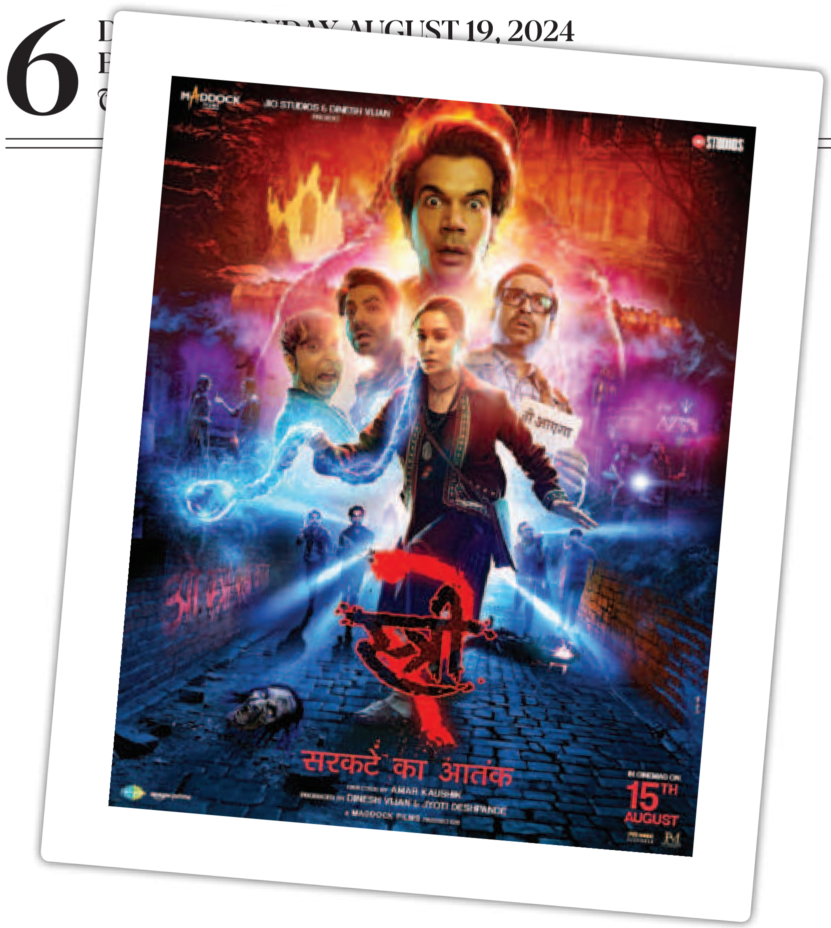
GD-200

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

REVIEW

STREE 2

A fantastic fable propagating equal rights



The overall harmonisation of myth and reality—conjoining the famous Uttarakhand-based folklore of Sarkata with the modern chauvinists—was such a beautifully crafted awakening call.

PHOTOS: **COLLECTED**

ASHLEY
SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

While I have always been a fan of the Maddock Supernatural Universe, I cannot help but commend Amar Kaushik's brilliant take on voicing his thoughts in favour of equal rights for women through ***Stree 2***, his latest release.

While the film's first instalment, released in 2018, was a delight for awakened souls juggling to find a firm stance in a gender-imbalanced social structure, the second one, released on August 15, reinforced the need for equal status for females with much more finesse and grandeur.

Packed with witty, naughty dialogues penned by Niren Bhatt, the horror comedy ensures laughter in every scene. Rajkukar Rao's effortless projection of innocence, paired with Pankaj Tripathi's and Aparshakti Khurana's impeccable comic timing, adds splendor to the experience.

However, the spotlight of this unique production was Abhishek Banerjee, playing the infamous role of Vicky's friend Jana—anxious, confused, and hilarious— all at the same time.

Shraddha Kapoor's portrayal of 'Vicky's nameless girlfriend', perhaps the only serious character in the production, is praiseworthy, especially in sequences involving action.

I, however, enjoyed Tamannaah Bhatia's (as Shama) presence more—her poise, grace, and a mismatched yet symphonic chemistry with Tripathi. Her elegance in the song ***Aaj Ki Raat***, trending on social media, requires no further validation.

The other, and most exquisite part of this Sachin–Jigar song, would be how an "item number" could be such a delightful watch for women. The composition of the number and its visualisation have been one of a kind, which I thoroughly enjoyed after Samantha's ***O Antava***.

I cannot help but admit how most cameos I come across seem enforced, out of place, and just the result of a good personal relationship between the actor and the director or producer. However, Kaushik's incorporation of the character Bhaskar (played by Varun Dhawan in ***Bhediya***) was smart and synchronised.

Coming to cameos, while most viewers were appalled by Akshay Kumar's special appearance, most failed to notice how well he essayed the antagonistic role of Sarkata's descendent. His pairing with Banerjee was simply brilliant, and hopefully casting directors will note their chemistry.

The overall harmonisation of myth and reality—conjoining the famous Uttarakhand-based folklore of Sarkata with the modern chauvinists—was such a beautifully crafted awakening call.

Made on a mere budget of Tk50 crore, the film earned almost Tk150 crore in the first two days of screening.

The collection came to me as no surprise, as the film—staying true to its commitment of uncompromised entertainment—has been one to remember this year and relish in years to come.

'Meyera Raat Dokhol Kor': Shayan lends voice to Kolkata protests

Musician Farzana Wahid Shayan, a dedicated advocate against injustice, returns with a powerful new song.

In response to the tragic rape and murder of Dr Moumita Debnath at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College Hospital, Shayan has released a powerful protest anthem.

Titled ***Meyera Raat Dokhol Kor***, the song has been shared on her Facebook and YouTube channels, quickly resonating with listeners and drawing widespread admiration.

Throughout her career, Shayan has remained a vocal critic of social and governmental injustices, using her music as a potent tool for protest.

Most recently, she joined students in their fight for change, continuing her unwavering commitment to speaking truth through her art.

Two Shakib Khan starrers postponed

Since the anti-discrimination student movement, Dhallywood has faced a significant slowdown with film releases and productions coming to a halt. Although the interim government has begun planning new movies, many projects are still delayed.

Two major Shakib Khan films have been affected. ***Borbaad***, directed by Mehedi Hasan Hridoy and starring Indian actress Idhika Paul, was set to begin filming in September but has been postponed.

Another film, ***Sher***, a Bangladesh-India joint venture, was scheduled for filming in December but has also been delayed, with production now expected to begin next year.

NEWS

6 more cases

FROM PAGE 12

Besides, a "mass killing" case was filed against Hasina and 33 others over the firing on a rally of Hefajat-e Islam at Motijheel's Shapla Chattar on May 5, 2013.

Mohammad Babul Sardar Chakhari, chairman of Bangladesh People's Party, lodged the case with another Dhaka court that ordered inspector (investigation) of Motijheel Police Station to submit a report before it after a probe.

In another development, Hasina, Quader, Asaduzzaman, former law minister Anisul Huq, former foreign minister Hasan Mahmud, and former textiles and jute minister Jahangir Kabir Nanak were sued over the killing of Abdullah Al Tahir, a student at Bangladesh Institute of Glass and Ceramics in Rangpur.

Victim's father Abdur Rahman lodged the case with Rangpur Kotwali Cognisance Court making AL President Hasina the prime accused.

Forty people, including former ministers and members of the units of Rangpur district and city AL, Swechchhasebak League, Jubo League, and Chhatra League were made accused, along with 300 unidentified ones.

In Joypurhat, Hasina and Quader were accused in a case filed over the murder of Najibul Sarker Bishal, a student of class-XII of Panchbibi Business Management Institute, on August 4.

Apart from the two accused, 126 other leaders of AL, Jubo League, and Chhatra League were accused in the case filed by Najibul's father Muzidul Sarker with the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Joypurhat that ordered the OC of Sadar Police Station to record the complaint as a FIR.

Former Jatiya Sangsad whip and AL Organising Secretary Abu Sayeed Al Mahmud Swapan and former AL lawmaker Shamsul Alam Dudu are among the named accused.

Meanwhile, a case was filed against ex-premier Hasina and former AL MP Shafiqul Islam Shimul over the murder of Natore school student Yasin Islam whose charred body was recovered from Shimul's house on August 6.

Yasin's father Fajer Ali also made Natore AL President Sirajul Islam, General Secretary Shariful Islam Romjan, Sadar Upazila Parishad Chairman Uma Chowdhury Joly and 111 unknown others accused in the case lodge with Natore Sadar Police Station.

India SC takes up doctor's

FROM PAGE 12

Questions have been raised against the police handling of the case since the beginning -- including the delay in allowing the women's parents to see the body, the postmortem report, and the prompt arrest of a civic volunteer, making it an open and shut case.

On and off the record, doctors have commented that the extent of the woman's injuries indicate the involvement of more than one attacker. There have also been reports that the police cremated the body in a hurry, which the Kolkata Police have denied.

The state's opposition BJP has been alleging that the police is involved in a massive cover-up to protect the guilty.

Their allegation got a boost after a midnight attack on the hospital on August 15, as the statewide women's "Reclaim the Night" demonstration was on. With the attackers wrecking the emergency department, the BJP said it was another attempt at obliterating evidence.

Govt mulls formation

FROM PAGE 12

of the press is one of the pillars of democracy. If we want democracy, we have to ensure freedom of the press and freedom of speech."

Asked about enacting the mass media employees act, he said the government would look into it.

The information adviser said they would overhaul the Bangladesh Film Censor Board and take logical steps in response to demands for its abolition.

He said the murder of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi was painful and that submission of the probe report had been delayed repeatedly.

He said his ministry would do whatever it can to ensure justice for Sagar, Runi, and other journalists who had been killed.

"We want justice as soon as possible. We do not want to see any farce or dilly-dallying," he added.

Asked about people filing cases just because they have personal enmity with someone, Nahid said those not involved in crimes would not be punished.

"Even if cases are filed, action will be taken based on the probe. The law ministry has issued specific instructions in this regard."

Asked about corruption in the Department of Films and Publication (DFP) and Press Institute Bangladesh (PIB), the adviser said, "We have said that we do not want to see any place for corruption and nepotism. Institutions should be completely neutral."

He asked journalists to work neutrally, instead of being divided along party lines.

Nahid said, "You don't have to call me sir. I come to you as your child, as a representative of the people, with their demands and a vision for a new Bangladesh."

201 officials promoted

FROM PAGE 12

question must mention it in their joining letter.

The notification further states that the authority reserves the right to modify or revoke the order if any contrary or unfavourable information is found against any officer in the future.

Meanwhile, in a major development, the government yesterday promoted 73 police officials to the rank of deputy inspector general (DIG) of police.

Of them, 10 officers got direct promotions, while the remaining 63 got promoted to supernumerary positions (officials who hold the same position and perform the same duties after their elevation).

The Public Security Division of the home ministry issued two separate circulars, signed by Deputy Secretary Mahabub Rahman Sheikh, in this regard.

According to the notification, the order will be effective soon after joining.

For the supernumerary posts, the tenure will be one year. The posts will be dissolved in case the officers get promoted, go on retirement, or are removed from duty, read the second circular.

The circular added that the promotion of officers on education leave or on a mission abroad will take effect as soon as they return to their regular workplace.

According to sources, the majority of the police officials, who got promoted yesterday, are from batches 15 and 17 of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS).

Plunged into darkness

FROM PAGE 1

Of them, 366 lost vision in one eye, and 17 in both.

Al Amin from Barishal said like the days before, the student of Hatem Ali Boys and Girls High School in the southern city joined his peers and seniors in the protests on Nathullabad Road on July 17, with unforeseeable peril awaiting him that afternoon.

"I had gone to support my seniors and fellows who were being attacked indiscriminately. However, I never expected them [police] to fire bullets and pellets at us," said the 14-year-old.

At least 22 pellets entered different parts of the schoolboy's body that day, including one into his right eye. Following the incident, he was rushed to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in the city.

More shocks were waiting for the family there. Doctors asked them to take him home despite multiple pellets still inside his body, including in the eye, as the authorities ordered the removal of all patients injured in the protests by that night, said Al Amin's mother Sharmin Jahan.

With whatever cash she could manage, she left home with her wounded son the next day and visited multiple health facilities for treatment.

"The hospitals were flooded with patients, which caused delays. After several tests and a thorough examination at Grameen GC Eye Hospital, they recommended immediate surgery and referred him [Al Amin] to Ispahani Islamia Eye Hospital in Dhaka," Sharmin said.

Like Al Amin, around 1,300 others were admitted to the hospitals in Dhaka, including the NIOH, Lions Eye Institute, Bangladesh Eye Hospital, and Dhaka Medical College Hospital's eye department, according to Dr Syeed Mehbub Ul Kadir of Bangladesh Eye Hospital.

Of them, 630 underwent surgeries -- more than 90 percent of whom have lost vision in one or both eyes, he added.

Most were admitted with pellet wounds causing retinal haemorrhage that led to loss of vision, said Dr Kadir.

In just 10 days from July 17, as many as 445 patients were rushed to the NIOH's emergency care. At least 305 of them had surgery.

Another 261 patients were brought between August 4 and 10, and 181 of them underwent surgery, the hospital said in a bulletin on August 11.

The patients have either become visually impaired or are at risk of losing sight. Their rehabilitation is important and urgent, added the bulletin.

Similar cases were reported from around the country, although a concrete figure is not available yet.

In Al Amin's case, the pellet had penetrated his retina, said his doctor vitreo-retinal surgeon Dr Farhana Yasmin of Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital.

The boy had the surgery on August 13. However, the doctors could not get the pellet out as it was deeply stuck in his optic nerve, making it nearly impossible for surgeons to remove it.

The pellet would not further harm Al Amin's eye, but the incident has led to a loss of vision in the injured eye, Dr Farhana said. "He would require follow-ups, and perhaps, another surgery," she said.

The doctor attended to at least five similar patients in the past two days.

"My friends have returned to school while all I do these days is sit indoors or lie on the bed," said Al Amin, currently at home after being discharged on August 14.

"I don't know how long it will take for me to return to my old life – enjoying chase with my school friends in the playfield."

Restaurant worker Kazi Faruk, however, still lies in his bed at the NIOH, wearing sunglasses.

An unseeable barrier now stands between him and a world he can no longer see after losing vision in both eyes.

Once filled with hope, Faruk's life took a tragic turn on August 5, the day Dhaka's streets erupted in celebration following Sheikh Hasina's fall and departure from the country.

It began as a regular day in his small room at his mess in Merul Badda. The Capital, the restaurant where he had worked for the past four years, was closed due to the unrest and curfew.

When the news of Hasina's exit spread, Faruk, like lakhs of others, joined the jubilant crowds.

As an active protester who had been demonstrating with Brac University students since July 16, he joined them on this day of victory as well.

As the protesters neared Badda Police Station, the celebration turned into horror.

Without any warning, police opened fire, and in the ensuing chaos, Faruk was struck by shotgun pellets, including in his eyes.

He was rushed to the NIOH immediately, but the irreparable damage was already done.

"We're still trying to regain his vision," said the hospital's Director Prof Mostafa.

"It's tragic for me to be shot on the day of celebration after our successful mission. The doctors are trying their best. I would be happy if I could regain vision in at least one eye," Faruk said, his voice tinged with sadness.

While the hospital is providing necessary care, Faruk's worries go beyond his immediate treatment.

"The hospital is giving me the supplies I need, but I have to buy the medicines that aren't available here. People are checking on me now, but I fear that if they stop, I'll be left alone," he added.

Faruk's family is also grappling with the uncertainty hanging over his future. Having lost his parents long ago, Faruk had faced many challenges in life, but nothing as devastating as this.

Serbian police kill armed man in arrest shootout

AFP, *Belgrade*

A man has been shot dead by Serbian police, the interior minister said yesterday, after being connected with the attacker behind a crossbow shooting at the Israeli embassy in Belgrade in June.

Interior minister Ivica Dacic said the man fired shots toward the police near the southern city of Novi Pazar late Saturday and refused to surrender.

"During the arrest, he resisted, fired three to four shots at the police, and members of the Special Anti-Terrorist Unit neutralised him," Dacic told local media.

He added that the man had previously been convicted and jailed for terrorist offences.

The police operation took place in the village of Hotkovo, near Novi Pazar -- a historical and political centre of Serbia's Bosniak Muslim minority.

LEBANON BLAST

Three UN peacekeepers injured

AFP, *Beirut*

Three United Nations peacekeepers suffered light injuries yesterday, the UN said, after a blast near their vehicle close to Lebanon's southern border, where Hezbollah and Israel have traded near-daily fire.

"Earlier today, three peacekeepers on patrol were lightly injured when an explosion occurred near their clearly marked UN vehicle in the vicinity of Yarine, in south Lebanon," the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said.

"All peacekeepers in the patrol returned safely to their base. We are looking into the incident," it added.

Earlier yesterday, Lebanon's state-run National News Agency had reported that "Israeli enemy warplanes" struck the village of Dhayra, about one kilometre (0.6 miles) from Yarine, "resulting in injuries".

Palestinians mourn over the bodies of their relatives killed in Israeli strikes, at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Harris easier than Biden to beat: Trump

REUTERS, *Wilkes-Barre*

US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump said on Saturday he believed Democrat Kamala Harris will be easier to beat than President Joe Biden even as some polls showed her edging ahead in the race for the November 5 presidential election.

Trump, the former president, spoke at a rally in Wilkes-Barre in northeastern Pennsylvania, a state looming large in the campaign. Vice President Harris was due to conduct a bus tour of western Pennsylvania starting in Pittsburgh yesterday, ahead of the kickoff of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago today.

"I believe she will be easier to beat than him," said Trump, referring to her as "radical" and a "lunatic."

Trump has sought to portray Harris as far left on a number of policies. At the rally, he highlighted her previous call for a ban on fracking, an industry important to the state. Harris' campaign has recently indicated she would not support a ban.

He also continued to attack Harris on personal terms, even as some political analysts say such comments could hurt Trump with moderate voters.

"Have you heard her laugh? That is the laugh of a crazy person," Trump said, adding that he was displeased by the illustration of Harris on the cover of the latest issue of Time magazine. "I'm much better looking than her."

DISPUTED POLLS

Venezuela's opposition vows to fight 'to the end'

AFP, *Caracas*

Venezuela's opposition, claiming victory in presidential elections they say were stolen by strongman Nicolas Maduro, gathered in the thousands in Caracas and elsewhere on Saturday, vowing to fight "to the end."

People rallied in several cities in Venezuela and as far afield as Spain, Belgium and Australia in response to a call by opposition leader Maria Corina Machado to join a "Protest for the Truth."

Machado herself came out of hiding to lead a rally in the capital, seeking to intensify pressure on Maduro to concede what she and others say was an overwhelming win for opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia in July 28 polls.

"We won't leave the streets," Machado told thousands of demonstrators, many of whom waved the national flag and copies of election records from their voting stations as proof of an opposition victory.

"Peaceful protest is our right," she said as demonstrators chanted "Liberty! Liberty!" and clamored to get as near as possible to the wildly popular politician.

Ukraine strikes another bridge in Kursk region

Repels Russian missile attack on capital

AFP, *Kyiv*

Ukrainian forces have struck another bridge in Russia's Kursk region as they seek to disrupt Moscow's combat operations and supply routes, Ukraine's air force said yesterday.

The strike appeared to target a bridge crossing the river Seym near the village of Zvannoye, about 15 kilometres (nine miles) north of the Ukrainian border.

"Minus one more bridge. The Air Force aviation continues to deprive the enemy of logistical capabilities with precision air strikes," Air Force Commander Mykola Oleshchuk said on Telegram.

Ukrainian drones attacked an oil storage facility in Russia's southern Rostov region

He published an aerial video of a blast tearing through the bridge, leaving a large rupture on the road.

It was not clear when the attack took place. Russian military bloggers shared photos of destruction from what appeared to be the same bridge dated Saturday.

Ukraine announced it had destroyed a separate bridge near the town of Glushkovo late on Friday, both of which cross the river Seym.

Ukrainian forces also said they thwarted a Russian missile attack on the capital Kyiv where air raid sirens sounded before dawn yesterday.

"This is the third ballistic missile attack on the capital in August with a clear interval of six days between each attack," the Kyiv City Military Administration posted on Telegram after the early morning barrage.

Simultaneous to the missile attack, drones were spotted heading to Kyiv. "All enemy drones were destroyed far outside the city," it added.

No damage or casualties were reported from the attack, which the administration said had "most likely used North Korean ballistic missiles of the KN-23 type".

The United States and Seoul have accused North Korea of providing ammunition and missiles to Russia for its war in Ukraine.

Early yesterday morning, Ukrainian drones attacked an oil storage facility in Russia's southern Rostov region, sparking a large fuel fire, the local governor said.

Videos published on social media showed thick black smoke and bursts of flames coming from the site of the blaze, which the governor said was in the town of Proletarsk.

"In the south-east of the Rostov region, air defences repelled a drone attack. As a result of falling debris on the territory of industrial storage facilities in Proletarsk, a diesel fuel fire broke out," Governor Vasily Golubev said on Telegram.

"At 05:35 (0235 GMT), firefighting at the industrial facility in Proletarsk was suspended due to a second drone attack," he added in an update to the post.

Paetongtarn endorsed as PM by Thai king

REUTERS, *Bangkok*

Paetongtarn Shinawatra was endorsed as prime minister by Thailand's king yesterday, two days after parliament elected her, paving the way for her to form a cabinet in the coming weeks.

Paetongtarn, 37, becomes Thailand's youngest prime minister just days after ally Srettha Thavisin was dismissed as premier by the Constitutional Court, a judiciary central to Thailand's two decades of political turmoil.

Daughter of divisive former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Paetongtarn won by nearly two-thirds in a house vote on Friday to become Thailand's second female prime minister and the third Shinawatra to take the office, following Thaksin and her aunt Yingluck Shinawatra.

The approval by King Maha Vajiralongkorn, a formality, was read out by House of Representatives Secretary Apat Sukhanand at a ceremony in Bangkok.

Dressed in official uniform, Paetongtarn knelt in homage to a portrait of king before giving a speech thanking the king and the people's representatives for endorsing her as prime minister.

Pakistan govt denies hand in ongoing internet disruptions

DAWN ONLINE

In the wake of internet disruptions across Pakistan and speculation over firewall installations, State Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said yesterday that reports suggesting that the internet was being throttled by the government were "completely false."

On Thursday, Khawaja said that the government had ordered the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and other relevant bodies to submit a report after citizens in various cities of Pakistan claimed they had been facing internet connectivity issues.

Her statement came a day after the business community and internet service providers alleged that the government's heightened efforts to monitor internet traffic had resulted in a significant nationwide slowdown of services, leading to losses.

On Saturday, the Lahore High Court summoned representatives from the federal government, the information ministry, and the PTA on August 21 over internet disruptions.

Speaking at a press conference in Islamabad yesterday, Khawaja acknowledged the recent frustration among the public regarding internet issues. "I want to reassure the public that the internet has neither been shut down nor slowed down by the state," she said.

"Reports suggesting that the internet was being throttled are completely false. The issue was limited to a few services on certain apps not downloading, which led a large segment of the population to start using VPNs," she added.

BENGALURU CITY

Fed up with stunt riders, people throw scooters off flyover

NDTV ONLINE

An agitated crowd threw two scooters off a flyover near Bengaluru. The reason? - Some people were caught performing stunts on the busy flyover, disturbing the commuters.

The incident happened on August 15 when some people were performing dangerous stunts on a flyover in Nelamangala town near Bengaluru on their two-wheelers.

The commuters, angry over this, decided to take matters in their own hands and threw two scooters off the flyover onto the road below as several motorists witnessed the scene.

Those performing stunts on the flyover however managed to flee the spot.

After the video of the incident went viral, the Bengaluru police took note of the incident and registered several cases.

Around 34 cases have been filed by the Bengaluru police against 36 people including both - those performing stunts and those who threw the scooters off - for putting public safety at risk.

Bengaluru (also called Bangalore) is the capital of India's southern Karnataka state.

The center of India's high-tech industry, the city is also known for its parks and nightlife.

Relatives of missing Baloch community people take part in a demonstration demanding greater civil rights for citizens in Quetta, Pakistan yesterday.

PHOTO: **AFP**

YEMEN CONFLICT

UN warns of surging child malnutrition

AFP, *Dubai*

A United Nations task force yesterday warned of soaring child malnutrition in Yemen's government-controlled areas, reporting "extremely critical" levels of malnutrition in parts of the country's south for the first time.

"The number of children under the age of five suffering acute malnutrition, or wasting, rose by 34 percent compared to the previous year ... affecting over 600,000 children, including 120,000 children who are severely malnourished," Unicef said of the latest report by Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) initiative.

Yemen has been engulfed in a devastating conflict since 2014 between the internationally recognised government, supported by a Saudi-led military coalition, and the Iran-backed Houthi rebels.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Metro rail operations must be resumed

Such a vital service cannot be held hostage to salary hike demands

It is disheartening to see the continued suspension of Dhaka metro rail services—now into its second month—despite earlier assurances about services resuming on August 17. On Sunday, the newly appointed adviser of the road transport and bridges ministry expressed hope that the metro rail would be operational within seven days. And an announcement in this regard may come as early as Monday when a reconstituted board of the Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL) convenes to discuss grievances of the employees who are refusing to return to work. What all this means for the commuters is a few more days of suffering before things get better.

The metro work abstention is but a reflection of the chaos and disruption being witnessed across the civil service after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5. At the Secretariat, for example, there have been frequent processions by civil servants who were previously denied promotions for political reasons or poor performance, or preferred placements or postings—all seeking personal benefits rather than better public services. Although the closure of metro services since July 18 was initially linked to the vandalism of two stations during the quota reform protests, it later transpired that around 700 DMTCL employees from grades 10 to 20 have been holding a strike since August 6, shutting any chances of prompt resumption.

Reportedly, the employees have six demands, including one for a salary hike. They argue that those in grades 1 to 9 earn 2.3 times the national pay scale, while those in grades 10 to 20 earn twice the pay scale. They see this as "discrimination," and are demanding that it be rectified. This calls for a comprehensive review of the pay and benefits at DMTCL, which we hope the board will do soon. However, we cannot condone a total work stoppage for something that can be resolved amicably, especially when said stoppage has left thousands of daily commuters struggling with increased travel times, overcrowded roads, and higher transportation costs. The metro was designed to alleviate severe traffic congestion in Dhaka, and its absence is a significant setback.

Resuming its services, therefore, must be a top priority. The interim government's role in this regard is critical. It must ensure that the DMTCL management is supported in meeting the legitimate demands of its employees while also safeguarding the interests of the public. In the long run, the authorities must learn from this experience. Employee grievances should never be allowed to fester to a point where they disrupt essential services. On their part, the protesting employees, too, must understand that they cannot hold the public hostage for their own benefits. It is completely against the spirit of public service.

Extortion at slums, footpaths must stop

Govt must prevent political groups from exploiting public spaces

It is alarming that the evil politics of exploiting public spaces to extort citizens continues despite a regime change mere days ago. After the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, groups claiming allegiance to the BNP, now the central party in Bangladesh, are already trying to assert their dominance in slums and footpaths where AL-linked groups exerted their power for 15 years, according to a report in this daily.

Over the years, we have seen how unscrupulous political elements often took control of government land, built illegal shanties and shops, and sold unauthorised and often risky utility services at exorbitant prices in collusion with corrupt public officials. Similarly, such elements also took control of footpaths and extorted money from hawkers for conducting their business there. Even though a non-political interim government is now in power, pro-BNP elements, who had been absent from the politics of territory control for almost two decades because of AL's absolute dominance, could not wait for their term to wield their muscle power.

According to our report, they have already grabbed shanties, shops, clubs, and offices previously occupied by AL men in a number of places in Dhaka. Similar scenes have likely been unfolding in other cities as well thanks to the power vacuum created by recent events and the resultant mass escape by AL leaders. Thankfully, in some places, marauding cadres pulled away after receiving warnings from party high-ups. In other places, citizens' groups have intervened to thwart potential extortionists.

While we welcome BNP high-ups' effort to control their party activists, this is not enough. The political culture of allowing exploitation of public spaces to appease party activists and affiliates at the expense of the poor must stop. On the other hand, relevant government bodies including city corporations and utility companies must take stern measures to prevent illegal use of public spaces, properties and services. They should also mete out punishment to corrupt officials and law enforcers if found guilty of aiding political elements in such practices.

However, any measure to correct long years of wrongdoing should not lead to dispossessing and depriving anyone of a home or a means of living. We are talking about a proper rehabilitation of slum dwellers and street vendors. We hope that the interim government will initiate dialogue with experts and relevant stakeholders to address the underlying issues related to city slums and informal businesses on footpaths, and come up with sustainable solutions.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Hitler made leader and chancellor

On this day in 1934, some 90 percent of German voters approved a referendum that made Adolf Hitler *Führer und Reichskanzler* (leader and chancellor).

The education mission for the interim government

Dr Manzoor Ahmed
is professor emeritus at BRAC University, chair of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN), and adviser to the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE).

MANZOOR AHMED

In 1974, Dr Muhammad Qudrat-i-Khuda, head of Bangladesh's first education commission, outlined many goals for the country's education sector, from universal literacy at the primary stage to quality education in Bangladesh universities. These goals were never realised. A majority of children aged 10-14 years cannot read or count at a basic level, according to World Bank estimates, and adult literacy skills at functional level remain well below 40 percent, according to an Education Watch assessment.

The expectations from the interim government, headed by Prof Muhammad Yunus, are many and high. The burning education questions are the policy and action priorities for the interim government.

To the credit of the Awami League government, the 2010 National Education Policy, adopted by the parliament, was a broadly accepted guideline for development in education. However, 14 years later, we have not seen a comprehensive and coordinated implementation plan for the policy. Most key objectives remain unmet, such as: i) a core unified curriculum for all types of school education with a minimum common standard of school provisions for all students; ii) major change in the professional training of teachers, their performance standards, their status and incentives, and assurance of adequate numbers; and iii) decentralised and accountable education governance, planning and management. These goals were aimed at realising an inclusive and equitable education system that responds to the needs of changing times.

Many educationists saw education development as fragmented and partial. The government actions did not address the roots of the problems. Too often, the government pursued solutions that avoided rocking the boat—solutions that usually don't work.

Public investment in education has remained at or below two percent of GDP—one of the lowest among developing countries. And larger budgets, under the present structure of planning, management and accountability, may lead to more waste, inefficiency, and mismanagement. One of the priorities should be a broad assessment of primary-level students' ability to read and do basic arithmetic, and actions based on the assessment to reach these targets. For example, Bangladesh could adopt the early grade reading and arithmetic survey, Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). It was pioneered by Pratham, an Indian NGO.

The burning education questions are the policy and action priorities for the interim government.

FILE PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

The past government claimed credit for a major expansion of student enrolment including girls, growth in the number of educational institutions, stipends for school students, distribution of free textbooks, and use of multimedia in classrooms. These have not produced satisfactory learning outcomes due to deficits in planning, school management, accountability, and pursuit of an education vision. We don't have enough teachers with professional skills, commitment to teaching, and a career path for them.

Comprehensive and coordinated planning has been obstructed by splitting school education into two ministries, unlike in any other country. As in other sectors, partisan political interests, rather than educational goals, have guided decision-making, especially in recruitment of personnel.

The new school education curriculum, launched in 2022 with much fanfare, has caused much anxiety and confusion among students, teachers, and parents.

The extraordinary recent events call for urgent actions. Students need to be in school and normal operations need to resume. At the university level, the University Grants Commission (UGC), in consultation with students and other stakeholders, should provide guidelines, but not seek to micro-manage. Each institution should consult students and teachers, and parents at school level, in implementing the guidelines.

With their sacrifice and maturity demonstrated in the popular movement, students have earned the right to have a role in managing the education and co-curricular activities of their institutions. Non-partisan elected student bodies should be formed in institutions.

The recent spate of resignations in top university positions requires that the right people be appointed to the right place. Appointments must be based on merit, not political loyalty. The process must ensure impartiality through measures such as clearly defined qualifications and use of search committees. A professional UGC can facilitate the process and consult teachers and students.

While changes are made, schools must continue to operate without disruptions and untried experimentations. This is particularly germane to the new curriculum. Most educationists want a pause in the rollout of the new curriculum. In order to minimise disruption, two steps can be taken: i) textbooks already introduced in some grades under the new curriculum may continue and existing textbooks may be used for other grades; and ii) conventional end-of-year or public student evaluation based on written examinations should continue, separating formative and practical work-based evaluation in classrooms from summative written examinations. Pausing for a year or so should be used to review and rethink the curricular reforms, particularly student evaluation, a highly controversial aspect of the new curriculum, and effective implementation in classrooms. Experts and stakeholders should be involved in this rethink.

An education consultative group of experts and stakeholders should examine the status and the priorities in the education sector and advise the interim government. They would look at the issues and suggest actions on the matters noted above. This group may be turned into a permanent, statutory commission as recommended in the 2010 education policy.

The consultative group would also consider and advise on larger policy questions related to the Sustainable Development Goals and national goals for building an equitable, inclusive and quality education system for all. These larger agenda would include: i) promoting an equitable society through education; ii) a time-bound plan for equitable and inclusive early childhood development and K-12 school education of acceptable quality for all; iii) strengthening the teaching profession and the education workforce in respect of their professional skills, motivation, performance and adequacy of numbers as well as effective use of digital technologies; iv) establishing decentralised district education authorities for planning and managing equitable K-12 education in every community; and v) ensuring academic autonomy of the education system and education institutions, protecting them from partisan politics.

The interim government may not complete all needed reforms. It should at least set a course which all stakeholders can endorse. If the interim government realises at least some of the key reforms, we will have honoured Dr Qudrat-i-Khuda's aspirations.

The author acknowledges valuable comments received from Dr John Richards and Shahidul Islam, his co-authors of the book 'Political Economy of Education in South Asia: Fighting Poverty, Inequality and Exclusion' (University of Toronto Press, 2022).

What the police reform requires

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RAKIB AVI

For years, the police force has been used as an extension of the ruling party to control political opponents. Unfortunately, during the July uprising, the said opponents were the students and the general public who took to the streets. The abject lack of a moral compass from the leadership of the police, which made them mere puppets of an authoritarian regime, led to the killing of hundreds of civilians on the streets of Dhaka as well as across the country between July 16 and August 5. What followed was a deadly series of mob attacks that saw the killing of a number of law enforcement members across the country and the burning of police stations as they had become symbols of oppression of the previous regime. The topmost priority of the interim government is, of course, bringing the trigger-happy perpetrators in the police force and the members of the police leadership, who issued the order of shooting at civilians, to justice. But what comes after that? How do the general public and the country heal from an experience like this?

Like many other public institutions in the country, the police have also been enfeebled by successive political administrations over the last five decades in favour of political gains at the expense of the general public. Added to that is a general culture of lacking accountability, rampant corruption in recruitment, and overt political inclination. Hence, an overhaul of the police is long overdue. The members of the police force very recently staged a protest and made an 11-point demand to the interim government, which is legitimate and the current government should take it into consideration.

There are arguments as to how this reform should take place. But above all else, what needs to be prioritised is the full resumption of the general operations of the police force to ensure that we don't go back to the utter lawlessness of the days following the fall of the AL government. As praiseworthy as the community volunteerism has been in safeguarding people's lives and assets, it cannot be the way of life in a civilised country. The state has a mandate to provide safety and security to its citizens and the interim government's legitimacy hinges on ensuring it. As far as a long-term reform goes, a veritable change in how the police function needs to be the goal, not just cosmetic changes like updating the colour of the uniform and logos. It goes far deeper than just a branding issue and needs serious soul-searching from the remainder of the leadership of the police, aided by an empathetic home ministry.

Police reform is a complex process and requires independent oversight, strong political will, and support from a coalition of a broad group of stakeholders; the citizens are a crucial part of that process. There are successful global examples of how to initiate that reform, demonstrated by Singapore when they were trying to overcome their own problems of corruption in the 1950s, and also by South Africa in the post-apartheid era. There is no specific playbook to follow, and each country has its own way to achieve its goals, but there are a few steps which the interim government could follow.

> **Police reform is a complex process and requires independent oversight, strong political will, and support from a coalition of a broad group of stakeholders; the citizens are a crucial part of that process. There are successful global examples of how to initiate that reform**

First, an independent commission should be set up to provide oversight and investigate corrupt practices in the force. The neutrality and jurisdiction of this commission is critical in curbing corruption and putting an end to the use of the police force for political gains. This could be done by strengthening the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), with an added emphasis on the oversight of the police. Second, a lot has been said about improving the salaries and working conditions of police personnel, with very little happening on the ground. There ought to be a fair assessment of compensation and general improvement of working conditions if we are to separate the reputation of corruption from the police.

Third, the recruitment and training process needs to be revised to bring in more focus on integrity, community engagement, and ethical conduct. Finally, bringing the citizens and the police closer through community policing and public engagement is crucial to build trust and responsiveness to the needs of the people. There is an ever-widening trust deficit between the public and the police, further exacerbated by the recent events. A truly responsive and citizen-centric police force cannot function with little to no connection with the communities they serve. Police officers need to be encouraged to engage with the public and work collaboratively with the communities to solve local problems. It's also time to establish an effective public feedback mechanism to encourage reporting of problematic behaviours and concerns by the public.

"The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there," is the immortal opening line from LP Hartley's novel ***The Go-Between***. It should also accurately describe the gulf between what used to happen in Bangladesh up until August 5 and what should happen in the coming days. Let's not cast our minds to the past, sustaining the memories of violence and despair. Now is the time to unite the country, rising above the politics of division and the labels that we all quite comfortably ascribe to people all around us. The police are also our fellow countrymen; let's not shun them due to the action of a small percentage of trigger-happy enforcers. A purge is due in the police force, but let them also heal with the rest of the nation and bounce back from their sclerotic leadership.

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FILE PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Underlying the mass agitation that eventually led to the downfall of the previous government is a deep sense of collective betrayal.

The politics of betrayal and trauma

Nazli Kibria
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NAZLI KIBRIA

Be·tray·al
: violation of a person's trust or confidence, of a moral standard, a contract, etc.

Bangladesh has experienced a dramatic series of events in recent weeks. An interim government has been formed, and we await fair and transparent elections. But we would do well to remember the cycles of betrayal and trauma that have shaped the politics of the country and to resolve that they are not repeated again.

Underlying the mass agitation that eventually led to the downfall of the previous government is a deep sense of collective betrayal. The Awami League government betrayed the most fundamental of public trusts: the expectation that the state will not wilfully kill one's children. "My son was murdered," said Shopna, the mother of slain 18-year-old protester Rahat Hossain. "And not by civilians, but by law enforcement officers under government orders. My son was killed by a bullet bought with my tax money."

What began in early July as peaceful protests by Bangladeshi university students against the quota system in government job recruitment faced a full-scale government crackdown as the police, the military, and border guard paramilitaries were deployed to quell the unrest. An Awami League government that shamelessly clung to power for 15 years through rigged elections and persecution of the opposition unleashed its punitive might on student protesters and citizens. A curfew was declared, and internet and mobile phone networks were shut down.

Betrayal has many faces, shapes and forms. At its core, though, is the experience of violation and trauma. The psychological effects of betrayal include anger, loss and grief, self-doubt, and preoccupation or an inability to let go of the precipitating events. Human beings do not compartmentalise these feelings. Emotions seep into political cultures where they have the potential to alter the course of a society.

In the wake of the police brutality, student organisers of the quota reform movement asked then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to apologise for what happened. It is easier to heal after betrayal when the responsible party takes ownership for what has happened. Regrettably, the Awami League government devoted its energies to denying responsibility, to pointing fingers at everyone but themselves.

The politics of betrayal in Bangladesh is painfully familiar to me. I am the daughter of the late Shah AMS Kibria. After joining the Awami League in 1992, my father was the finance minister of the government led by Sheikh Hasina from 1996 to 2001. Following that, he was a member of the opposition in parliament and a vocal critic of the rise of militancy, persecution of religious minorities, and state-sponsored political violence in the country.

On January 27, 2005, Shah AMS Kibria was assassinated by a grenade attack during a public meeting at his constituency in Sylhet.

Following her husband's killing, the late Asma Kibria fought hard for a full and transparent investigation conducted independently of the BNP-Jamaat government of the time. I am reminded of her indomitable spirit when I hear Shamsi Ara Zaman, the mother of 27-year-old Tahir Zaman, a freelance photographer who was killed on July 17 when he went to film the protests, "I want justice. As a mother I will do whatever is necessary to get justice for my son."

When the Awami League was elected in 2009, we, the family, rejoiced. After four long years, we would get justice for my father's murder. Who more so than a government led by the political party that he had loyally served could be motivated to address the questions that had been haunting us since that fateful day in 2005? Who ordered the grenade attack on him? What was the source of the grenades?

For 15 years, the Awami League led by Sheikh Hasina has held the reins of government in Bangladesh. For 15 years, we have not seen a complete investigation and trial into our father/grandfather's murder. For 15 years, the crucial questions of motive, intent and plan remain unanswered.

It is of great sorrow to me that my mother never saw the justice that she sought. She died with the trauma of betrayal. "Where can we get justice," she said, "if even those he trusted the most do not have the will to find and punish his murderers?" Her trauma is now mine, to be passed down through the generations of our family.

Growing up, my parents instilled in me a deep appreciation for the ideals of the 1971 Liberation War and the sacrifices of those who gave their lives for the independence of Bangladesh. Over the past decade and a half, I have watched with dismay as the Awami League—the political party so closely tied with these iconic events—chose to politicise and weaponise this glorious history, using it to divide rather than unite the nation.

When I watched the terrifying footage of Abu Sayed, a student shot and killed during the quota reform protests, I felt the sting of many betrayals, one top of another and another. How could the government authorise the use of deadly force against unarmed student protesters? How could a government led by the Awami League, a party founded on principles of self-determination and democracy, turn on its own people? There is a sense in which I am grateful that my father is not around to see the moral degeneration of the party he served with dedication.

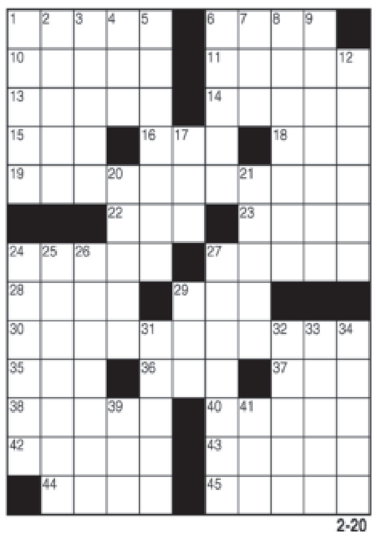
Bangladesh is now at a political crossroads. The country, I believe, can only heal from the trauma of betrayal if there is a concerted building of trust in public institutions and those who serve in them—whether it is a policeperson directing traffic or a clerk at the passport control office or a Supreme Court judge. The politicisation of our institutions must stop. After all, in the end, it is very easy to be betrayed by a political party or a political leader. But if we know that our public institutions are there to serve all of us, regardless of who is in power, it may not matter so much.

After all, as Shah AMS Kibria used to say, "We Bangalees can never be put down for long. We sacrificed our lives for freedom once and we will do so again if necessary."

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Storybook elephant
6 Alan of "M*A*S*H"
10 Nimble
11 Sheds tears
13 Like some secret messages
14 Make suitable
15 Mine yield
16 Corn serving
18 Early auto
19 First lady of the 1980s
22 "It's a mouse!"
23 Medicine amount
24 Instrument panel features
27 More mature
28 Lake near Buffalo
29 Work wk.'s end
30 First lady of the 1990s
35 What's more
36 Poker prize
37 Take to court
38 Pageant topper
40 First lady Michelle
42 Diner patron
43 Wild party
44 Waiting room call
45 Hägar's dog

DOWN
1 Burger topper
2 Old market
3 First lady Jill
4 Saloon order
5 Overnight flights
6 In the know
7 Was a pioneer
8 Greg Kinnear movie
9 Placate
12 High fellow
17 Noah's boat
20 Star
21 Improvise on stage
24 Campaign event
25 Hormuz native
26 When a show is shown
27 Public speakers
29 To and —
31 Isolated
32 Grammar topic
33 Ancient Mesopotamian region
34 Body pump
39 Writer Stout
41 Outlaw



2-20

SATURDAY'S ANSWERS

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A	S	T	R	O	■	I	D	A	H	O
L	E	A	N	I	N	G	■	K	I	N
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S	T	E	P	U	P	■	E	N	D	S
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Write for us. Send us your opinion pieces to **dsopinion@gmail.com**

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Time for the sunshine law

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SHAMSUL BARI *and* **RUHI NAZ**

The seismic changes in Bangladesh in three fateful weeks—from mid-July to early August—were a powerful testament to people's power. The induction of an interim government led by Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus has been a harbinger of hope for the country's Right to Information (RTI) Act. This law can help meet the nation's cry for systemic change in governance.

Over the years, this column has lamented that a powerful law like the RTI Act has not been utilised to its full extent. More than a handful of activists and individual citizens have used it, but Bangladesh's civil society, known for its stand on public issues, has largely stayed away. One reason for this was the fear of possible reprisal by the authorities facing information requests on sensitive matters that may expose their misdeeds.

Under the country's changed circumstances, it is time for all, particularly our student community which led the recent uprising, to turn their attention to the law.

RTI is popularly called the sunshine law, as it is meant to shine light on a government's activities. The RTI Act, 2009 provides a legal framework for all citizens to access relevant information from government offices relating to their responsibilities. The idea is that by doing so, they can assess if the offices concerned are performing their duties under the laws of the land. The preamble to the act proclaims that by applying the law, "transparency and accountability of all public ... institutions ... shall increase, corruption of the same shall decrease and good governance of the same shall be established."

Unlike most other laws, the RTI Act requires all public offices to promptly respond to citizens' information requests and, where delinquent, face sanctions. This is a powerful way to hold public officials accountable and make them responsive to the people. It's a step towards establishing transparent and accountable governance, the two most essential elements of democracy. While this law establishes a right, it also lays the responsibility on citizens to hold their government accountable.

FILE VISUAL: **STAR**

Prof Yunus's call to the nation to unite and help establish peace, justice, freedom, non-discrimination and equality in the country—all very important elements for democracy—resonates well with the primary objectives of the RTI Act. By resorting to it faithfully, our youth can promote systemic changes in the country's governance culture. Their demonstrated skills in organising and achieving their goals in recent times will be invaluable in this new endeavour.

To begin with, they must fully grasp the potential of the RTI Act and learn how to use it to advance their goals. Once that is done, they must develop a specific strategy to achieve them. Therefore, understanding the law's substance and the processes involved in its application is important. Towards that end, we focus below on a few of its salient elements.

An important attribute of the RTI Act is fostering interaction between citizens and public officials. By seeking pertinent information from public offices, citizens establish contact with the officials and simultaneously remind them that they are under public scrutiny. Such interaction was impossible under the Official Secrets Act, 1923, a remnant of colonial times, which prevailed before the enactment of the RTI Act.

The RTI Act serves as a bridge, connecting citizens with government bodies meant to serve them. Any information request from a citizen to a government unit's designated officer (DO) requires a prompt response. Preparing the response, which involves consultation within the office unit, establishes a direct connection between the citizen seeking information and the relevant government office.

To illustrate the process, let us use the quota system for government jobs, which ignited the recent student protests, as an example. Suppose a citizen, whether curious or aggrieved, wished to know how the application of the quota system affected the selection of candidates for public jobs and sent an information request to the DO of the Public Service Commission (PSC). The request asked for lists of candidates who sat for the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) exams in a given year, were selected for government jobs, and benefited from the quota system.

The DO could provide the information faithfully if they wished to abide by the law. Another option would be to disregard or bin the request if there was something to hide or if the office felt uneasy about responding. The law, however, provides for an appeal, and if that does not lead to a satisfactory response, a complaint could be filed with the Information Commission. So, the DO and their colleagues must consider what option to take. If they took the first option, the information could be publicised and become a subject for discussion, leading to whatever action is considered necessary by those affected. This is the main objective of the law: drawing public attention to official actions affecting the public.

If the information was not provided or only partially provided and the applicant was dissatisfied, an appeal could be filed with a higher authority in the office. If that, too, was found unsatisfactory, then a complaint could be filed with the Information Commission. The latter would then have to call the two sides and decide on the respective claims, including a directive to provide the information and even sanctions against the delinquent officials. Or the commission could decide against disclosure of the information, in which case the applicant could file a writ petition with the High Court. Thus, a citizen's request for information would have led to national attention to an issue of public interest, alerting the office concerned to be at least careful about how it went about its work. Just imagine if this happened on many other national issues.

When six coordinators of the quota reform movement were picked up, social media pressure forced the authorities to reveal their whereabouts. There was widespread concern in the country about their well-being. RTI could have been used to seek such information from the police, as the law provides for a response within 24 hours if it concerns citizens' human rights. But very few knew this.

Now is the opportunity for our youth, with their courage and sense of national responsibility, to lead us in using existing laws to build a better country. We have faith in the younger citizens' capability to apply the law and oversee the system as a whole, including the role of the Information Commission and the selection process of the commissioners entrusted to safeguard such an important institution. We can only go forward from here.

Shamsur Rahman and Muslim Bengali childhood

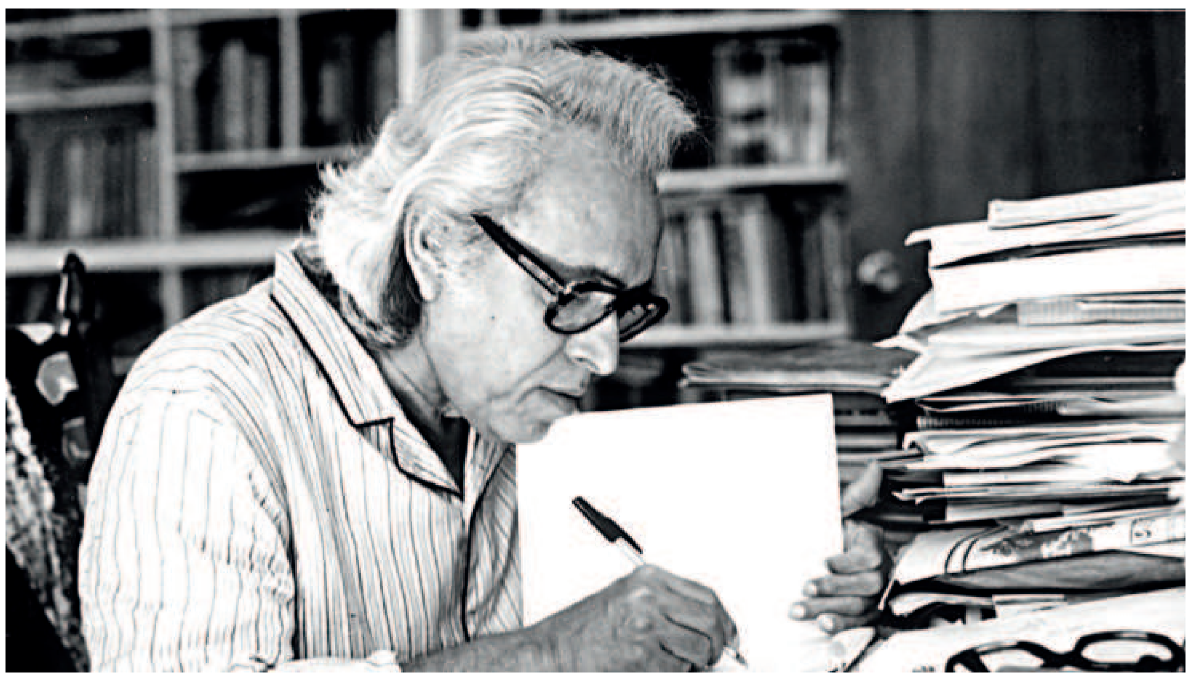
MODERNITY, CITY, AND SOLILOQUY

> **Shamsur Rahman developed a stylistic approach that diverged from the Calcutta-based concept of modernity and the European notion of cosmopolitanism. His poetic language was deeply influenced by his Islamicate Muslim childhood, which subtly informed the narrative of his work.**

MUJIB RAHMAN

The poetic tradition in the East, particularly in Greater India, has long been characterised by diverse literary experimentation, significantly influenced by Sanskritic, Arabic, and Persian cosmopolitan traditions. Over time, this tradition also drew substantial inspiration from various aspects of colonial modern aesthetics. Poet Shamsur Rahman—affectionately known as Bacchu among close friends—embodies this cosmopolitan narrative. To critically assess Shamsur Rahman's aesthetic sensibility and modernist tone, we must explore the various trajectories within the framework of multiple modernities.

It is also crucial to situate the poet's upbringing, the childhood scenarios depicted in his poetry and memoirs, and his concepts of self and city within the context of the Islamicate, as outlined by M.S. Hodgson. When referring to the Islamicate and Muslim Bengali childhood of old Dhaka, it should not be conflated with an Islamic one. The terms "Islamicate" and "Muslim Bengali" are secular and worldly, often linked to a social and cultural complex that is distinct from religiosity.



Shamsur Rahman (Oct 23, 1929 – Aug 17, 2006)

A childhood photo of poet Shamsur Rahman (back row, 1st from left) with his uncle.

> **His childhood memories serve as a wellspring of inspiration for the development of his unique poetic style. While it may initially appear that he is reliving a colonial and medieval city, it is clear that Shamsur's work must be understood within the broader context of the city's distinctive lineage within the global city narrative.**

THE POETICS OF ISLAMICATE CHILDHOOD

In the following poems, we will explore the social and psychological atmosphere of Shamsur Rahman's childhood. Among his poetry centred on childhood, he often evokes the multi-faceted, lost memories of his early years. However, our primary focus here is to unpack the cultural dimensions of Bengali Muslim childhood, its worldview, and its ethos. By delving into the poetics of Rahman's childhood and his autobiographical reflections, we gain insight into the upbringing of Bengali Muslims during the late colonial period. As previously indicated, we are making a clear distinction between the Islamic and the Islamicate; when we refer to Muslim Bengali childhood, it must be situated within the Islamicate sphere—undisputedly non-sectarian and all-encompassing, distinct from the religious dimension.

An unknown, oft-visited lamplighter with a ladder, usually found in the alleyways at dusk

The vivid portrayal of the lamplighter of old Dhaka in the early 1930s serves as a representative sample of the poet's early childhood. Through this narrative, Shamsur Rahman retrieves the lost heritage of earlier town planning and the daily life of old Dhaka's alleys. It is important to note that during that time, DESCO, WASA, and WAPDA were not parts of Dhaka's infrastructure, which does not mean that Dhaka had yet to develop into a modern city or become a hub for the bourgeoisie. From an urban studies perspective, Dhaka's lineage as a city can be traced back to the Middle Ages, if not earlier. As we explore Dhaka's contours through Shamsur's poetic narration, the distinctive features of an oriental and Mughal city like Dhaka will become evident.

The depiction of the lamplighter's tattered shirt and curly mustache reminds us of the often-marginal characters in the city, celebrated in surrealist discourse, who reveal the tales of the city. This is superbly portrayed in Shamsur's famous poem, Shoishober Bati-ola Amake (Chance encounter with that famed lamplighter of my old town childhood). In this regard, Shamsur's lamplighter, if not a connoisseur of the city, resembles Baudelaire's flâneur: both recapture the many lives of a decadent city. The arrival of the lamplighter at dusk, signalling the dazzling glow of night, is one of Shamsur's finest works, creating an iconic character easily identified by readers as the from 46 Mahut-Toli.

Ma is never found in the green room

This narrative captures the inner world of Bengali Muslim women in relation to the arts and aesthetics. Unlike their Hindu counterparts, the emergence of Bengali Muslim women in the public sphere took a different path. In his poems and autobiography, Shamsur Rahman reflects on growing up in an environment often devoid of arts and aesthetics, focusing instead on school textbooks, though this was not always the case. He poignantly reveals that he never saw his mother sing, prompting us to consider the predicament of Bengali Muslim women. Shamsur challenges us to confront the question of modernity for Bengali Muslims. This is evident in every line of his work. The poem Kokhono Amar Ma'ke (Ma is never found in the green room) is less concerned with aesthetic judgment and more with meditative reflection on the mother figure within a Freudian narrative, distinct from the typical Oedipus complex.

Manhood & its cracked mirror

In the poetic narration of Dussomoyer Mukhomukhi (Manhood reminisces and relives the lost childhood), Shamsur Rahman takes us back to his early childhood, growing up in a typical Bengali Muslim household. This poem vividly depicts the evolving milieu of Bengali Muslim childhood, serving as an archive of a young boy's coming-of-age story. The mosque, with its intricate floral engravings, decorations—a hallmark of Islamicate architecture from the Sultanate era—and the water tank with its fish, all captivated Shamsur. He also recalls his father reciting the Azan during a deadly cyclone to calm the approaching storm. These images not only recapture memories but also serve as a poetic archive of Bengali Muslim childhood, common across the social spectrum.

To become more Hindu among Hindus

The remembrance of things past is beautifully articulated in the esoteric poem Chelebela Theke (From My Childhood). It can be argued that this poem serves as a rare document of partition from a poetic perspective, documenting the secular and non-sectarian upbringing in old Dhaka. Among his friends, Shamsur names Arun, Sunil, Subimal, Surjokishor, Taher, and Ashraf. One fine morning, the poet discovers that all his Hindu classmates, including Subimal and Shisir, have left for India—a decision often attributed to the desire to become "more Hindu among Hindus"—a typical narrative of the 1947 partition. His Hindu playmates and non-sectarian Hindu teacher at Pogose School always compelled him, in later days, to reflect on the plight of Hindus in Bangladesh. Besides the tale of Hindu-Muslim solidarity and the tragedy of partition, Shamsur also recounts the heartbreaking loss of his sister, Nehar, in the poem. It was on this occasion that the poet wrote his first elegy, in memory of his deceased sister. All these events unfolded in the Islamicate old town, where Shamsur lived as a Muslim among Hindus.

One Fine Eid Morning

In the poem Das Takar Note Ebong Shoishob (One Fine Eid Morning), Shamsur Rahman reflects on his early childhood, again typical of a Bengali Muslim upbringing. While many poets have written about Durgapuja, Saraswati Puja, and Rathjatra, the world of Bengali Muslim childhood has rarely been explored. Shamsur Rahman ventures into this realm, offering a vivid representation of early Muslim childhood, centring around the Eid festival and the tradition of giving Eid money, known as edyee in the vernacular. He evokes memories of his childhood neighbourhood: the house of Henry, the lamplighter, kulphiwala, and the typical horse stable—a reminiscence of Muslim heritage—with the celebration of Eid at the heart of it.

The Soft Stretch of Father's Prayer-Mat

Shamsur Rahman wrote several poems about the liberation war of Bangladesh, with Swadhinota Tumi being the most renowned. In this poem, he creates a surreal image of his father's prayer mat. During his early childhood, Shamsur would often intrude on his father's prayer time, occasionally receiving a gentle scolding for his interruptions. Rather than merely evoking lost time, Shamsur Rahman draws us into a vivid reliving of it, seamlessly blending past and present.

Janmashtomi procession in Dhaka. Illustration: Ranabi

Maharram procession in Dhaka. Illustration: Ranabi

THE POETIC MEMOIRE OF SHAHI DHAKA: THE LIFE OF AN ORIENTAL CITY

We often hear that poetry serves as a journal and a representation of the everyday. In Shamsur Rahman's work, certain figures and images repeatedly resurface: the Batiwala, Bhakarkhaniwala, Bhistiwala, and horse stable all hint at the city's longstanding Islamicate orientation. Alizan Beyapari, with his pump shoes and his renovation of the seventeenth-century Mirza Mosque—now known as Sitara Mosque, with its colourful, engraved star domes—captivated Shamsur. The poet also explores the worlds of Kawali, Merasin (marginalised women musicians), and the vernacular, including the unknown naive painter Noyeem Mia, with whom he delved into the enigmatic world of painting. Mr. Harney and his son Waisy, along with the neighbourhood populated by Anglo-Indians, Armenian traders, and their places of worship—including churches—feature prominently in his work. Lastly, Shamsur intertwines his persona with the grandeur of Shahi palaces and caravanserais like Choto Katra and Boro Katra. He also depicts the home and world of the Dhakai Nabab, highlighting the divide between them and the unlettered kutti, as well as the native Bengali Muslim. Landmarks in the old town, such as Bahadur Shah Zafar Park and Lalbagh Fort evoke memories of the persecution and execution of soldiers during the First War of Independence in 1857.

It is evident from his writing that his family and neighbourhood were deeply rooted in religiosity, though not in a sectarian way. As a child, Shamsur was influenced by both the Karbala and Hindu Vaisnavite traditions, such as Janmashtami. He fondly recalls the evocative memories associated with Dhakeswari and Ramna Temple and participated solemnly in various Pujo celebrations. This should be understood within the framework of a secular, non-sectarian, and Islamicate worldview. One of his most cherished memories relates to Karbala, which holds a central place in Bengali Muslim culture. Notably, he memorised Mir Mosarraf Hossain's Bishad Sindhu while reading it aloud to his grandmother during his early childhood. In several of his poems and some prose written in memoir form, Karbala, Tazia, the Duldul horse, and Hossaini Dalan are recalled with deep reverence.

The many facets of fanciful and delirious Dhaka nights are vividly captured in his now-classic poem Ai Matuala Rait (The Delirious Dhaka Night), written after he returned from a tavern at midnight. The poem's distinctive style is apparent in its masterful use of local idioms and the Perso-Arabic vocabulary of the old town.

Through these images, Shamsur crafts the narrative of his poetry. His childhood memories serve as a wellspring of inspiration for the development of his unique poetic style. While it may initially appear that he is reliving a colonial and medieval city, it is clear that Shamsur's work must be understood within the broader context of the city's distinctive lineage within the global city narrative.

It is often said that Dhaka does not fit the Western concept of a city; rather, it resembles a series of souks, as noted by many anthropologists. The concept of a souk has a different genealogy in the Middle Eastern world, often carrying an Islamicate connotation. The trajectory of an oriental city is markedly different from that of a Western one. It is clear that the genealogy of an oriental city like Dhaka cannot be fully explained by the Western narrative; it must be understood within the framework of multiple, diverse, and alternative modernities. Many sociologists and anthropologists of urban life have emphasised the unique and distinctive character of our city within the global city narrative.

THE SWADESHI MODERNITY: THE LINEAGE OF OUR MODERN POETICS

Kavitar Songe Gerosthali (Living together with poetry) is one of Shamsur Rahman's most poignant poems. In this work, we find early signs of his poetic development. Through his creative imagination, Shamsur vividly illustrates his journey to becoming a poet. We also gain insight into his liberal upbringing, guided by his elder brother, who was deeply immersed in the world of Tagore. Shamsur's poetic perspective was influenced by a fortuitous encounter with Tagore's Chayanika, followed by his discovery of Sanchayita in the early 1940s. By the early 1950s, he was drawn to the modernist poets of the 1930s, notably Das, Bose, and Dutt. He also found inspiration in Western modernist and surrealist poets such as Paul Éluard and Louis Aragon. William Radice aptly notes that while Shamsur could craft a perfect sonnet, he preferred a poetic form that allowed freedom and flexibility, yet never appeared uncontrolled.

Although this poem does not explicitly detail his poetic influences, Shamsur elsewhere acknowledges various poets from different traditions, including Islamicate figures like Ghalib, Hafiz, and Rumi, as well as other renowned Persian and cosmopolitan poets. It is noteworthy that, early in his career, he introduced the Multani poet Khwaja Farid to his audience.

In 1953, Shamsur delivered a lecture at Shantiniketan, where he clearly differentiated between Islamic revivalist poetry and the secular, Islamicate tradition. The former included poets like Golam Mustafa and Farrukh Ahmad, while the latter comprised poets such as Ahsan Habib and others. Shamsur was committed to advancing the secular tradition. In developing his own style, he regularly drew inspiration from Hafiz, Ghalib, and Neruda, deeply immersing himself in his childhood memories. He frequently highlighted that his early years were enriched by the poetry and epics of Islamic, Persian, and Sanskrit cosmopolitan discourses, all of which shaped the contours of his poetic style.

As we often say, Shamsur Rahman, or Bacchu, was the quintessential poet of Dhaka. He vividly portrayed the everyday life of Bangladesh and captured the political events of the century through his poetic vision. In doing so, he developed a stylistic approach that diverged from the Calcutta-based concept of modernity and the European notion of cosmopolitanism. His poetic language was deeply influenced by his Islamicate Muslim childhood, which subtly informed the narrative of his work.

The lineage of Shamsur's poetics, both within his poetry and in the context of Dhaka, should not be framed within the parameters of Western modernity. As it is often said, modernity is not singular but plural, encompassing numerous distinct styles. Ultimately, Shamsur Rahman, our Bacchu, represents the essence of Swadeshi modernity—a modernity shaped by our own unique narrative of disenchantment and reflected in the poetics of our world.

Mujib Rahman *is a journalist at The Daily Star and also teaches at East West University*

Star
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SPORT

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
English Premier League
Leicester City vs Tottenham Hotspur
Live from 1:00 am (Tuesday)

HP lose final in Australia

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh High Performance (HP) finished runners-up in the Top End T20 Series following a 32-run defeat against Adelaide Strikers in the final at the DXC Arena in Darwin yesterday.

Chasing a target of 170 runs, Bangladesh batters let their side down as they could not get enough momentum during the chase. Tanzid Hasan Tamim and Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby made 35 and 21 runs respectively but it could hardly help the side as they were bundled out for 137 runs in 19.5 overs.

Jordan Buckingham, Liam Scott, Tim Oakley, Noah Mcfadyen and Lloyd Pope took two wickets each.

Earlier, Tom O'Connell struck a 33-ball 53 while Ryan King and Liam made 35 and 30 runs respectively which propelled the Strikers to 169-7.

Pacer Ripon Mondol, who finished the tournament as the highest wicket-taker with 15 scalps, took two wickets in the final.

Earlier in the day, Bangladesh HP beat Northern Territoty Strike by 21 runs in the second semifinal to book a berth in the final.

Bangladesh set to play against Bhutan next month

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national football team are set to to play two friendly matches against Bhutan in FIFA September window, Bangladesh Football Federation's general secretary Emran Hossain Tushar said yesterday.

"We were hopeful about hosting Bhutan in the September window but the opponents have a concern regarding the current situation in Bangladesh. They are supposed to inform us about their decision on Monday. If they don't want to come here, then we will go Bhutan to play the matches," said Emran.

The BFF general secretary said they picked Bhutan as opponents mainly with the aim of increasing FIFA ranking, with a target of securing Pot-3 instead of Pot-4 in the upcoming draw for the Asian Cup Qualifiers.

Meanwhile, Emran revealed that FIFA recently imposed a fine of 15,000 Swiss Francs [equivalent to Tk 20 lakh] on the BFF over security lapse during Bangladesh's World Cup qualifying match against Australia at the Bashundara Kings Arena on June 6.

Bangladesh were previously fined twice by FIFA – 11,250 Swiss Francs and 1400 Swiss Francs -- during matches against Lebanon and Maldives on Nov 21, 2023 and October 17, 202, both in World Cup qualifying matches at Bashundara Kings Arena.

The BFF general secretary, therefore, requested football fans to enjoy international matches by obeying all rules and regulations.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and head coach Chandika Hathurusingha inspect the pitch at the Rawalpindi Stadium during a training session yesterday ahead of the first Test against Pakistan, starting on August 21. The venue will also host the second and final match of the series which was initially going to take place in Karachi. The Pakistan Cricket Board announced yesterday that the match will be moved from the National Bank Stadium in Karachi to Rawalpindi due to ongoing renovation works.

Bangladesh Sports Institute will be a blessing: Sports adviser

SPORTS REPORTER

Adviser to the Ministry of Youth and Sports in the interim government Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan on Sunday announced his plans of creating Bangladesh Sports Institute – a first-of-its-kind institution in the country which will work to take Bangladesh sports to the next level.

Asif made the announcement during a press conference at the Secretariat on the 11th day after the current interim government headed by Prof. Muhammad Yunus took oath on August 8. Secretary of the youth and sports ministry Dr. Mohiuddin Ahmed was also present at the event.

"In order to produce international quality sportspersons in Bangladesh and to achieve greater success globally, Bangladesh Sports Institute will collaborate with national and international sports organisations and will deliver specialised and infrastructural assistance to the athletes," Asif told reporters during the press meet.

"Countries like the UK, the USA, China and France have achieved immense successes by linking sports and science together. Bangladesh also wants to reach to such levels through the Bangladesh Sports Institute," he added.

However, the adviser did not provide any specifics about the estimated cost for the institute nor when it could be launched in his press conference.

"To achieve the ultimate target and get quality service, experts from both home and abroad will be involved in Bangladesh Sports Institute. The ministry is determined to complete the project in the shortest possible time. I hope it will be a blessing for the sports fraternity," he said.

The adviser added that the new institute will be an independent organisation and will work to accommodate the sportspersons who come out of BKSP.

"Many athletes come into sports through BKSP. There, they receive training and an education side-by-side till the Higher Secondary Certificate exam. But there is no specific organisation they can go to after that. That's why this project has been undertaken.

"This won't be run by the BKSP. It will be an independent organisation. We will check whether we can accommodate this in our existing infrastructure. Otherwise, we will start it through building new infrastructure," he said.

Several board directors of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) including president Nazmul Hasan Papon have gone into hiding since the Awami League government fell through a student uprising on August 5.

Some recent media reports have claimed that the BCB president expressed his willingness to resign from his position to few of the other board directors.

Asif, however, said that he is yet to receive a letter of resignation from any of the BCB directors.

"I have seen it in the media that the BCB president and board directors want to resign. But I'm yet to receive anything related to that directly. We are now discussing the matter with different stakeholders and former cricketers to solve the issue," he said.

The adviser also said that they are in discussion with the International Cricket Council (ICC) regarding hosting the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup in October.

Asif also said that the ministry will be working to ensure that the constitutions of all sports federations are more democratic and also unearth the corruptions that have taken place in different sports bodies in the last few years.

"We speak about a reformation in the system, not a change in individual. The ones who corrupted the system will definitely be removed. But those who come into the [cricket] board or are handed the responsibility have to make the constitution more democratic. Along with that, the irregularities and corruption that have happened before must come to light. We have the same plan for other federations as well."

Govt has no problem with names of Sk Jamal and Sk Russel: BFF GS

SPORTS REPORTER

With the withdrawal of sponsors following the recent political turmoil in the country, clubs like Sheikh Jamal DC and Sheikh Russel KC are struggling to form squads for the upcoming football season, with the latter having already informed the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) about their inability to participate in the Bangladesh Premier League.

The interim government, however, has no problem with the names of Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, two sporting outfits named after two sons of Bagabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and younger brothers of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

"We have come to know from media and players that three clubs – Sheikh Jamal, Sheikh Russel and Chittagong Abahani – will not participate in the upcoming league. Sheikh Russel officially informed us about it yesterday [Saturday]. In this situation, the players sat with the president [Kazi Salahuddin], who requested the clubs to take part in the league.

"I have informed the Youth and Sports Adviser about the developments, and he said as sponsorship is a matter of clubs, the clubs should manage these things. They [govt] don't have any problem with names of Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel. They [govt} will provide necessary security to the clubs if needed," BFF's general secretary Emran Hossain told reporters yesterday after a meeting with adviser Asif Mahmud at the ministry.

SHORT CORNER

Melbourne match in 2027 to celebrate 150th anniversary of first ever Test

Cricket Australia (CA) plan to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first ever Test match, played at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) in 1877, with an Australia vs England Test at the same venue in March 2027, the governing body said yesterday. Australia won the single-innings timeless match played between March 15 and 19 by 45 runs, before England won the second match at the same venue to tie the series 1-1.

Al Hilal crush Ronaldo's Al Nassr 4-1 to clinch Saudi Super Cup

Al Hilal clinched the Saudi Super Cup trophy by coming from a goal down to crush Al Nassr 4-1 on Saturday, with all four of their goals coming in a dominant second half. Cristiano Ronaldo scored Al Nassr's only goal a minute before the end of the first half.

Lewandowski hails Barca youngsters after comeback win at Valencia

Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski said he was proud of his team's performance in a 2-1 comeback win at Valencia in their LaLiga season opener on Saturday. With Gundogan, Pedri, Gavi, Araujo and De Jong all out, new manager Hansi Flick gave 20-year-old academy midfielder Marc Casado his senior debut, playing alongside three 17-year-olds in Lamine Yamal, Pau Cubarsi and Marc Bernal.

***Read full stories on The Daily Star's website.*

Alvarez fits perfectly with Atleti DNA: Simeone

REUTERS, *Madrid*

Atletico Madrid manager Diego Simeone heaped praise on his new signing Julian Alvarez and expects great things from the 24-year-old Argentine forward.

Alvarez only joined Atletico last week after they paid Manchester City a deal reported by British media to be worth around 75 million euros ($82.7 million), Simeone said he could available for Monday's LaLiga opener at Villarreal.

"Julian (Alvarez) is a player we are all looking forward to seeing and who will help us to be better. It was all very sudden, so quick. He just arrived a little while ago, has been training for four days but has been adapting fast," Simeone told a press conference on Sunday.

"But I see him with a lot of enthusiasm, knowing where he is coming from and understanding where he is heading towards. His characteristics fit to the Atleti DNA."

After spending over 150 million euros on Alvarez, Spain Euro 2024-winning defender Robin Le Normand and last season's LaLiga top scorer Alexander Sorloth, Simeone played down title expectations.

With negotiations to sign Chelsea midfielder Conor Gallagher lingering, Simeone said they still need to add more players to be competitive against a Real Madrid side who won the Champions League and LaLiga double last season before recruiting France captain Kylian Mbappe.

"Real Madrid start the season as the best team and will have to prove it with the wonderful players they have while all the rest of us will be behind to compete against them," Simeone said.

"We haven't closed the squad yet, apart from not closing it yet, we need to focus on tomorrow's game and see game by game how the team progress.

"Barcelona continue to have a very good team, Real continue to grow with players who are phenomenal but it's clear for me that we have to think about ourselves."

SIEGER
2024 Supercup 2024
BAYER 04 LEVERKUSEN

Ten-man Bayer Leverkusen, whom never-say-die attitude earned them the nickname 'Neverlusen' in the last season, beat Stuttgart 4-3 on penalties in the season-opening German Super Cup on Saturday, winning the trophy for the first time. The season curtain-raiser, which puts the Bundesliga champions up against the Cup winners or league runners-up, was the first not to feature either Bayern Munich or Borussia Dortmund since 1993.

PHOTO: **FACEBOOK**

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201 officials promoted to joint secys

73 police officers also elevated to rank of DIG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has promoted 201 officials from the post of deputy secretary to joint secretary.

A notification, signed by Ziauddin Chowdhury, deputy secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration, was issued to this effect yesterday.

Since the fall of the Awami League government, "politically sidelined" officers have been gathering at the Secretariat almost every day to put pressure on the interim government to promote them.

According to sources, among these officers, some were politically sidelined, while others were overlooked due to their poor track records.

Earlier on August 13, 117 government officials were elevated to the rank of deputy secretary from the post of senior assistant secretary or its equivalent.

The promotions that these officers received are retroactive, meaning that they take effect from the date they became eligible. This also means these officers are entitled to retrospective financial benefits.

According to the notification, the promoted officers can submit their joining letters to the public administration ministry in person or by e-mail.

If an officer's place of employment has changed from the one specified in the promotion order, the officer in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

BREAK THE BARS
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ALCRUELTY
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People demonstrate at Kantaban in the capital yesterday demanding an end to the trade of animals at pet shops there. The Animal Welfare Foundation organised the protest.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Govt mulls formation of mass media commission

Says info adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Information Adviser Nahid Islam yesterday said the government is contemplating forming an independent mass-media commission to ensure freedom of the press.

"We will take steps on preparing a framework in consultation with the journalist community," Nahid told reporters at his secretariat office.

Certain laws will be amended, if needed, after discussing the matter with journalists, he added.

Expressing his frustration over Bangladesh's position in the World Press Freedom Index, he said, "Freedom

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

AL GOVT OUSTER

626 took shelter in cantonments

Says ISPR; seven of them still there

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Army provided shelter to 626 people of many professions, including politicians and law enforcers, in cantonments during the recent political upheaval.

The Inter-Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR) disclosed the information in a press release yesterday.

According to the release, the law and order situation across the country deteriorated drastically following the ouster of the Awami League government on August 5.

"Fearing for their lives, citizens, including some political figures, sought shelter in the cantonments," it reads.

A total of 626 people, including 24 political personalities, five judges, 19 civil administration officials, 28 police officers, 487 policemen of different positions, 12 people of various professions including officials of public universities, and 51 families (wives and children) took shelter in different cantonments, the release reads.

The ISPR further stated that 615 people had already left the cantonment on their own initiative as the situation improved. So far, four of the sheltered people have been handed over to law enforcement agencies following the proper legal process based on the allegations or cases brought against them.

"At present, seven people are staying in the cantonment. All the information has been given to the concerned ministry on behalf of the army," the release reads.

The Bangladesh Army is working with neutrality and professionalism to improve law and order and to prevent extrajudicial activities to uphold the rule of law.

The ISPR also requested everyone not to pay heed to rumours and to show patience and a cooperative attitude.

Bangladesh Army will always be by the side of the people and is committed to upholding the law of the country, the release added.

Israel launches fresh strikes across Gaza

25 more Palestinians killed; Blinken heads to ME for 10th time to push for truce

REUTERS, *Cairo*

Israeli strikes killed 25 people in Gaza yesterday, including six children, Palestinian health authorities said, ahead of a visit to the region by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to try to push forward ceasefire talks.

The children and their mother were killed in an Israeli airstrike on a house in the central town of Deir Al-Balah, health officials said. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

The Israeli military said it destroyed rocket launchers used to hit Israel from the southern city of Khan Younis, the scene of intense fighting in recent weeks, and killed 20 Palestinian fighters.

Diplomatic efforts to halt the Israel-Hamas conflict and secure a deal to return hostages held in Gaza have intensified in recent days. Talks mediated by the US, Egypt and Qatar are set to continue this week in Cairo, following a two-day meeting in Doha last week.

Blinken is making his 10th trip to the region since the offensive began days after the United States put forward bridging proposals that the mediating countries believe would close gaps between the warring parties.

There has been increased urgency to reach a ceasefire deal amid fears of a regional escalation. Iran has threatened to retaliate against Israel after the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on July 31.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 40,099 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory. The toll includes 25 deaths over the past 24 hours, according to ministry figures.

Ten months after the offensive began, Palestinians in Gaza are living in constant desperation to find a safe place. "There is nothing left to us but the sea," said Tamer Al-Burai, who lives in Deir Al-Balah with several extended family members.

» Hardly any safe place for Palestinians in Gaza

» Ceasefire talks set to continue this week in Cairo

» Death toll in Gaza rises to 40,099

32 OCs of DMP transferred outside Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The officers-in-charge of 32 police stations under Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), who hold the rank of police inspectors (unarmed), have been transferred to various police units outside Dhaka.

This transfer order was issued by Additional Inspector General of Police (administration) Kamrul Ahsan from the Police Headquarters yesterday.

Three days after the mass uprising of students and citizens that led to the resignation and departure of Sheikh Hasina on August 5, DMP Commissioner Habibur Rahman was first attached to the police headquarters and later sent into forced retirement.

On August 12, a notification from the police headquarters said 18 inspectors from the DMP were transferred. The next day, seven officers of deputy commissioner rank from the DMP were assigned to new posts.

With the transfer of 32 OCs yesterday, the officers-in-charge of 50 police stations under the DMP have now been transferred.

6 more cases filed against Hasina

Several ex-ministers, AL MPs also made accused

STAR REPORT

Six more murder cases were filed yesterday against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, several of her cabinet members, ex-Awami League lawmakers, leaders and activists of the party, and police officials.

Three of them were lodged in Dhaka while one each was filed in Rangpur, Joypurhat, and Natore.

With this, Hasina, who resigned and fled the country amid an uprising on August 5, is now facing 15 cases, including 12 for murder, one for abduction, and two for committing crimes against humanity and genocide.

Last night, Kamrul Hasan, father of Khaled Saifullah, who was shot dead at Azimpur in the capital on July 18 during the quota reform protests, lodged a case with Lalbagh Police Station against 91 named people, including Hasina, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, AL General Secretary and former road transport and bridges minister Obaidul Quader, and 100-150 unnamed others.

Hasina and 12 others were also sued over the deaths of two students -- Kobi Nazrul Government College student Iqram Hossain Kawser and Government Shaheed Suhrawardy College student Omar Faruque -- at Sutrapur on July 19 during the violence centring the quota reform protests.

Kawser's mother Nasrin Begum filed the case with a Dhaka court.

Former DB chief Harunor Rashid, former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheik Fazle Noor Taposh, and former DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarkar are among the named accused.

The court directed the officer-in-charge of Sutrapur Police Station to register the complaint as first information report (FIR).

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Two children, woman killed in landslide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Cox's Bazar*

A woman and two children of a family died when a landslide crushed their house in Pekua upazila of Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

The tragic incident occurred around 5:00am in the Segunbagicha area of Jarulbonia under the upazila's Shilkhali union, police said.

The deceased Mamtaj Begum, 45, her daughter Moina Akhtar, 12, and her grandson Md Toha, 8, lived at the foot of a hill in the Segunbagicha area.

Pounded by heavy downpours for the past several days, the saturated hillside gave way and collapsed their house, burying it under a large chunk of mud.

"Although local residents rushed to help after hearing the family's cries for help, they could not rescue them. Later in the morning, when the Upazila administration and fire service personnel arrived at the scene, they recovered the bodies of the mother and her daughters," said Pekua Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md Saiful Islam.

He also said people living in the risky hilly areas are being evacuated.

Medical professionals take part in a candle light vigil as they protest against the rape and murder of a doctor in India's West Bengal state, in Chandigarh yesterday.

PHOTO: **AFP**

India SC takes up doctor's rape-murder case

Some doctors continue strike

AGENCIES

India's Supreme Court, on its own, has taken up the rape-murder case of the Kolkata doctor that has shocked the country and thrown the medical fraternity in a turmoil.

A three-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud will hear the matter tomorrow.

The top court's move came as some junior doctors remained off the job yesterday, demanding swift justice for the murder incident, despite the end of a 24-hour strike called by the country's biggest association of doctors, reports Reuters.

The case is already being heard by the Calcutta High Court, which, during a hearing last week, ordered that the probe be transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation or CBI, overriding Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's ultimatum to the state police.

If the police were unable to solve the case by Sunday (yesterday), the CBI will take over, she had said.

The case went to the High Court after the woman's parents, and a few others, unhappy with the police investigation, filed an appeal. The court made its displeasure with the police and the administration clear, reports NDTV online.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

All city mayors removed

Mayors of 330 municipalities, chiefs of zilla, upazila parishads among 1,873 representatives booted out; administrators replace them

HELEMUL ALAM *and* **BAHARAM KHAN**

The interim government yesterday removed all mayors of 12 city corporations and 1,873 public representatives at three other tiers of local government.

It also got rid of mayors and administrators of all 330 municipalities; 61 zilla parishad chairmen; 493 out of 495 upazila parishad chairmen, and 988 vice-chairmen and women vice-chairmen of upazila parishads, said gazette notifications issued by the LGRD ministry yesterday.

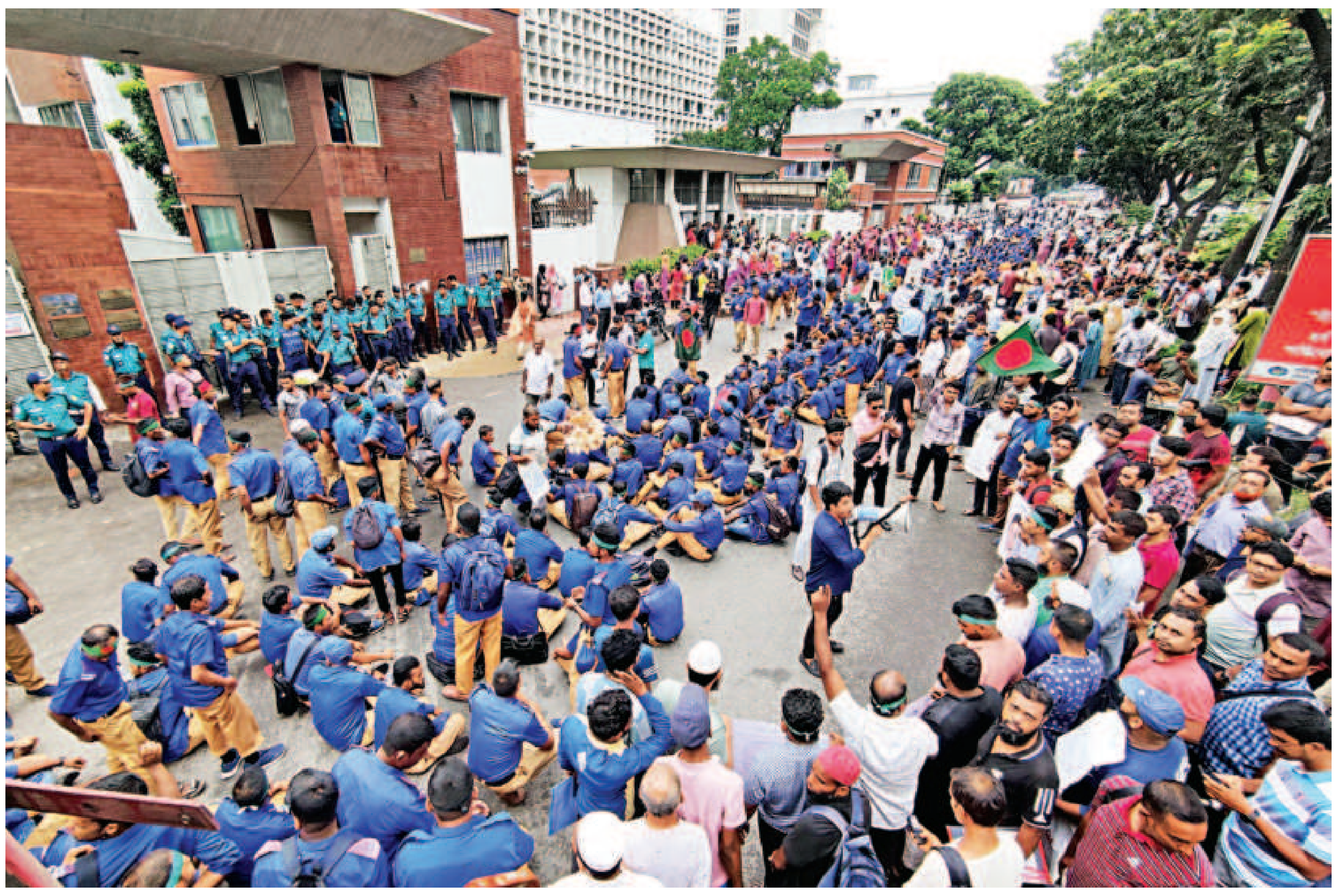
The government also appointed administrators to carry out the responsibilities of the mayors of the city corporations and the municipalities.

Md Sher Ali, additional secretary of Local Government Division (LGD), was appointed administrator of Dhaka South City Corporation and Md Mahmudul Hasan, director general (additional secretary) LGD, of Dhaka North City Corporation.

Divisional commissioners of Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Barishal, Rangpur, and Mymensingh were given the charges of their respective city corporations. The divisional commissioner of Dhaka will administer Gazipur City Corporation.

AHM Kamruzzaman, additional secretary of LGD, was appointed Narayanganj City Corporation,and Saif Uddin Ahmed, director general of Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Cumilla City Corporation administrators.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1


Members of different organisations, including the Gram (village) Police Bahini, stage demonstrations blocking Abdul Gani Road in front of the Secretariat yesterday to press home their demands, including nationalisation of their jobs. The protests led to traffic snarls in the vicinity. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

BUSINESS

6 S Alam-linked banks lending now capped

Bangladesh Bank yesterday restricted six banks linked to S Alam Group from lending activities to prevent their situation from deteriorating further amid allegations of wrongdoing.

Experts say the restriction may help boost liquidity in the cash-strapped banks, which were running their activities by taking special liquidity support from the BB.

The lenders are Islami Bank, First Security Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank, Union Bank, Global Islami Bank, and Bangladesh Commerce Bank.

STORY ON B1

Dipu Moni arrested in Baridhara DOHS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dipu Moni, the social welfare minister in the Sheikh Hasina-led government that collapsed following a mass uprising, was picked up from the capital's Baridhara DOHS area last night.

Rabiul Hossain Bhuiyan, joint commissioner (north) of the Detective Branch of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), confirmed the matter to The Daily Star.

"On information, a police team detained Dipu Moni around 7:30pm."

Later, she was taken to the DB office on Minto Road, where she was shown arrested in a murder case lodged with the Mohammadpur Police Station on August 13, according to DMP sources.

The case was filed over the death of grocery shop owner Abu Saeed in police firing in Mohammadpur during quota reform protests on July 19.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

S ALAM GROUP, ASSOCIATES

Tk 95,000cr loans taken from 6 banks

MD MEHEDI HASAN *and* **AM JAHID**

S Alam Group and its associate companies took out Tk 95,331 crore between 2017 and June this year from six banks, with 79 percent of the sum coming from Islami Bank.

This amount is equivalent to 5.78 percent of the banking sector's total outstanding loans as of March.

However, the total amount taken from these six banks is likely higher, according to Bangladesh Bank and bank officials with knowledge of the matter.

Documents pieced together by The Daily Star show that most of the loans were taken by bypassing banking rules and regulations, which is a testament to how the Chattogram-based conglomerate exerted its influence on the country's banking sector.

Founded in 1985 by Mohammad Saiful Alam, a relative of former Awami League politician Akhtaruzzanan Chowdhury Babu and former Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, S Alam Group has grown into one of the largest conglomerates in Bangladesh.

For example, within one month of opening an account with Islami Bank's Chaktai branch in Chattogram, a modest corrugated tin seller Murad Enterprise was given Tk 890 crore without even verifying the need for the funds and the company's financial capacity to pay back the sum.

A year later, another loan of Tk 110 crore was given to the company, which turned out to be a shadow company of S Alam Group, BB documents show.

What is worse is that the bank, where S Alam Group has controlling stakes, took very little collateral from Murad Enterprise.

The conglomerate and companies with ties to it took Tk 74,900 crore from Islami Bank, whose chairman since June last year is Alam's eldest son Ahsanul Alam.

Of the amount, Tk 26,000 crore was borrowed in the name of its subsidiaries, and the remaining amount was in the name of 29 associate companies, such as Nabil Group, Desh Bandhu Group, Unitex Group, and Anantex Group.

Islami Bank's Khatunganj branch in Chattogram is particularly noteworthy: a staggering Tk 35,924 crore was taken from the branch through 10 companies, documents show.

S Alam Group and its shadow companies, such as Nabil Foods, Nabil Auto Rice Mills, MS AJ Trade

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

S ALAM-LINKED COMPANIES' LOANS

BANK	AMOUNT (in Tk)
Islami	74,900cr
Janata	13,400cr
Social Islami	4,200cr
Union	2,000cr
Global Islami	574cr
First Security	257cr

SOURCE: BB, BANKS

Why scrapping of caretaker system not unconstitutional?

HC issues rule on 15th amendment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule questioning the constitutionality of the 15th amendment that scrapped the nonparty caretaker government system and brought some significant changes in the charter.

The 15th amendment bill was passed by the Jatiya Sangsad on June 30, 2011, and signed into law on July 3 the same year. It abolished the caretaker government system introduced by the 13th amendment in 1996.

The law also recognised Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as Father of the Nation and increased the number of reserved seats for women in parliament to 50 from 45.

Following the amendment to the constitution, three general elections were held on January 5, 2014, December 30, 2018 and January 7 this year, with Awami League President Sheikh Hasina in the prime minister's office. The scrapping of the 13th amendment created huge controversy and sparked outrage among the opposition political parties.

Yesterday, the HC also asked the respondents to the rule to show causes why the Constitution (Fifteenth Amendment) Act, 2011 should not be declared unconstitutional, and why the previous actions and deeds done or taken in any manner under this act should not be treated as transactions past and closed.

Secretaries at the ministry of law and Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat have been made respondents to the rule, which is returnable in 10 days.

The HC bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Sashanka Shekhar Sarkar issued the rule following a writ petition challenging the legality and constitutionality of the 15th amendment.

Speaking to reporters after the issuance of the HC rule, Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman said Bangladesh was taken towards non-democratic rule through the 15th amendment to the constitution and a

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

P 8 The darkest hour

P 9 After the euphoria, the concerns

CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

ACC to investigate 41 ex-ministers, MPs

DIPAN NANDY

The Anti-Corruption Commission has decided to initiate probes into allegations of graft against 41 who had been ministers, state ministers, and lawmakers of the Awami League between 2009 and 2024.

Of them, 12, including former law minister Anisul Huq; ex-foreign minister Hasan Mahmud; former education minister Mohibul Hasan Choudhoury; ex-state minister for power and energy Nasrul Hamid; and former state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak, held their offices in the last cabinet of the AL government.

The others seven are former food minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder; ex-social welfare minister Dipu Moni, who was also foreign and education minister in previous tenures; former local government

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Khaleda's bank accounts unfrozen after 17 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue yesterday asked banks to unfreeze the accounts of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

The move came 17 years after the NBR froze the accounts.

The Central Intelligence Cell of the tax administration in August 2007 directed banks to freeze the accounts of Khaleda, who served as prime minister thrice since 1991, based on the recommendation of a panel

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ সড়ক পরিবহন কর্তৃপক্ষ (বিআরটিএ)
সদর কার্যালয়, বিআরটিএ ভবন
"বিআরটিএ'র সার্ভার সচল হওয়ায় গ্রাহক সেবা কার্যক্রম শুরু সংক্রান্ত"
জরুরি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বিআরটিএ ভবনে স্থাপিত সার্ভার ও আইএস সচল হওয়ায় বিআরটিএ কর্তৃক মোটরযান সংক্রান্ত সেবা যথাঃ রেজিস্ট্রেশন, মালিকানা বদলি, ফিটনেস, ট্যাক্স-টোকেন ও রুট-পারমিট এবং ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স নবায়ন বা হালনাগাদ, ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স পরীক্ষা গ্রহণ, অগ্রিম আয়কর প্রদান, ইত্যাদি সকল সেবা কার্যক্রম চালু হয়েছে। এমতাবস্থায় সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে বিআরটিএ সার্কেল অফিস থেকে অনতিবিলম্বে সংশ্লিষ্ট সেবা গ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

বিআরটিএ
GD-207

আলহাজ্ব সেলিম রহমান
চেয়ারম্যান
আল-আরাফাহ্ ইসলামী ব্যাংক পিএলসি.

আলহাজ্ব সেলিম রহমান আল-আরাফাহ্ ইসলামী ব্যাংক পিএলসি. এর পরিচালনা পর্ষদের চেয়ারম্যান হিসেবে নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন। ১৮ আগস্ট ২০২৪ ব্যাংকের পরিচালনা পর্ষদের ৪০৩ তম সভায় এই সিদ্ধান্ত নেয়া হয়।

আলহাজ্ব সেলিম রহমান চট্টগ্রামের সম্ভ্রান্ত মুসলিম পরিবারে জন্মগ্রহণ করেন। তাঁর পিতা আলহাজ্ব খলিলুর রহমান দেশের অন্যতম বৃহৎ শিল্পগোষ্ঠী কেডিএস গ্রুপের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা। বর্তমানে সেলিম রহমান কেডিএস গ্রুপের ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক হিসেবে দায়িত্ব পালন করছেন। এ গ্রুপের কোম্পানিগুলোর মধ্যে রয়েছে কেডিএস গার্মেন্টস ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ লিঃ, কেডিএস এক্সেসরিজ লিঃ, কেডিএস এ্যাপারেলস লিঃ, কেডিএস লজিস্টিকস লিঃ, কেডিএস আইডিআর লিঃ, কেওয়াইসিআর কয়েল ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ লিঃ, স্টিল এক্সেসরিজ লিঃ এবং কেডিএস পলি ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ লিঃ।

আলহাজ্ব সেলিম রহমান আল-আরাফাহ্ ইসলামী ব্যাংকসহ অন্যান্য বেসরকারি ব্যাংকে দীর্ঘ ২৪ বছর ধরে পরিচালনা পর্ষদের পরিচালক হিসেবে দায়িত্ব পালন করছেন।

আল-আরাফাহ্ ইসলামী ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
aib
Al-Arafah Islami Bank PLC.

AZIM MURDER

West Bengal CID submits charge sheet

AGENCIES

The Criminal Investigation Department of West Bengal has submitted a charge sheet in the murder case of former Jhenaidah-4 MP Anwarul Azim Anar who was killed in Kolkata in May.

The 1,200-page charge sheet was placed before a Barasat court on Saturday, reported Anadabazar Patrika.

According to CID sources, Jihad Hawlader and Mohammad Siam, who allegedly dismembered the body after the murder, have been named in the charge sheet.

Jihad is in Kolkata police custody since the murder while Siam has reportedly fled to Nepal.

However, nothing was said about the motive for the murder.

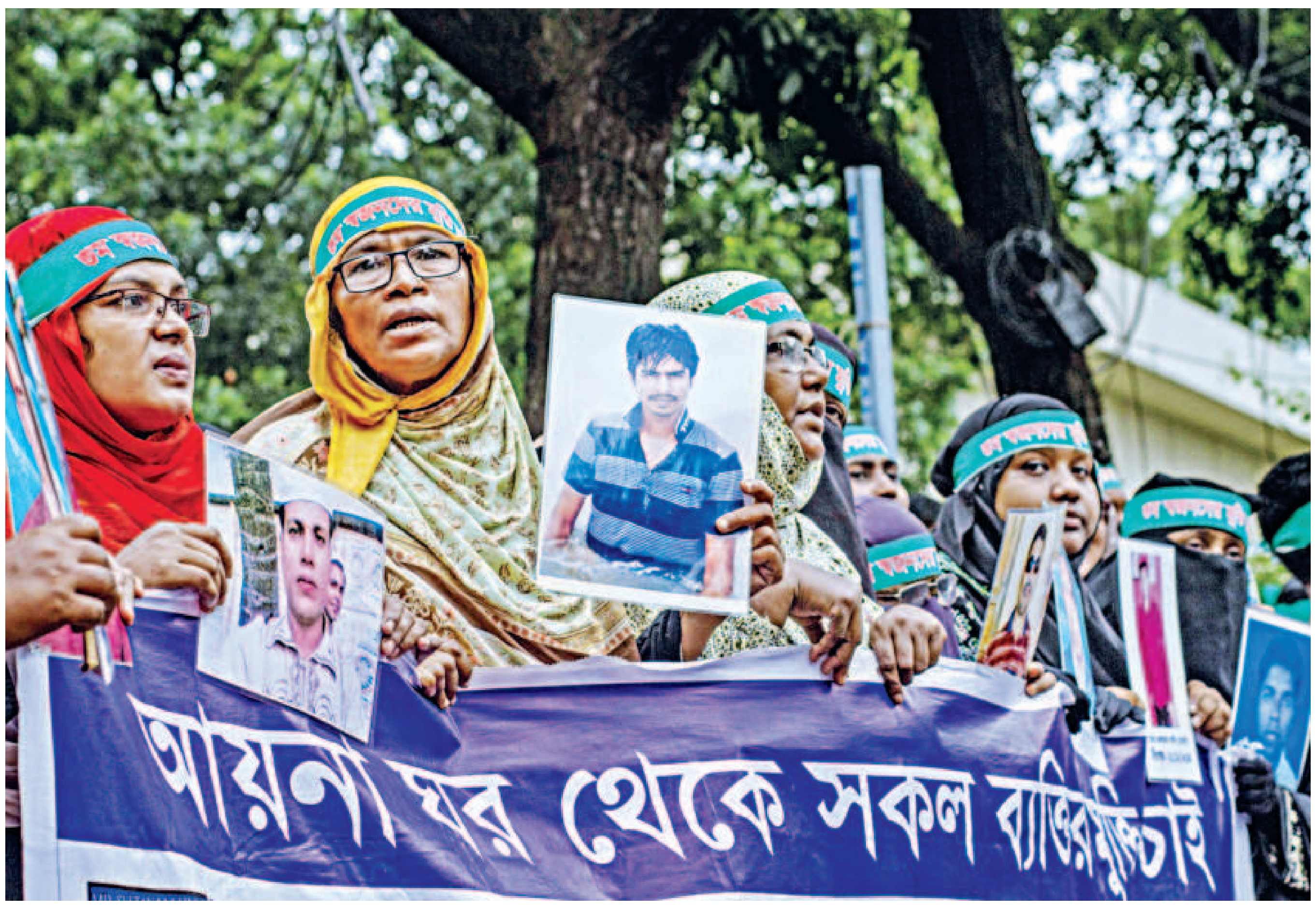
CID sources said the motive cannot be disclosed now as the investigation is yet to be complete. Besides, the main accused in the case is yet to be cross-examined, they added.

According to West Bengal CID sources, Azim's close friend Akhtaruzzaman Shaheen, a US citizen, is the main accused in the crime. He has fled to the US after the murder.

Akhtaruzzaman allegedly paid Rs 5 crore to the suspects involved in the crime.

Lawmaker Azim went to Kolkata on May 12. Nine days later, India and Bangladesh police said he was murdered at a Kolkata flat.

Police suspect that political rivalry and a feud over gold smuggling may have played key roles behind the murder of the Jhenaidah-4 lawmaker.


আয়নাঘর থেকে সকল ব্যক্তির মুক্তি চাই

Families of the victims of enforced disappearance form a human chain in front of the Secretariat yesterday demanding their loved ones be returned to them and the detention centres, including "Aynaghor", be closed. PHOTO: STAR

Family of four meets tragic end on road

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

Jasim Uddin, 65, of Bagmara upazila, Rajshahi, was brought to Dhaka a few days ago by his two sons so he could have better care for his chronic paralysis.

After the treatment, when Jasim, along with his wife and two sons, set out for their home on a rented microbus in the early hours of yesterday, they were met with a fatal collision with a truck in Sirajganj.

Following the incident, the bodies of Jasim Uddin, 65; his wife, Nargis Begum, 60; and their two sons, Jamal Uddin, 45, and Kamal Uddin, 40, were taken to their home in Noroshinghapur village of Bagmara upazila around noon for burial. Jamal's wife and child are the only surviving members of the family.

Confirming the accident, Md Taj Uddin, inspector (investigation) of Solonga Police Station, said the accident took place around 3:30am in Hatikumrul area when the family was returning to their village home in Bagmara by microbus.

On information, firefighters rushed to the spot and recovered the bodies.

The inspector said four members of the family died on the spot, and Md Ashik, the driver of the microbus, was taken to Shaheed M Monsur Ali Medical College in Sirajganj with critical injuries.

The police were now trying to track down the truck involved in the collision as soon as possible, he added.

All city mayors removed

FROM PAGE 1

Divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners (DCs), and upazila nirbahi officers (UNOs) will also be administrators of their respective zilla and upazila parishads, the notifications said. They, however, did not mention who will perform the duties of upazila parishad vice-chairmen and women vice-chairmen.

On August 14, the LGD in an order said many mayors and panel mayors have been absent due to existing circumstances. The LGD tried to communicate with them but failed.

The order said their absence halted services and other work of city corporations and that was why a decision was made to give chief executive officers the full administrative and financial authority to run the city corporations in public interest.

Five days after the order, the government yesterday issued notifications, removing all public representatives and appointing administrators.

According to sources, several mayors, including the ones of the DSCC, the DNCC, Chattogram, Khulna, Barishal, Mymensingh, and Cumilla city corporations, have been absent at work since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5.

All the absentee mayors had AL backing.

DNCC mayor Atiqul Islam went to his office on Sunday night but left soon afterwards as a group of people tried to chase him, sources said.

Talking to reporters at his office yesterday, LGRD Adviser AF Hassan Ariff said, "The move is an attempt to clean up the entire local government."

Basically, the administrator will perform the duties instead of the mayor and chairman, he said, adding that no decision was made regarding the councillors.

Dr Tofail Ahmed, a local government expert, welcomed the move saying the public representatives failed to prove themselves.

"As the elections were grossly faulty and since almost all public representatives -- including the prime minister, ministers, lawmakers, under whom they were elected -- are now on the run, these appointments have justification," he told The Daily Star.

Of the 12 mayors, nine are on the run. The rest are in the country but absent at work, according to sources.

The councillors are also absent for which the city corporations are dysfunctional, he added.

Their absence hampers day-to-day services and there is no good alternative to appointing administrators, Tofail said.

"These administrators are acceptable as interim management, but I hope they will do only day-to-day work and continue ongoing projects and not take up any new projects," he said.

On zilla parishads, Tofail said that these local government bodies were dysfunctional as people did not take part in the election. The representatives were not elected directly and zilla parishads were like "rehabilitation centres for Awami League leaders".

He added that upazila parishads too became dysfunctional to some extent as local lawmakers were made advisers to the parishads. There has always been a feud between chairmen, MPs, UNOs, vice-chairmen, and members.

ZILLA, UPAZILA, UNION

The government appointed officials, including additional deputy commissioners and assistant commissioners (land), as administrators for the 330 municipalities.

With gazette notifications issued by the LGRD ministry, 323 municipality mayors and seven municipality administrators were removed. All municipalities now have new administrators at their helms.

The DCs will now serve as administrators of 53 zilla parishads.

Divisional commissioners will act as administrators of Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet, Mymensingh, Rangpur, and Barishal zilla parishads.

No change was made to the three zilla parishads in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The UNOs will be administrators of 495 upazila parishads until further notice following the removal of the chairmen of 493 upazila parishads.

Khulna's Koyra upazila parishad chairman passed away and polls to Madaripur's Dasar upazila parishad have not been held since it became an upazila.

In a notification issued last night, the LGD asked divisional commissioners and DCs to give panel chairmen the authority of unions if the chairmen were absent.

In case there are no panel chairmen, the divisional commissioners and DCs can assign the UNO and AC (land) concerned financial and administrative authority of the union parishads.

Why scrapping of caretaker system

FROM PAGE 1

situation like interfering in the judicial functions was created.

During the hearing on the petition, Sharif Bhuiyan, counsel for the petitioners, told the HC bench that the basic structures of the constitution -- democracy and election -- have been damaged by the 15th constitutional amendment.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in its judgement in the 13th amendment (caretaker government system) case had asked for holding two national elections (10th and 11th) under caretaker governments, but the 15th amendment abolished the caretaker government system and therefore, those elections were held under political governments, he said.

Sharif said the 15th amendment states that the president would conduct a referendum within seven days from the date of the amendment bill presented to him, but no such referendum was held and therefore the 15th amendment is illegal.

The provision of the 15th amendment, which said that basic structures of the constitution cannot be amended, is unconstitutional as it has damaged the sovereignty of parliament which is elected by the people, the lawyer argued.

Five conscious citizens -- Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of rights organisation Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, Tofail Ahmed, M Hafizuddin Khan, Md Jobirul Hoque Bhuiyan and Zahrah Rahman -- submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC on August 18.

They stated in the petition that following the abolition of the nonparty caretaker government system through the 15th amendment act, the nation saw three consecutive failed elections in 2014, 2018 and 2024 and it ultimately led to the July 2024 uprising by students and ordinary people and the fall of the government on August 5, 2024.

The 13th amendment was incorporated in the constitution to ensure free and fair election and strengthen democracy and therefore, the 13th amendment became part of the basic structure of the constitution since 1996.

The 13th amendment represented the "will of the people" and a "political consensus and settlement" as it was made in the context of the demand of major political parties, and the public, including civil society, the petitioners stated in the writ petition.

According to the writ petition, a 15-member special parliamentary committee was formed on July 21, 2010 to amend the constitution. Twelve members of the committee were senior Awami League leaders.

After consulting 104 distinguished citizens, the committee on March 29, 2011, unanimously recommended amending the constitution by retaining the nonparty caretaker government system with a three-month tenure.

After holding a meeting with then prime minister Shiekh Hasina, the committee the following day changed its previous recommendation. It suggested amending the constitution to abolish the nonparty caretaker government system. Thus, it is clear that while the committee and other participants in the special parliamentary committee meetings were in agreement to retain the nonparty caretaker government system, the entire system was abolished only on the recommendation of then prime minister Hasina.

On June 30, 2011, the Jatiya Sangsad passed the 15th constitutional amendment bill. With the passage of the bill, Islam's status as the state religion was retained and the Arabic phrase "Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim" with its translation "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful/ In the name of the Creator, the Merciful" was made a part of the constitution.

The amendment also introduced the provisions for holding parliamentary polls in 90 days before the dissolution of parliament, secularism, Bangalee nationalism, more powers for the war crimes tribunal and displaying the portrait of Father of the Nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in all government offices.

Tk 95,000cr loans taken from 6 banks

FROM PAGE 1

International, and Anowara Trade International, secured loans amounting to Tk 29,575 crore from the Rajshahi branch of Islami Bank.

Another Tk 23,900 crore was taken from Islami's offshore banking unit and other branches over the years in violation of rules.

Rules were also not followed by state-run Janata when extending loans to the business giant, whose interests range from commodity trading to fishery, from construction materials to real estate, from textiles to media, from intercity buses to shipping, and from power and energy to banks and insurance.

S Alam Group and its affiliate companies took Tk 13,400 crore from state-run Janata Bank.

About Tk 10,449.45 crore was taken in the name of S Alam subsidiaries, with as much as 90 percent of the loans taken from Janata's Sadharan Bima Corporate Branch in Chattogram.

The remaining Tk 2,950.55 crore was taken from Janata by its associate companies.

Janata's lending to S Alam Group breached the bank's single borrower exposure limit by an alarming margin.

According to banking law, a bank is prohibited from lending more than 25 percent of its paid-up capital to a single party. At the end of June this year, Janata's paid-up capital stood at Tk 2,314 crore.

Some Tk 4,200 crore was taken from Social Islami Bank (SIBL), whose chairman Belal Ahmed is Alam's son-in-law. Five more relatives of Alam are on the board of SIBL.

Some Tk 2,000 crore was taken from Union Bank, whose board consists of Alam's siblings Halima Begum, Osman Goni, and Md Rashedul Alam and his wife Marzina Sharmin. Their nephew, Mohammad Mostan Billah Adil, is also on the board.

S Alam Group and its associate companies took Tk 574 crore from Global Islami Bank (GIB), whose vice-chairman is Alam's daughter Maimuna Khanam. Seven other relatives of Alam, including his brother Shahidul Alam and sister Rokea Yasmin, are on the board of the 11-year-old bank.

Some Tk 257 crore was taken from First Security Islami Bank (FSIBL), whose chairman is Alam himself. Alam's wife, Farzana Parveen, and four other relatives are on the board of FSIBL.

If the loans taken by its associate companies are added, the total amounts taken from SIBL, FSIBL, Union, and GIB will go up, according to industry insiders.

In light of the gross irregularities, the BB yesterday restricted the lending activities of the banks save for Janata.

Alam; Subrata Kumar Bhowmik, executive director of S Alam Group; the managing directors of the six banks; and BB spokesman Md Mezbaul Haque could not be reached for comment.

ACC to investigate 41 ex-ministers, MPs

FROM PAGE 1

Minister Tazul Islam; ex-religious affairs minister Faridul Haque Khan; former state minister for shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury; ex-state minister for disaster management and relief Mohibbur Rahman; and former state minister for Chittagong hill tracts affairs Kujendra Lal Tripura.

This decision was made yesterday by a full commission meeting at the ACC headquarters. Three separate teams, each led by a director, were formed to carry out the investigation, said multiple senior officials of the commission. None of them agreed to speak on record.

The decision comes a day after Supreme Court lawyer M Sarwar Hossain filed a complaint with the ACC on Sunday seeking probes into allegations of amassing illegal wealth by the 41.

Sarwar said he filed the complaint following a daily Samakal report which was based on research carried out by Transparency International Bangladesh.

He attached data that apparently showed how their wealth increased over the years. "Such a rise in assets is not possible without corruption," the complaint read.

Talking to the reporters on Sunday, ACC Secretary Khurshida Yasmin told reporters, "If a complaint against the 41 was made to the commission, the commission will look into it according to its rules. This is routine work for the commission."

Sarwar told The Daily Star, "I am happy with the quick action the ACC has taken the day after I filed the complaint. This was something the ACC should have done on its own. Nonetheless, I appreciate the decision they made ... ."

The other former ministers and state ministers are Tipu Munshi (commerce): Zahid Maleque (health); Golam Dastagir Gazi (textiles and jute); Imran Ahmad (expatriate welfare): Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun (industries); Shajahan Khan (shipping); Hasanul Haq Inu (information); Faridul Haque Khan (religious affairs); Meher Afroz Chumki (women and children affairs); Swapan Bhattacharjee (LGRD, primary and mass education); Kamal Ahmed Majumder (industries); Zahid Ahsan Russell (youth and sports); and Meher Afroz Chumki (women and children affairs).

The former AL lawmakers being probed are Benjir Ahmed (Dhaka-20); AKM Sarwar Jahan (Kushtia-1); Shariful Islam Jinnah (Bogura-2); Shahidul Islam Bakul (Natore-1); Sheikh Afil Uddin (Jashore -1); Salim Uddin Torofdar (Naogaon-3); Kazi Nabil Ahmed (Jashore-3); Enamul Haque (Rajshahi-4); Noor Alam Chowdhury Shaon (Madaripur-1); Sheikh Helal Uddin (Bagerhat-1); Mamunur Rashid Kiron (Noakhali-3); Kazim Uddin Ahmed (Mymensingh-11); Anwar Hossain (Pirojpur-2); Abu Sayeed Al Mahmud Swapan (Joypurhat-2); and Ziaur Rahman (Chapainawabganj-2).

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the move might be viewed as a welcome news, quite belated though, in the backdrop of self-inflicted credibility gap of the ACC.

"While people will expect to see specific progress to ensure exemplary accountability of such erstwhile high-profile individuals for their abuse of power, this will remain as yet another example that ACC tends to act against the so-called big fish only when they are out of power.

"It will not be unjustified to question that by failing to take action before their humiliating downfall, the ACC has in reality protected their corruption and violated their own mandate as well as the relevant law.

"Be that as it may, nothing can justify any underestimation of the imperatives for a thorough overhaul of this institution as part of state-restructure to meet the aspirations of a 'new Bangladesh' as articulated by the student-led people's uprising," he said.

TRAVEL BAN ON TAQSEM

The ACC sought a travel ban on former managing director of Dhaka Wasa, Taqsem A Khan. It wrote to the Special Branch of the police regarding this yesterday.

The ACC is probing alleged amassing of illegal wealth by Taqsem and has formed a committee, led by ACC Assistant Director Mahbubul Alam, in this regard.

ACC Deputy Director Syed Nazrul Islam has written to the secretary of the Local Government Division requesting documents related to Taqsem's appointment, ACC sources said.

Dipu Moni arrested in Baridhara DOHS

FROM PAGE 1

This was also the first case lodged against Hasina after she resigned and went to India amid an uprising on August 5.

Seven people were named as accused in the case. They are former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, former DB (Dhaka Metropolitan Police) chief Harun Or Rashid, former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, and former DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker.

Besides, several unnamed top police officials and other government officials were accused in the case, Mamun Mia, a lawyer for the complainant, had told The Daily Star.

SM Amir Hamza Shatil, a resident of Mohammadpur, filed the murder case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury.

The complainant was not a relative of the victim and filed the case voluntarily.

In his complaint, Shatil mentioned that Saeed was killed around 4:00pm on July 19, when police were firing indiscriminately on the protesters, following the accused's directives.

The victim's family members, who are very poor, live in Boda upazila of Panchagarh. They do not have the ability to file the case, he mentioned in the complaint.

Dipu Moni, a joint general secretary of the Awami League, was a member of parliament (MP) from Chandpur-3 constituency.

From 2019 to 2023, she was the education minister in the Awami League-led government. She faced criticism for the new curriculum passed during her tenure. Due to a lack of sufficient training, many teachers were confused about how to give classroom instructions, distribute group work to students, and evaluate the students' performances based on the new curriculum.

Between 2014 and 2018, she was chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On January 6, 2009, she became the country's first female foreign minister, serving until 2013. When she was foreign minister, she made headlines for her frequent trips abroad.

Earlier in 2023, The Daily Star published a report on Dipu Moni's involvement in illegal sand lifting in Chandpur. Besides, Dipu Moni and her brother JR Wadud Tipu were found involved in illegal land acquisition at Chandpur Science and Technology University.

Following the fall of the AL government on August 5, law enforcers started arresting top leaders of the party.

So far, former law minister Anisul Huq, Hasina's private investment adviser Salman F Rahman, former ICT minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak, former deputy speaker of the 12th Jatiya Sangsad Shamsul Haque Tuku, and Chhatra League leader Tanbir Hasan Shaikat have been arrested and are now in police custody for interrogation.

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Improving law, order now main challenge

Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The current challenge is to improve the law-and-order situation in the country, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said yesterday.

He was addressing reporters at the secretariat.

"The home ministry's main challenge is to improve law and order as soon as possible," he said.

Earlier around noon, the adviser met Gwyn Lewis, the UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh.

Asked in this regard, he said, "We discussed the types of help they [the UN] can provide in this situation and sectors in which we want cooperation."

He, however, did not elaborate on the situation or the discussions.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

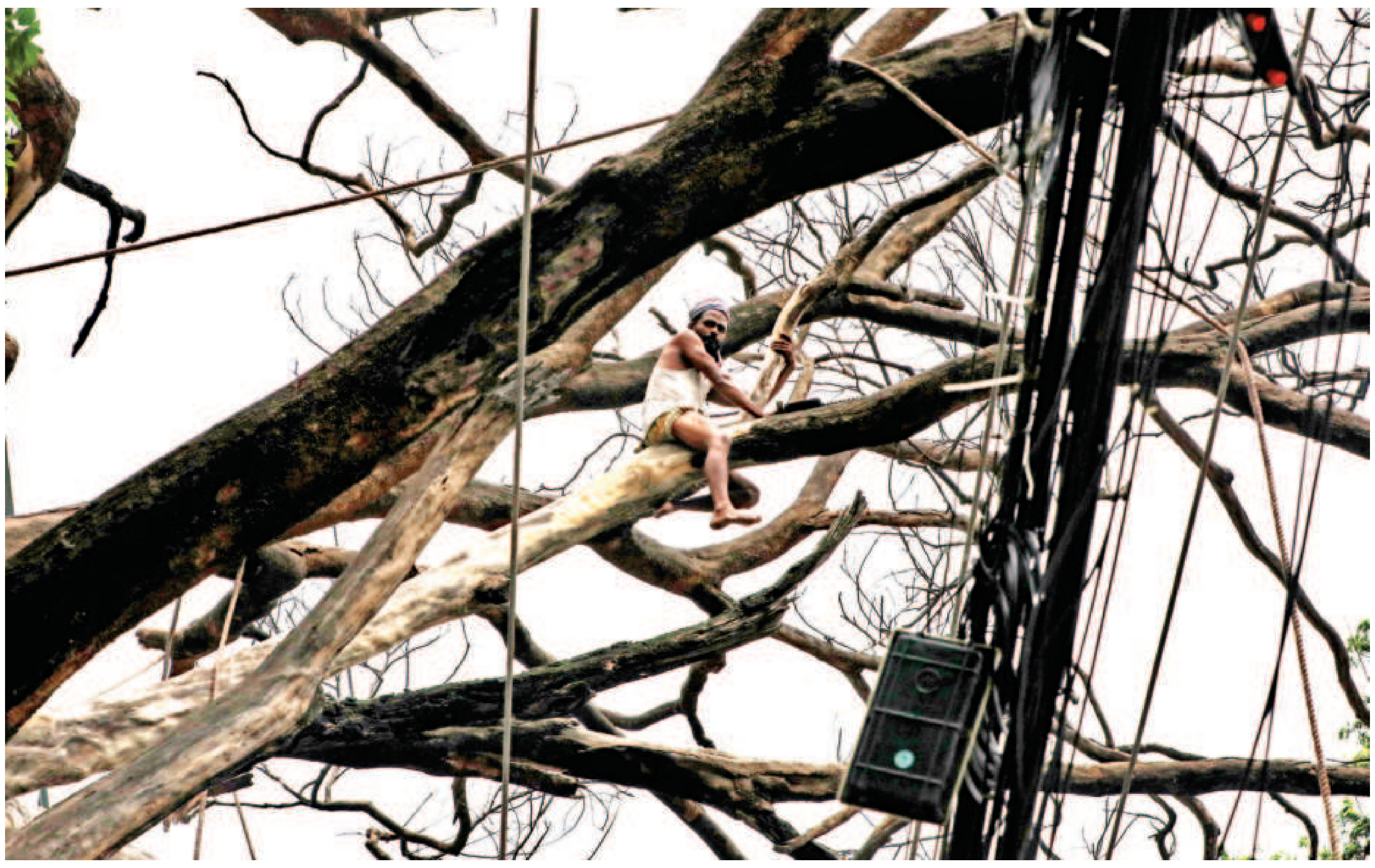


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

This man cuts this old tree that is on its deathbed near Asad Gate. He sits on the tree without any harness for his own safety. At the same time, the road has not been blocked off underneath the tree, leaving passersby and vehicles at risk. The photo was taken yesterday.

Support interim government to bring stability

Fakhrul urges party men; EU expresses willingness to help recover laundered money

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday urged his party activists to support the interim government, stressing the need for stability.

"We have an interim government, and we all have to back them so that they can sustain," Fakhrul said at a discussion held at the Jatiya Press Club.

"The ones running the government now do not have political sense; they are not politicians. They have come for a short period to try and lift the state from its ruined condition," he said.

He further urged party members to avoid negativity, saying, "It would be wrong to undermine our efforts with negative words or actions at this time."

Expressing hope for a fair election, Fakhrul said, "Through a neutral election, we will be able to establish a representative parliament and form a government. Today, we must perform our duties with patience."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Shot six times, Amir lives to tell his tale

18-year-old shot by police while hanging from Rampura building escapes death

MASHFIQ MIZAN

After broadband internet was restored in selected areas on July 23, a video dated from July 19 began circulating on social media showing a boy hanging from the cornice of an under-construction building.

Two cops then arrive at the scene and several rounds of gunshots are heard. The video shows police pointing their guns at the boy, who is desperately hanging on for his life.

The footage led many to believe that the person in the video had been killed on the spot.

Social media and some mainstream outlets reported he was dead. This correspondent spoke to eyewitnesses and verified the authenticity of the video through geolocation tracking on July 24.

It was confirmed that the footage was from a building near Meradia Bazar in Rampura.

Visiting the under-construction building, this correspondent saw bloodstains on the third and fourth floors.

However, this was all circumstantial evidence, and without tracing the body, The Daily Star could not confirm the death.

Despite efforts to track down the body to confirm the death, all attempts failed.

However, recently, we got information that Amir Hossain, the subject in the video who everyone believed to be dead, is alive.

He is now recovering at his Dhaka residence in a slum in Noapara, Meradia.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Amir told us how he survived.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

End political dominance, bring reforms in higher edn

Demands University Teachers' Network

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The University Teachers' Network yesterday proposed ending political dominance and ensuring both academic and administrative accountability within universities.

The network, comprising educators from both public and private universities, demanded for modern universities that support freedom of thought, and encourage students to ask questions.

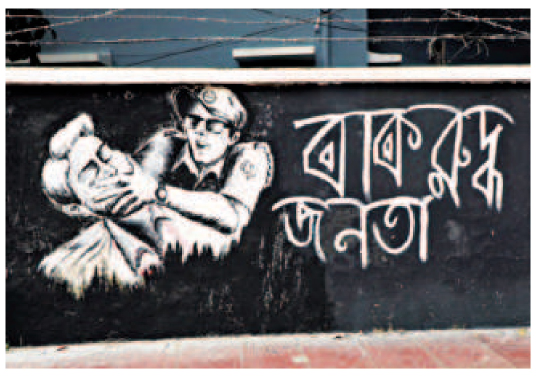
They urged the government to be accommodating and to allow universities to operate autonomously, without any form of political interference.

They put forward the proposals while taking part in a discussion. Titled, "What kind of university we want: thoughts on reformation of universities" the session took place at the University of Dhaka's Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury auditorium yesterday.

Key proposals include holding teachers accountable for classroom performance and decentralising decision-making powers currently concentrated in vice-chancellors.

Former Jahangirnagar University Professor Anu Muhammad said, "Sycophants of the government should not be appointed as vice-chancellors, and individuals who lack interest in reading and teaching should not be hired as teachers."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



DMP suspends cop for gagging student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector (Operations) Arshad Hossain of Shahbagh Police Station, who was pictured gagging the mouth of a student during a protest on July 31, was suspended on Sunday.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner suspended him citing his unprofessional conduct.

Arshad gagged the mouth of Nahidul Islam, a student of political science department at New Model Degree College in Dhaka, during the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement's "March for Justice" programme.

Despite being a member of a disciplined police force, his unprofessional actions have created adverse perception about the activities of police and tarnished the image of the police force, a DMP official said.

A photo of the incident was widely shared and also inspired graffiti on a wall of Dhaka University.

HOUSING PROJECT IN RANGUNIA

Environmental clearance cancelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Chattogram*

The Department of Environment has cancelled the environmental clearance of a housing project of the National Housing Authority in Rangunia upazila of Chattogram.

The DoE director general approved the unanimous decision to cancel the project's environmental clearance in a meeting yesterday, according to a letter signed by Masud Iqbal Md Shamim, director (Environmental Clearance) of DoE.

The project titled "Site and Service Residential Plot Development at Rangunia Upazila in Chattogram" was earlier initiated upon a demi official letter from former foreign minister Hasan Mahmud, when he was the chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Environment and Forest in 2014.

After a visit to the spot, the officials concerned found that a significant portion of the nine acres of land for the proposed project belong to hills, hillocks and waterbodies there.

Although there is 4.02-acre of plain land in the area, it is not enough for implementing a housing project with all sorts of utilities and civic amenities.

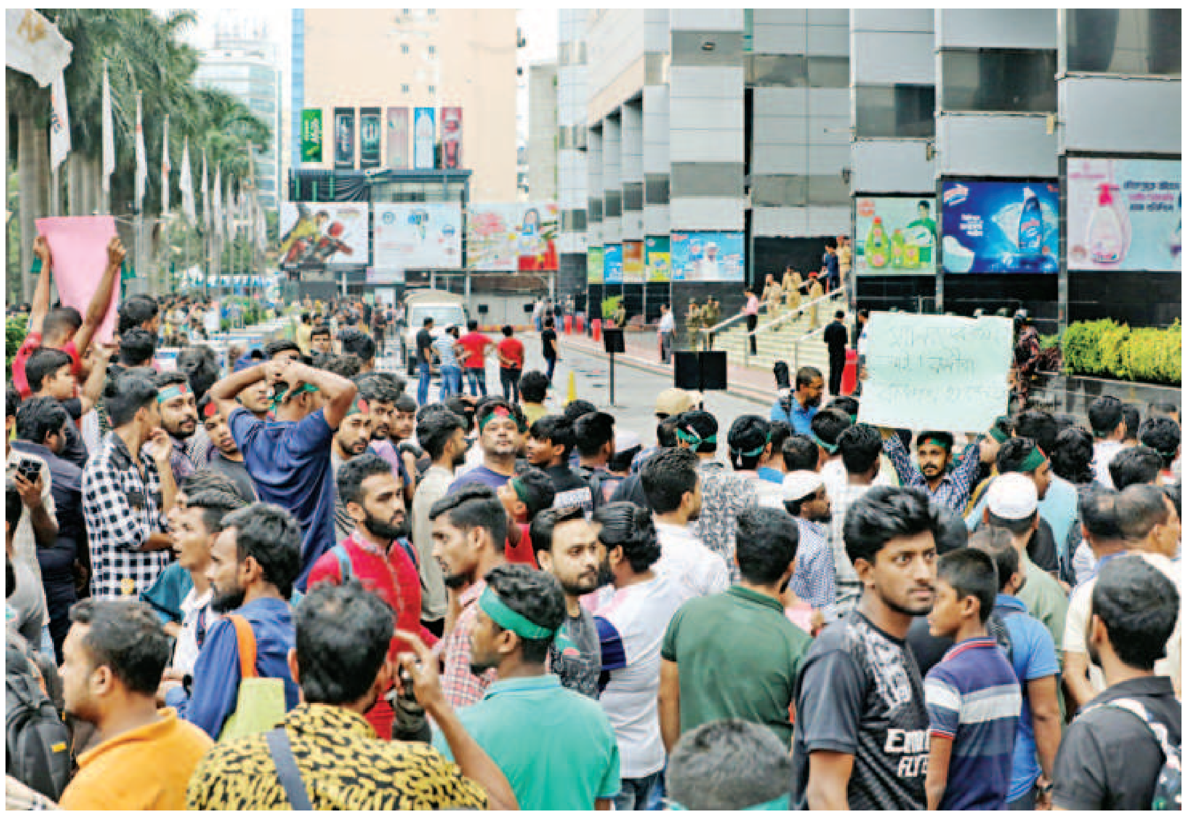
According to the officials, there is possibility of adverse impact on nature and financial loss to the authority if the project is implemented.

If the project is implemented, there is probability of an adverse impact on nature and financial losses to the authority.

Hasan Mahmud, also then lawmaker of Chattogram-7 (Rangunia) constituency, sent the DO letter on July 7, 2014, said officials.

Even though the project was initially returned without consent from the Prime Minister's Office, it was later approved by the PM in June this year, on conditions including preserving the hills, hillocks and water bodies in the area.

Following a letter issued on July 10, Bijoy Kumar Mandol, member of Planning, Design and Special Project of NHA, submitted a report on August 13 after visiting the site, deeming it not feasible for the project.



Employees and owners of the shops at Bashundhara City Shopping Complex protest in front of the building, demanding for the rent to be lowered, public holidays to be enforced and for operation hours of 11:00am to 8:00pm. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Office of East West Media Group vandalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified miscreants vandalised the East West Media Group's office in Bashundhara residential area yesterday.

They also assaulted a female journalist.

At around 2:45pm, the group entered the media house chanting slogans, reported Daily Sun, a concern of East West Media Group.

The miscreants first entered the Radio Capital office and vandalised doors, window panes, laptops, computers and broadcasting machinery.

A female journalist was also attacked. She was rescued by her colleagues. She sustained minor injuries.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

ABANDONED SUV

Former home minister found to be its owner

UNB, *Dhaka*

An SUV valued at approximately Tk 2 crore was found abandoned in front of Baitul Aman Mosque in the capital's Dhanmondi on Sunday morning, sparking widespread curiosity.

The vehicle, a Land Cruiser with the licence plate Dhaka Metro-Gha 21-8456, was eventually towed to a secure location around midnight with the assistance of Bangladesh Army.

The mystery surrounding the unclaimed vehicle led to a flurry of questions about its ownership and origin, particularly after a post on social media.

Finally, information and photos obtained from various sources confirmed that the SUV belongs to former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 20

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-38	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-41	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

End political

FROM PAGE 3

He said the state must decide whether a university will be a centre for the creation of knowledge or a centre for the creation of goons.

Syed Nizar, associate professor at Jahangirnagar University, called for the protection of academic freedom and argued against punitive actions for researchers.

He criticised existing repressive laws and noted the autocratic tendencies among some vice-chancellors.

Dhaka University Professor Mohammad Azam highlighted the inadequate education budget, urging the interim government to commit to increasing funding to 4 percent of GDP.

Seuty Sabur from BRAC University called for a student-centric approach, with accountability for all university staff.

Professor Kamrul Hassan of Dhaka University proposed limiting the powers of vice-chancellors to prevent their control from extending over entire universities.

They criticised the previous governments' interference in university autonomy and the influence of partisan politics on university appointments and promotions.

The teachers also criticised the 1973 order, arguing it allowed political activities to overshadow academic priorities, turning universities into election-centric institutions.

They stressed that teacher recruitment should prioritise merit over political connections and called for modifications to ensure economic freedom for both teachers and universities.

The network also recommended fixing teachers' working hours, involving senior students in teacher appointments, allowing visiting professorships, and setting a class size limit of 40 students.

They proposed using both Bangla and English as languages of instruction and ensuring students learn at least three languages.

The proposed reforms aim to restore academic integrity and autonomy, ensuring universities fulfill their educational mission without political interference.

Shot six times, Amir

FROM PAGE 3

After attending Friday prayers, he was on his way home when BGB and police opened fire on protesters. Fearing for his life, he ran and took refuge on the fourth floor of the under-construction building.

According to Amir, two police officers suddenly entered the building and chased him. He retreated and hung onto the cornice of the fourth floor. When cops found Amir, they pointed their firearms at him, and yelled, "Jhap de, jhap de (Jump, jump)."

To intimidate him, one of the officers fired several blank shots while pointing their gun at him.

"But I knew that if I jumped, I would not survive the fall," Amir added.

Suddenly, another cop from the third floor shot at him six times, aiming at both of his legs.

He fell to the third floor, collapsed and began bleeding profusely. Then the officers left, completely disregarding whether Amir was alive.

"I tried to get up, but had no strength. I shouted, but sounds of gunfire muffled my pleas for help," Amir recounted.

"At one point, I almost gave up hope. I thought I would die. My vision was blurred, but a part of me didn't want to give up. I kept thinking, 'I can't die like this'. Thoughts of my elderly father and my sister, whose marriage I had been saving money for, kept me going. This wasn't how I would die," he added.

Gradually, the gunshots stop ringing through the area. After nearly three hours, a student rushed into the building and found Amir lying in a pool of blood.

Two doctors from a nearby hospital, who were in the area, quickly joined the rescue. They worked desperately to stop the bleeding.

"They kept telling me, 'Don't close your eyes. We won't let you die. Please, don't close your eyes'," Amir recalled.

They took him to Famous Hospital, where he received initial treatment that night, before being referred to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

Amir experienced so much blood loss that he required three bags of blood at the hospital. After three days, he was discharged from DMCH.

"He needed further treatment, but DMCH was flooded with people who had life-threatening injuries. Since Amir's condition was stable, doctors prescribed him medication for three months and sent him home," said Nasima Begum, Amir's aunt.

"After the video went viral, we heard police were searching for us. There were stories of raids where police were picking up people with bullet injuries, so we stayed quiet. Journalists were looking for him, but we only found our voices after hearing about Sheikh Hasina's fall on August 5," she added.

Amir showed this correspondent all of the bullet wounds he had to mark the horrific day.

In his right leg, a bullet struck the sole of his foot and pierced through his ankle, another hit his shin and exited through his calf, and a third struck his thigh, passing through his hip.

In his left leg, one bullet struck just below his knee and exited the other side, another hit the top of his thigh and exited through the opposite end. The last one was lodged below his thigh and exited through the other side.

We took photos of his medical reports, including the X-rays, and consulted physicians from Famous Hospital and Farazy Hospital, where Amir had a follow-up after being discharged from DMCH.

At Famous Hospital, doctors confirmed that Amir would have likely died from excessive bleeding if he had been brought in just 5-10 minutes later. Both hospitals noted that Amir's speedy recovery was due to the fact that none of the six bullets struck his bones; if they had, it might have been fatal.

However, Amir still can't stand on his own and needs assistance to use the washroom. The doctors noted that he lost a significant amount of blood and it would take time for him to fully recover.

Withdraw VAT

FROM PAGE 5

standard service rules across all private universities in the country.

The statement said the former government previously attempted to impose VAT on private educational institutions in 2010 and 2015 but was forced to withdraw it in 2015 following strong opposition from students. However, the VAT was reimposed in the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Citing that any imposition of VAT or taxes on private universities ultimately harms both teachers and students, the platform demanded that these funds be reserved for research, scholarships, and student welfare.

Nahin Mamun, general secretary of BSPUA, delivered the opening address at the event.

The event was also attended by key BSPUA members, along with teachers and students from nine universities.

Office of East

FROM PAGE 3

Later, the attackers vandalised a number of cars and motorcycles parked inside the media complex.

East West Media Group PLC is a media conglomerate in Bangladesh and a subsidiary of Bashundhara Group.

The media complex houses two Bangla dailies, Kaler Kantho and Bangladesh Pratidin; an English daily, Daily Sun; an online news portal, banglanews24.com; a television news channel, News 24, and T Sports, a Bengali-language sports television channel.

Support interim

FROM PAGE 3

"One form of fascism has left, but we cannot allow a new fascism to be imported," he said.

Criticising India, Fakhrul said, "The enemies of Bangladesh had to flee the country, and I don't think providing them shelter will earn India any goodwill from the country's people."

Earlier in the morning, after placing wreaths at the shrine of party founder Ziaur Rahman, Fakhrul said members of BNP and its affiliated organisations have no involvement in the recent "disturbances".

"Certain individuals are conspiring to undermine the students' victory. They are creating disturbances and unfairly targeting our party members," he added.

Meanwhile, Bernd Spanier, acting ambassador of the EU to Bangladesh, met Fakhrul yesterday and discussed various issues related to Bangladesh's economic development and democratic transition.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said the EU has expressed willingness to assist in the recovery of money laundered abroad.

"Over US $100 billion has been laundered out of the country. Discussions have been held about bringing the money back, and they [the EU] are ready to cooperate in this matter," said Khasru.

During the hour-long meeting at the BNP chairperson's office in Gulshan, he said talks were held about Bangladesh's future, focusing on democratic, political, and overall development.

Improving law

FROM PAGE 3

He also mentioned discussing the Rohingya issue and the details of the fact-finding mission.

"We sought more cooperation. Around 1.2 million Rohingyas reside here [in Bangladesh], with their population increasing every day ... How much longer can we afford their expenses?" Jahangir said.

Asked about the arrival of UN factfinding mission to probe atrocities committed during the student-led protests in July and earlier this month, he said they may arrive next week.

DHAKA COLLEGE

Committee formed to probe idol vandalism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Dhaka College formed a probe committee on Sunday over the vandalism of a Hindu temple by miscreants at West Hostel of the college.

Professor AKM Elius, chairman of the geography department, has been made the convener of the committee.

The probe committee was asked to submit the report soon, sources at the college authorities said.

On Saturday, a group of miscreants vandalised an idol inside the temple at West Hostel and stole valuables from there, said students.

Meanwhile, Hindu students protested over the incident and demanded justice after a proper investigation.

They also submitted a written complaint letter to the college authorities demanding justice.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Aditmari, Lalmonirhat
www.lged.gov.bd

Mamo No. 46.02.5202.000.18.022.24-820 Date: 18/08/2024

Invitation e-Tender Notice No. 01/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the work listed below.

Tender ID	Package No.	Name of work	Last selling date & time	Closing date & time	Tendering method
1007575	e-Tender/PEDP4/LAL/AD12023-2024/W2A-06671	Construction of additional classroom at Mohistuli GPS under PEDP4	04/09/2024 15.00pm	05/09/2024 15.00pm	OTM
1007576	e-Tender/PEDP4/LAL/AD12023-2024/W2A-06671	Construction of additional classroom at Hajigonj GPS under PEDP4	04/09/2024 15.00pm	05/09/2024 15.00pm	OTM
1007577	e-Tender/PEDP4/LAL/AD12023-2024/W2A-06836	Construction of additional classroom at Mohiskhocha Masterpara GPS under PEDP4	04/09/2024 15.00pm	05/09/2024 15.00pm	OTM
1007578	e-Tender/PEDP4/LAL/AD12023-2024/W2A-06853	Construction of additional classroom at Mohiskhocha GPS under PEDP4	04/09/2024 15.00pm	05/09/2024 15.00pm	OTM
1007579	e-Tender/PEDP4/LAL/AD/2024-2025/W14-3440	Construction of Boundary Wall and Gate of Bhadai GPS under PEDP4	04/09/2024 15.00pm	05/09/2024 15.00pm	OTM
1008983	e-Tender/PEDP4/LAL/AD/2024-2025/W2A-07451	Construction of additional classroom at Sarpukur GPS under PEDP4.	04/09/2024 15.00pm	05/09/2024 15.00pm	OTM

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through and registered bank's branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

18.08.24
Khandaker Enamus Shalehin
Upazila Engineer
Aditmari, Lalmonirhat
Mobile: 01708-161646
Email: ue.aditmari@lged.gov.bd

GD-212

সার্টিফিকেট হারিয়েছে

২০২৩ সালের জুন মাসে আমার নামে ইনভেস্টমেন্ট কর্পোরেশন অব বাংলাদেশ কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-G/06/619, রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-G/06/620, রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-ICB/1/11915 ও রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-ICB/1/10667 এর অধীনে কিছু ইউনিটের সার্টিফিকেট হারানো গিয়েছে। ধানমন্ডি থানায় ১৪/৭/২০২৪ তারিখে জিডি করা হয়েছে। জিডি নং ৮৮১। কাজী শহীদুল্লাহ

সার্টিফিকেট হারিয়েছে

২০২৩ সালের জুন মাসে আমার নামে ইনভেস্টমেন্ট কর্পোরেশন অব বাংলাদেশ কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-G/06/566, রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-G/06/567, রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর- G/06/579, রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর- ICB/1/11303, রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-ICB/1/13082 ও রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর-ICB/1/13834 এর অধীনে কিছু ইউনিটের সার্টিফিকেট হারানো গিয়েছে। ধানমন্ডি থানায় ১৪/৭/২০২৪ তারিখে জিডি করা হয়েছে। জিডি নং ৮৮২। শাবনাম শহীদুল্লাহ

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স্মারক নং-১৩.০১.৬১০০.০০১.৩৯.০২১.০৬.২৩২৯ তারিখ: ১৯/০৮/২০২৪খ্রি.

গাছ বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ময়মনসিংহ জেলাধীন ময়মনসিংহ সিএসডি'র অভ্যন্তরে অবস্থিত ০৪টি বিভিন্ন প্রজাতির গাছ বিক্রয়ের জন্য প্রকৃত কাঠ ব্যবসায়ী/বৈধ লাইসেন্স প্রাপ্ত "স" মিলের মালিকগণের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। আগামী ০২/০৯/২০২৪খ্রি. তারিখ বিকাল ৪.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে এবং ০৩/০৯/২০২৪খ্রি. তারিখ সকাল ১০.০০ টা হতে দুপুর ১.০০ টা পর্যন্ত (১) জেলা প্রশাসক, ময়মনসিংহ, (২) জেলা খাদ্য নিয়ন্ত্রক, ময়মনসিংহ এবং (৩) ব্যবস্থাপক, ময়মনসিংহ সিএসডি, ময়মনসিংহ এঁর কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাক্সে দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে। গাছ বিক্রয়ের বিস্তারিত তথ্যাদি ও সিডিউল অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে অত্র দপ্তরের হিসাব শাখা এবং www.food.mymensingh.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।

জেলা খাদ্য নিয়ন্ত্রক
ময়মনসিংহ

GD-210

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ এর কার্যালয়
সড়ক বিভাগ, খুলনা
টেলিফোন নং-০২-৪৪১১০৮৬৮
মোবাইল নং-০১৭৩০-৭৮২৭৫৬
ই-মেইলঃ eekhu@rhd.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-৩৫.০১.৪৭৫১.৪৩৬.১৬.০০১.২৪.৫৭০ তারিখঃ ১৫-০৮-২০২৪খ্রিঃ

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি (২য় বার) বিজ্ঞপ্তি

Invitation for Enlistment (IFE) No: Enlistment-02/BRD/2024-25
Date: 15/08/2024

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, নিম্নবর্ণিত সময়সূচি মোতাবেক সড়ক বিভাগ, খুলনা-এর ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি করা হবে। আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে ঠিকাদারী লাইসেন্স নবায়ন/তালিকাভুক্তি করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

ছক-১

বিবরণ	তালিকাভুক্তি ফরমের মূল্য	তালিকাভুক্তি ফি	ভ্যাট ১৫%	তালিকাভুক্তি ফরম সংগ্রহ ও জমা প্রদানের সময়সীমা
ঠিকাদারী তালিকাভুক্তি	১০০০.০০	৫০০০.০০	৭৫০.০০	১৫-০৮-২০২৪খ্রিঃ হতে ০৫-০৯-২০২৪খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত

শর্তাবলীঃ

১। ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের লাইসেন্স নবায়নের জন্য অত্র দপ্তরের হিসাব শাখায় লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ফি ও ভ্যাট জমাপূর্বক মানি রশিদ সংগ্রহ করতে হবে।
২। ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা মূল্যের তালিকাভুক্তি ফরম অত্র অফিস হতে সংগ্রহপূর্বক ফরমে উল্লেখিত সকল শর্তাবলী পূরণ করে দাখিল করতে হবে। তালিকাভুক্তি কমিটি কর্তৃক যাচাই-বাছাই অন্তে উত্তীর্ণ ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের তালিকাভুক্তি ফি গ্রহণপূর্বক ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্ত করা হবে।
৩। নির্ধারিত তারিখের পরে কোনক্রমে ঠিকাদারী লাইসেন্স তালিকাভুক্তি ফি গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
৪। ঠিকাদারী লাইসেন্স তালিকাভুক্তির ক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

১৫/৮/২৪
মোঃ ফরিদ উদ্দিন
পরিচিতি নং-৬০২২১৮
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (অঃদাঃ), সওজ
সড়ক বিভাগ, খুলনা

GD-203

Persistent waterlogging in Chattogram highlights the city's struggle with uncleaned drains, amid political unrest and heavy rains, leaving residents in knee-deep water and disrupting daily commutes. PHOTO: COLLECTED

SUSPENSION OF CCC ACTIVITIES

Ctg areas waterlogged as drain cleaning stalls

ARUN BIKASH DEY, *Ctg*

Multiple areas in Chattogram city have been facing waterlogging as regular drain clearing activities have been suspended for much of the last one month.

Most activities of the Chattogram City Corporation have been on hold due to the unrest that started with the quota protests over a month ago.

Following the ousting of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League government, the situation has been improving gradually, and the city corporation initiated a crash programme to clean the major canals in the port city, targeting two canals each day.

The programme started with drives at Chawkbazar and Shulakbahar on Sunday, while cleaning of drains in Katalgaganj and Sholashahar Gate-2 was scheduled for Monday.

Visiting the areas yesterday morning, this correspondent did not find any workers at the aforementioned spots.

"The CCC conservatory department was supposed to clean drains in our area today. However, no one arrived here since morning," said Abdur Rahaman, a resident of Katalganj.

Overnight rain inundated the area as the drains, not cleaned for over a month, were clogged with garbage, he added.

The situation is similar in Sholashahar area, with city corporation workers being a no-show since morning.

Many low-lying city areas, including Bahaddarhat, Muradpur, Katalganj, Halishahar, Agrabad, Bakalia, and Chandgaon, went under knee-deep water due to overnight rains.

Engine seizures in many three-wheelers and long tailbacks on waterlogged roads added to the woes of the locals.

According to CCC authorities, cleaning activities for yesterday were suspended due to downpours.

Soil, washed off slopes due to rain, sedimented in the canals, blocking them, as per CCC's Chief Conservation Officer Commander Latiful Haque Kazmi.

"Workers could not work for 20 days due to the political situation in the country. We launched the crash programme as the situation is normalising. We started yesterday but could not continue today due to heavy rains," he said.

He said they are planning to resume the cleaning works today, if rain recedes.

The Chattogram Met Office recorded 124 millimetres of rain in the 24 hours preceding noon yesterday, said its forecasting officer Jahirul Islam, adding that the downpour may continue for the next couple of days due to low pressure over the Bay.

The Chattogram Port has been advised to hoist cautionary signal-3, he added.

Withdraw VAT, taxes on private universities

Demands BSPUA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Society for Private University Academics (BSPUA) yesterday demanded that the government withdraw all forms of VAT and taxes imposed on private universities, urging to redirect these funds towards research, scholarships, and student welfare instead.

At a press conference held at Jatiya Press Club, BSPUA, a platform representing private university faculty, also called for an end to politics in all educational institutions, including private universities.

Farid A Sobhani, professor at United International University and president of BSPUA, citing the 2024 QS World Rankings and Times Higher Education Rankings, said private universities have made substantial progress in educational quality and research, often surpassing public universities.

The long-standing discrimination against private universities is unacceptable, he added.

In a written statement outlining a nine-point demand, Prof Sobhani called for the inclusion of private university faculty in the University Grants Commission (UGC), Bangladesh Accreditation Council, Bangladesh Public Service Commission, and various government committees related to education.

He also demanded prioritising private university faculty for top administrative positions within the institutions.

Additionally, the BSPUA called for the establishment of a separate regulatory agency for private universities and an end to discriminatory practices against private university graduates in the job market.

They also demanded that private university graduates be allowed direct admission into PhD programmes at public universities.

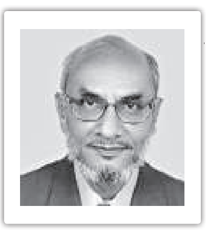
"We demand equal opportunities for higher education based on merit and qualifications," said Prof Sobhani.

The BSPUA also urged the implementation of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Abdul Muyeed new Biman chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, former adviser to a caretaker government, was appointed the new chairman of the board of directors of Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism announced the appointment through a notification yesterday.

Abdul previously served as the managing director and CEO of Biman from 1991 to 1994.

He was a civil servant belonging to the erstwhile Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) cadre, which he joined in October 1967.

Remove top health officials: protesters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group Directorate General of Health Services employees and pro-BNP doctors from the Doctors Association of Bangladesh yesterday demanded the resignation of the new acting director general and other pro-Awami League officials of DGHS.

Several doctors, nurses and health workers demonstrated in front of the main gate of DGHS. Later, they brought out a procession to Mohakhali's DNCC Dedicated Covid-19 Hospital where Health Adviser Nur Jahan Begum was attending a meeting.

Protesters demanded the resignation of Prof Robed Amin, DG of DGHS; Prof Ahmedul Kabir, additional DG of DGHS; Prof Titu Miah, DG of health education department; Bayezid Khurshid Riaz, additional DG of health education department; Shamiul Islam Sadi, director of National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine, and all the pro-AL officials at the DGHS.

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড

SGFL

(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানী)

Sylhet Gas Fields Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)

বিদ্যুৎ ও জ্বালানি নিরাপত্তা
সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রাধিকার

গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ। এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

সুত্র নং – ২৮.২০.৯১৫৩.০৮৪.০১.০১০.০২৪/কনডেম/যানবাহন/২১

তারিখ: ১৮-০৮-২০২৪

পুনঃনিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড (এসজিএফএল)-এর প্রধান কার্যালয়ে এর কেন্দ্রীয় ভান্ডার-এ রক্ষিত কনডেমকৃত ৮(আট)টি গাড়ী **"যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে ভিত্তিতে"** নিলামে বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে আগ্রহী দরদাতা/ক্রেতাদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১	মন্ত্রণালয়/ডিভিশন	:	বিদ্যুৎ, জ্বালানী ও খনিজ সম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়/ জ্বালানী ও খনিজ সম্পদ বিভাগ
০২	সংস্থা	:	বাংলাদেশ তেল,গ্যাস ও খনিজ সম্পদ কর্পোরেশন (পেট্রোবাংলা)।
০৩	নিলামকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম	:	সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড (পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানী)।
০৪	নিলাম পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ওটিএম)।
০৫	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	:	২৮.২০.৯১৫৩.০৮৪.০১.০১০.০২৪/কনডেম/যানবাহন/ তারিখ : ১৮-০৮-২০২৪
০৬	দরপত্র তফশীল এর মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	:	প্রতি সেট ২০০০.০০ (দুই হাজার) টাকা।
০৭	টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটির পরিমাণ	:	প্রতিটি যানবাহনের বিপরীতে উদ্বৃত মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা ১০ ভাগ) আর্নেষ্টমানি/টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটি " সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড" এর অনুকূলে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের তফশীলভুক্ত যে কোন ব্যাংক হতে ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে অর্ডার দরপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
০৮	নিলামে বিক্রয়ের জন্য প্রস্তাবিত যানবাহন	:	৮ টি গাড়ী (ট্রাক, জীপ, মাইক্রোবাস ও কার) ।
০৯	দরপত্র দলিল প্রাপ্তি স্থান	:	(ক) হিসাব ও অর্থ বিভাগ, সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড, ডাকঘর- চিকনাগুল, সিলেট-৩১৫২ (খ) হিসাব শাখা, কৈলাশটিলা গ্যাস ফিল্ড,গোলাপগঞ্জ,সিলেট। গ) হিসাব শাখা, রশিদপুর গ্যাস ফিল্ড,বাহুবল, হবিগঞ্জ। (ঘ) ঢাকা লিয়াজোঁ অফিস, পেট্রোসেন্টার, ১৪-তলা, ৩ কাওরান বাজার বা/এ, ঢাকা-১২১৫
১০	দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের তারিখ	:	২৫-০৮-২০২৪ হতে ১৭-০৯-২০২৪ পর্যন্ত সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে
১১	দরপত্র গ্রহণের স্থান	:	টিএস ডিভিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড, ডাকঘর-চিকনাগুল, সিলেট-৩১৫২।
১২	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	১৮-০৯-২০২৪ হতে (বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত) ক্রমিক ১১ এ বর্ণিত স্থানে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাক্সে
১৩	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	:	১৮-০৯-২০২৪ তারিখ বেলা ১২.১৫ ঘটিকা।
১৪	ক্রেতা/দরদাতাদের যোগ্যতা	ক)	নিলামে অংশগ্রহণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধ সংক্রান্ত ডকুমেন্ট ও ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে।
		খ)	নিলামে অংশগ্রহণে আগ্রহী ক্রেতা/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের বিগত ৩ (তিন) বছরের মধ্যে একক কার্যাদেশে সরকারি/আধাসরকারি/স্বায়ত্বশাসিত/রাষ্ট্রীয় মালিকানাধীন প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে নূন্যতম ১৩ লক্ষ ৮০ হাজার টাকার মালামাল নিলামে ক্রয়ের অভিজ্ঞতার কাগজপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
		(গ)	নিলামে অংশগ্রহণে আগ্রহী ক্রেতা/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের বিগত ৩ (তিন) বছরের মধ্যে কমপক্ষে ৩টি ভিন্ন ভিন্ন সরকারি/আধাসরকারি/স্বায়ত্বশাসিত/রাষ্ট্রীয় মালিকানাধীন প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে নিলামে মালামাল ক্রয় ও যথাসময়ে অপসারণ সংক্রান্ত তথ্যাদি দাখিল করতে হবে।
১৫	শর্তাবলী	:	টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্টে বর্ণিত শর্তাবলী প্রযোজ্য।
১৬	বিশেষ নির্দেশনাঃ		
	(ক)		দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলার দিন কোন কারণবশতঃ কার্যদিবস ব্যাহত হলে পরবর্তী প্রথম কার্যদিবসে একই সময়ে দরদাতাগণের উপস্থিতিতে দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলা হবে।
	(খ)		মূল দরপত্র দলিল দরদাতা কর্তৃক স্বাক্ষর ও সীল মোহরসহ দাখিল করতে হবে।
	(গ)		বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত দরপ্রস্তাব গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
	(ঘ)		সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল অথবা দরপত্র আহ্বান প্রক্রিয়া বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।
	(ঙ)		এ নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি www.sgfl.org.bd ওয়েব সাইটে দেখা যাবে।

১৮/০৮/২০২৪
মহাব্যবস্থাপক (হিসাব ও অর্থ)
ও
আহ্বায়ক, স্থায়ী নিলাম কমিটি

GD-209

JU pro-VC, treasurer resign

STAR REPORT

Jahangirnagar University's Pro-Vice Chancellor (Administration) Prof Sheikh Md Manzurul Huq and its treasurer Prof Rasheda Akhtar resigned yesterday.

They submitted their resignation letters via email to President and Chancellor of the university Mohammed Shahabuddin.

In their letters, they cited the country's "current situation" as the reason for their resignations, said JU Deputy Registrar ABM Azizur Rahman.

3 task forces to be formed to improve rail services

Says railways adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Railways Ministry Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan yesterday directed the ministry to form three task forces to deal with three issues to improve railway services.

One task force will work to prevent delays in train operations while another task force will work to prevent black-marketing of train tickets. One task force will work to recover occupied railway properties.

The adviser gave the instruction at his first meeting with the officials of railways ministry and Bangladesh Railway, said a ministry press release.

He also asked them to take necessary steps for reducing railway expenditure.

জ্বালানি নিরাপত্তা
সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রাধিকার

সুন্দরবন গ্যাস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানি)
প্রধান কার্যালয়ঃ ২১৮, এম, এ, বারী রোড, সোনাডাঙ্গা, খুলনা

জাতীয় সম্পদ গ্যাসের অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

সূত্র নং-২৮.২১.০০০০.১৩৫.৩২.০০২.২৪/২৫৫

তারিখঃ ১৯/০৮/২০২৪ইং

২০২৪-২০২৫ ও ২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরের জন্য ১.১ শ্রেণীর ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের তালিকাভুক্তি নবায়ন সময়সীমা আগামী ২০/০৯/২০২৪ পর্যন্ত বর্ধিতকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিশেষ কারণবশতঃ অত্র কোম্পানির তালিকাভুক্ত ১.১ শ্রেণীর (৪র্থ শ্রেণীর) ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের ২০২৪-২০২৫ ও ২০২৫-২০২৬ দুই (০২) অর্থবছরের জন্য তালিকাভুক্তি নবায়ন সময়সীমা আগামী ২০/০৯/২০২৪ পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হল। যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদন অনুযায়ী এই সময়সীমা নির্ধারিত হয়েছে। এ বিষয়ে ইতোপূর্বে প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তির অন্যান্য বিষয়াবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

১৯/০৮/২০২৪
প্রকৌ. মোঃ সালাহউদ্দিন
মহাব্যবস্থাপক (পরিকল্পনা ও উন্নয়ন)
মোবাইল নং-০১৭০৪-১৭১১০৩

GD- 205

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
Department of Immigration and Passports
E-7, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka-1207
www.dip.gov.bd

Invitation for Service procurement

SL NO	Description	Detail
1.	Ministry/Division	Security Service Division, Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
2.	Agency	Department of Immigration and Passports (DIP)
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Director General, Department of Immigration and Passports, Agargaon, Dhaka
4.	Procuring Entity Code	N/A
5.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh
6.	Invitation for	Selection of service provider for the supply of manpower
7.	Invitation Ref No.	58.01.0000.102.99.019.24-570
8.	Date	19-08-2024
KEY INFORMATION		
9.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method.
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10.	Budget and Source of Funds	Government of Bangladesh (GOB)
11.	Development Partners	None
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12.	Programme Code	N/A
13.	Programme Name	N/A
14.	Application Closing Date and Time	09/09/2024 at 1:00 PM (BST).
15	**Name & Address of the office**	
	Availability of Tender document	Assistant Director (Procurement) Room No-9004, Department of Immigration & Passport, E-7 Shre-e-Bangla Nagar, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
	Receiving the Tender document	Assistant Director (Procurement) Room No-9004, Department of Immigration & Passport, E-7 Shre-e-Bangla Nagar, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
INFORMATION FOR APPLICATION		
16.	Eligibility of Service provider	a) Vat Registration Certificate with last year pay slip of the Suppliers. b) TIN Certificate of the Supplier. c) Up-to-date Trade License. d) Proof of Solvency from bank issued within 3 months. e) Service providor must confirm that he has legal Capacity to enter into a contract under the authority with valid Power of Attorney. f) At least 7 year's experience certificates for the Supply of similar services. g) The minimum number of supplied Services is at least BDT 5 million within a year. h) The minimum amount of liquid assets or working capital or credit facility of the Tenderer: BDT 5 million. i) According to Rule No.7 of Bangladesh labor Rules 2015, the contractor providing the service workers must have registration and renewed licence.
17.	Brief Description of Outsourcing staff Recruitment	Type of category: (Category: 1-5) a) Driver b) Electrician c) Pump Operator d) Dishpatch Rider e) Office sohayok f) Security Guard g) Liftman h) Cleaner
18.	Brief Description of Related or Physical Services	Not Applicable
19.	Price of Application Form (TK)	2000.00 Payable with treasury Chalan (Code No: 1610501-133252-1422328)
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
20.	Name of Official inviting Application	Director General.
21.	Designation of Official Inviting Application	Director General.
22.	Address of Official Inviting Application	Department of Immigration & Passport, E-7 Shre-e Bangla Nagar, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
23.	Contact details of Official inviting Application	Telephone No: 02-55007118
The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all the Application without assigning any reason.		

19.08.2024
(Al Amin Mridha)
Deputy Director (Procurement)
For Director General.

GD-204

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

I stepped out to witness the people's victory: MEHAZABIEN CHOWDHURY

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

> **The country has gained a new form of independence. On the day of the students' and people's victory, I stepped out of my home to witness the joy and celebrations firsthand. The experience was amazing.**

Mehazabien Chowdhury's debut film ***Saba*** is set to make a remarkable entry at the 45th edition of the Toronto International Film Festival, before its official release. The film has been selected for the prestigious Discovery programme, a significant recognition that highlights the anticipation surrounding the film and marks a major milestone in Mehazabien's career, as she steps into the world of cinema.

Expressing her heartfelt emotions, the actress shared, "I am absolutely thrilled and overjoyed by this news. It's a special moment for those living abroad, especially in Canada, and for everyone attending the festival—they'll have the chance to watch ***Saba***, at its world premiere."

The ***Punorjonmo*** actress added, "It's truly a matter of pride for me because ***Saba*** is my first film. It has made a place along with a total of 25 movies from around the world which will be showcased at this festival. This is a significant achievement for me."

Speaking about the world premiere of a Bangladeshi film abroad, she remarked, "Very few films from our country have had the opportunity to reach international film festivals. Previously, ***Rehana Maryam Noor*** was praised on the global stage. Now, ***Saba*** will be part of that legacy, which is a significant accomplishment for Bangladeshi cinema and a proud moment in my career."

Even before the film's release, her long-time colleagues and directors in the industry are highly optimistic about it, and discussions have already sparked on social media. When asked about her satisfaction with the experience, she shared, "I'm absolutely content with my performance in the project. There's a unique emotion that comes with the first silver-screen project, and that feeling has stayed with me."

Mehazabien also noted, "***Saba*** is not just my debut film, but the first film for director Maksud Hossain. I had hoped it would be released in Bangladesh first, so I could experience it in theatres with my family, friends, and loved ones."

She believes that it is a great achievement for her that many renowned filmmakers from around the world will be watching the film at the Toronto International Film Festival.

When asked about how well ***Saba*** will resonate with Bangladeshi audiences, Mehazabien said, "The film's budget isn't extravagant, but my genuine aim was to be part of a compelling story, and I'm glad to say we've achieved that. I believe the story of Saba has the potential to connect with viewers from all walks of life. The entire team has done an excellent job, and I've given my best performance."

Meanwhile, from the very beginning of the recent anti-discrimination student movement, the former Lux Superstar has been actively supporting the students on social media.

"The country has gained a new form of independence. On the day of the students' and people's victory, I stepped out of my home to witness the joy and celebrations firsthand. The experience was amazing," said Mehazabien.

When asked about her vocal support for the students, despite some hesitating to speak out, she responded, "I believe that personal freedom is essential in all aspects. Ultimately, one must stand up against injustice. I protested in my own way and supported the students' movement."

Mehazabien also spoke about the language of protest for artistes. She said, "The language of protest for artistes should be artistic. Everyone should have the freedom to protest against injustice in their own way. It's important to allow individuals the freedom to make their own choices."

The 45th Toronto International Film Festival is set to begin on September 5 and will run for ten days. The actress plans to attend the festival in full glory.

PHOTOS: **COLLECTED**

FAROOKI demands reform in censorship system

Mostofa Sarwar Farooki called for the dissolution of Bangladesh's film censorship laws, advocating for a rating system to replace outdated censorship policies. His film, ***Saturday Afternoon***, remains censored for undisclosed reasons, prompting his demand for change. Farooki criticised the censorship board for silencing dissenting voices, particularly those challenging the ruling Awami League's historical narratives.

Farooki proposed safeguards to address concerns over historical misrepresentation while protecting creative freedom. He also criticised former state minister Mohammad Ali Arafat for tightening regulations on OTT platforms instead of reforming censorship laws.

The filmmaker called for the removal of outdated figures from the censorship board and grant committee, pushing for more progressive and sensible leadership in Bangladesh's film industry.

Warfaze celebrates 4 decades with concerts worldwide

Prominent rock-metal band Warfaze celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, marking their four glorious decades in the music industry. To commemorate, the band is planning a series of domestic and international concerts, beginning with a US tour in September.

A grand reunion with former and current members is also in the works, followed by an international concert series. Founding member Sheikh Monirul Alam Tipu expressed pride in the band's enduring journey, attributing their success to innovation and fan support.

Meanwhile, Warfaze is set to release a remake album featuring iconic tracks like ***Poth Chola 2***, with three of its singles—***Hariye Tomake***, ***Alo***, and ***Ondho Jibon***— already receiving positive feedback.

NEWS

Hasina faces another ICT case

FROM PAGE 12

Among the others are former foreign minister Hasan Mahmud, former minister Jahangir Kabir Nanak, former state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak, former state minister for information Mohammad Ali Arafat, former state minister Kamal Ahmed Majumder, former IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, and former RAB director general Md Shafiur Rahman.

According to the complaint, Alvi died after being shot by police at the behest of the accused. It mentioned the entire country of Bangladesh as the location of the incident. It also said that the incident took place between July 15 and August 5, the day Hasina was ousted.

5 MORE MURDER CASES

Hasina has been accused in five more murder cases over killings in different parts of Bangladesh during the student-led movement that led to her ouster and escape.

With these, she is now facing 21 cases, including 18 on murder charges, two over alleged crimes against humanity and genocide, and one on allegation of abduction.

Several members of her cabinet, ex-Awami League lawmakers, leaders and activists of the party, and police officers are Hasina's co-accused in these cases.

One of the three latest cases in Dhaka was filed by Afsana Akhter Islam over the killing of her husband Jubo Dal leader Abdullah Kabir Khan, 50, at Mirpur-10 on August 4. Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mehedi Hasan ordered Mirpur police to register the complaint as a first information report (FIR).

Among the 66 other accused are AL General Secretary Quader, ex-home minister Asaduzzaman, former Mirpur MPs Majumder and Mainul Hossain Khan Nikhil, ex-IGP Mamun, ex-DMP chief Habibur Rahman, former chief of DMP's DB Harunor Rashid, and former DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarkar.

In another case, Hasina is among 148 accused of killing protester Liton Hasan Lalu in Mirpur-10 on August 4. The others include Quader, Asaduzzaman, Kamal Majumder, Nikhil and the top police officers names in the previous case. Lalu's brother Md Milon Hasan filed a complaint with a magistrate's court that ordered police to register it as an FIR.

In the other case in the capital, Hasina and 12 others were sued over the death of carpenter Tarique Hossain, 18, who passed away on August 9 after being shot in front of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station on August 5.

A Dhaka metropolitan magistrate ordered the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) to submit an investigation report by September 30 in the case filed by Tarique's mother Fidusi Khatun.

Along with Quader, Asaduzzaman, Majumder, Nikhil, Mamun, Harun, Habibur and Biplob, former law minister Anisul was named in the case.

In Chattogram, Hasina, Quader and 106 other people were sued in a case over the killing of college student Wasim Akram in a clash between Chhatra League and protesters in the Muradpur area on July 16 – one of the first killings that turned the quota reform movement into a mass uprising. Wasim's mother Jyotsna lodged the case last night at Panchlaish Police Station.

Wasim, a third-year social science student at Chattogram College, was involved with Chhatra Dal, the BNP's student wing, according to police and his family members.

The other accused include Chattogram-based former ministers Mohibul Hassan Chowdhoury Nowfel, Hasan Mahmud, former Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) mayor Rezaul Karim, city unit AL's General Secretary AJM Nasir Uddin, former Chattogram-10 MP Mohiuddin Bachchu, and 12 AL-backed CCC ward councillors. Some 100 to 150 unnamed people were also accused in the case.

In Narayanganj, the case was filed against Hasina, Quader, Asaduzzaman, former MP Shamim Osman and 58 others on Sunday. Shamim Osman's son Imtinan Osman Ayon, nephew Azmery Osman and many of his followers were also accused in the case. Plaintiff Shahnaz is the widow of victim Md Milon, a fish trader.

On July 21, law enforcers and Awami League men clashed with the protesters between Signboard and Shimrail on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway. Milon, who lived with his family in the Mizmizi Purbapara area in Siddhirganj, was shot in the chest while returning home from a fish warehouse on that day.

Two journalists were also accused in the case over Milon's killing. They are Billal Hossain Robin, staff reporter of The Daily Manabzamin and correspondent of NTV, and Forhad Hossain, Siddhirganj Thana correspondent of The Daily Bhorer Kagoj.

2 DU deans step down in face of protests

FROM PAGE 12

Students said the three deans were asked to resign for supporting the Awami League government's mass killings during the July movement.

Around 11:30am, around 50 students gathered in front of the arts faculty building, demanding Prof Bachir's resignation, alleging that he was an aide of the ousted autocratic government and had previously issued show cause notices to students who attended a Quran recitation programme on campus during last Ramadan.

Around an hour later, Prof Abdul Bachir wrote his resignation letter and signed it.

"I'm resigning from the post of dean of the arts faculty. Please take the necessary measures in this regard," reads the resignation letter addressed to the DU vice-chancellor.

At that time, the protesting students recited verses from the Quran and prayed for guidance for the dean in his office with his participation.

Meanwhile, Prof Nisar Hossain, fine arts faculty dean, in his resignation letter also addressed to the DU VC, wrote, "I've received a letter with a four-point demand, including the resignation of the dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts for taking a stance in favour of mass killing and autocracy during the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement. There is currently no scope for me to verify how objective their allegations are and how logical the demand for resignation is, so I request that I be relieved of my duties as dean without regard to the allegations."

Contacted, DU Pro-VC Sitesh Chandra Bachar said the resignations will come into effect once the new VC is appointed.

Khaleda's bank accounts unfrozen

FROM PAGE 1

formed during the then Army-backed caretaker government, said a senior official of the NBR.

Khaleda's accounts had been blocked since then although the BNP on several occasions demanded unfreeze.

The latest move by the NBR comes after a mass uprising toppled the government of Sheikh Hasina, a long-time rival of Khaleda, on August 5, ending the 15-year Awami League rule.

The NBR said they received an application from Khaleda's lawyer on Sunday seeking unfreezing of the bank accounts.

"As there are no tax-related issues pending investigation relating to Khaleda Zia, we have advised banks to unfreeze all her accounts. We have asked them to take immediate action and provide a compliance report," the official said.

Internet blackout had no legal basis

FROM PAGE 12

"The question is whose opinion would constitute the opinion of the government? Can the telecom minister form the opinion of the government? Generally speaking, the government means the cabinet," said an eminent telecom lawyer who asked not to be named.

Most importantly, since there is a positive requirement of "opinion", the exercise of power under this section must be preceded by a written record of forming the opinion.

"Such opinions must also be objective," he said.

No administrative approval of the posts and telecommunication ministry was taken while issuing the directive to shut down the internet, according to a probe report of the ministry.

The government and its agents acquire their powers and authority from statute, and there is currently no statute in force that can be used to legitimise the unprecedented mobile and internet blackout, said Fatema Anwar, a Supreme Court advocate.

"A fundamental principle is that one cannot rely on an extenuating circumstance that is self-induced to justify one's illegal action," she said, adding that the entire episode was "clearly and unequivocally escalated and exacerbated" by the last government.

State agencies who facilitated the said aggravation cannot now turn back and claim that they have a legal justification for a law-and-order situation that they created, Anwar said.

The widely referred provisions of the telecom act are inappropriate given the circumstances of those days.

"Interpreting statutes to justify their misconduct is legally fallacious. There was no war or warlike situation against Bangladesh. There was no external threat to our national security or sovereignty."

As for the internal law and order situation, the government is entitled to preferential use of telecommunication apparatus, equipment and systems.

"I do not see how this provision can be interpreted to mean blocking the service altogether. Moreover, there was no state of emergency declared," Anwar added.

In its response, the BTRC also said: "It is to be noted here that the former state minister gave his own confessions regarding internet shutdown and took the responsibility on his own which has been widely published in various media platforms."

The total losses from the internet shutdowns amounted to Tk 100,000 crore, said Mohiuddin Ahmed, president of the Bangladesh Mobile Phone Consumer Association.

"This action violated human and economic rights and those responsible must be held accountable and face trial -- it is a severe criminal offence," Ahmed added.

Sri Lanka defends diplomat fined for exploitation in Australia

AFP, *Colombo*

Sri Lanka's government has defended a top diplomat ordered by an Australian court to pay over $360,000 in back wages to her former housekeeper held in Canberra under "slavery-type conditions".

Colombo's foreign ministry in Colombo said Himalee Arunatilaka, currently Sri Lanka's permanent representative to the UN in Geneva, including the International Labour Organization, had followed government-approved rates in paying low wages.

Arunatilaka had previously been Colombo's Deputy High Commissioner in Canberra for three years, up until 2018.

The Federal Court of Australia on Thursday found Arunatilaka had breached the Fair Work Act and was not entitled to diplomatic immunity.

Australian media reports said the court ordered Arunatilaka to pay more than Aus$540,000 in back wages and interest to Priyanka Danaratna.

"She worked seven days a week for three years, and she had two days off in that entire time — and she did that because she burned her hand while preparing some food," her lawyer David Hillard was quoted as saying.

She was not given unpaid breaks, not paid overtime or penalty rates, and not paid regularly or issued payslips.

"It's an example of how modern slavery works," he said.

The court was told that Danaratna was paid a total of Aus$11,212 for three years of work, while the national minimum wage for a 38-hour week was Aus$656.90.

After running away from the diplomatic compound, Danaratna had sought refuge with the Salvation Army.

Hezbollah claims attacks on north Israel

Says two of its fighters killed

AFP, *Beirut*

Lebanese group Hezbollah said yesterday two of its fighters were killed and claimed attacks on northern Israel, including with drones, the latest cross-border violence amid fears of full-blown war.

The powerful Iran-backed group has exchanged regular cross-border fire with Israeli army in support of ally Hamas since the Israeli offensive in Gaza began on October 7.

Hezbollah said two of its fighters were "martyred on the road to Jerusalem", the phrase it has used to refer to members killed by Israeli fire since October.

The Israeli military said air forces struck "Hezbollah terrorists" in the Hula area and "Hezbollah military structures" elsewhere in south Lebanon.

Lebanon media reported Israeli shelling and raids on several southern areas.

WE WANT JUSTICE
JUSTICE FOR ABHAYA
March for Justice-Punish the real Culprits
Punish the

Calcutta High Court advocates hold posters during a protest to condemn the rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata, West Bengal, India yesterday. Thousands of outraged Indian protesters, including arch-rival football fans, called for justice after the rape and murder of the doctor as widespread strikes by healthcare workers entered a second week.

PHOTO: **AFP**

A record number of aid workers killed in 2023: UN

AFP, *United Nations*

The United Nations yesterday condemned the "unacceptable" level of violence becoming commonplace against humanitarian workers, a record 280 of whom were killed worldwide in 2023.

And it warned that the Israel's offensive in Gaza is potentially fueling even higher numbers of such deaths this year.

"The normalisation of violence against aid workers and the lack of accountability are unacceptable, unconscionable and enormously harmful for aid operations everywhere," Joyce Msuya, acting director of the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said in a statement on World Humanitarian Day.

"With 280 aid workers killed in 33 countries last year, 2023 marked the deadliest year on record for the global humanitarian community," a 137 percent increase over 2022, when 118 aid workers died, OCHA said in the statement.

It cited the Aid Worker Security Database which has tracked such figures back to 1997.

The UN said more than half of the deaths in 2023, or 163, were aid workers killed in Gaza during the first three months of the offensive, mainly in air strikes.

South Sudan, wracked by civil strife, and Sudan, where a war between two rival generals has been raging since April 2023, are the next deadliest conflicts for humanitarians, with 34 and 25 deaths respectively.

TERROR ATTACK

Paramilitary officer killed in India's J&K

NDTV ONLINE

An officer from the Indian Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) was killed in action after terrorists fired on a patrol team in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur yesterday.

A counter-terror operation has been launched in the area. A joint party of the CRPF and the Special Operations Group of the Jammu and Kashmir Police came under fire from the terrorists in Dadu area.

Yesterday's attack took place in Jammu region, which for several years, remained relatively silent compared to Kashmir. There has been a spurt of terror activities in Jammu, particularly in the Pir Panjal range.

Ukraine 'achieving our goals' in Kursk assault

Says Zelensky; Russia rules out peace talks with Ukraine

AFP, *Kyiv*

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday said his troops were meeting their objectives during their offensive in Russia's Kursk region, launched almost two weeks ago.

"We are achieving our goals. This morning we have another replenishment of the (prisoner of war) exchange fund for our country," Zelensky said, a day after saying Ukraine was attempting to create a "buffer zone" in Russia.

The Kremlin said yesterday it "will not talk" to Ukraine given its incursion into Russia's Kursk region.

Kyiv sent troops over the border on August 6, and has since held onto a part of the Kursk region, going on the attack in an offensive that has rattled Moscow.

Russian troops capture 'major' settlement in Ukraine's Donetsk region

"At the current stage, given this escapade, we will not talk," Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov told the Russian Shot Telegram channel, adding that "at the moment it would be completely inappropriate to enter into a negotiating process".

Authorities in the southern Russian city of Proletarsk introduced a state of emergency yesterday as firefighters battle for more than 24 hours to extinguish a blaze at an oil facility hit by a Ukrainian drone.

Russia said Kyiv struck the fuel storage warehouse -- located in the city of 20,000 people in the southern Rostov region -- on Sunday morning and that the blaze was raging for a second day.

Local governor Vasily Golubev said the "liquidation of the fire is continuing" and that 18 firefighters were hurt tackling the blaze.

Meanwhile, Russia said yesterday its troops captured a "major" settlement in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, where Moscow's forces are advancing.

Russia's defence ministry said it had "liberated" the village of Artemovo, describing it as one of the area's "major population centres," located outside the town of Toretsk, where there has been heavy fighting.

Modi to visit Ukraine on Aug 23

REUTERS, *New Delhi*

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Ukraine on August 23, at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

Modi has trod a delicate balance between maintaining his country's historically warm ties with Moscow while courting closer security partnerships with Western nations as a bulwark against regional rival China.

His government has avoided explicit condemnations of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in the more than two years since the conflict began, instead urging both sides to resolve their differences through dialogue.

DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

Biden to pass torch to Harris

AFP, *Chicago*

US President Joe Biden was due to give a bittersweet farewell address at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago yesterday, passing the torch to Kamala Harris as the party's nominee for November's election.

Less than a month after his stunning withdrawal and Harris's astonishing ascent, Biden can expect a hero's send-off from many of the same people who helped push him out due to concerns about his age.

The 81-year-old is expected to say that Harris -- America's first female, Black and South Asian vice president -- is the best person to finish the job he started of protecting American democracy from Republican rival Donald Trump.

SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW

Philippines, China trade blame after vessels collide

REUTERS, *Beijing*

The Philippines and China yesterday accused each other of ramming vessels and performing dangerous manoeuvres in the South China Sea, the latest flare-up after the two nations agreed last month to try to manage disagreements at sea.

China's Coast Guard said in a statement a Philippine vessel which had ignored its repeated warnings had "deliberately collided" with a Chinese vessel in an "unprofessional and dangerous" manner in the disputed waterway early yesterday.

The Philippines disputed Beijing's account and accused it of "imposing its version of facts." It said two of its coast guard vessels "encountered unlawful and aggressive manoeuvres" from Chinese vessels near Sabina Shoal, while on their way to supply Filipino personnel stationed in two occupied islands.

"These dangerous manoeuvres resulted in collisions, causing structural damage to both PCG (Philippine Coast Guard) vessels," said Jonathan Malaya, a spokesperson for the national security council.

At a regular news briefing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told reporters that China would continue to take lawful "resolute and forceful measures" to safeguard its territorial sovereignty.

"We hope that the Philippines can keep its commitments (and)earnestly abide by the temporary arrangements reached with China," Mao said.

The US condemned China's actions. Its ambassador to Manila, Mary Kay Carlson, said on X the US "stands with the Philippines in condemning the China Coast Guard's dangerous manoeuvres".

Ex-judge, 4 former ministers

FROM PAGE 12

Around 400 AL men, including ex-lawmakers AKM Bahauddin Bahar and her daughter Tahseen Bahar Shuchona, were sued over the killing of a youth named Masum Mia in Cumilla.

A BNP activist filed the case at Cumilla Sadar South Police Station on Sunday night.

Masum, a resident of the city's Uttar Rampur area, was killed during a clash between protesters and law enforcers on August 4 in the Nandanpur area on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway.

In Dhaka's Savar, former state minister for disaster management and relief Md Enamur Rahman and former Savar Upazila Parishad chairman Manjurul Alam Rajiv were sued over the killing of a student named Sajjad Hossain.

Sajjad's father Md Alamgir filed the case at Savar Model Police Station yesterday. Sajjad, a student of Sonargaon University in Narayanganj, suffered bullet injuries during a clash on August 5 and died a day later while undergoing treatment at a hospital.

In the district's Ashulia, former Dhaka-19 MP Muhammad Saiful Islam and 40 other AL men were accused of killing 10th grader Ash-Sabur during protests on August 5.

The victim's mother Rahen Jannat Ferdausi filed the case at Ashulia Police Station on Sunday night. Ash-Sabur joined the protests in the Baipal area on August 5. His charred body was found at the Baipail intersection the next day.

Former MPs Mohammad Ekramul Karim Chowdhury and AHM Ibrahim are among 39 people sued over the killing of a youth named Asif, 24, in Noakhali. Asif was shot during clashes between protesters and police on August 5. He succumbed to his injuries on August 16. His father Morshed Alam filed the case with a court in Noakhali yesterday.

Another case was filed against a police officer and 17 AL men on charges of attacking and vandalising the houses of BNP men in 2018. A local BNP leader filed the case on Sunday night at Senbagh Police Station.

In Jashore, a case was filed yesterday against a deputy inspector general, an SP and three other police officers on charges of extrajudicial killing of a BNP activist in 2015.

Parveen Khatun, the widow of victim Abu Sayed of Manirampur upazila's Jaipur village, lodged the case with the Manirampur Cognisance Court.

Sayed was arrested on February 17, 2015, before being killed in "crossfire".

In Patuakhali, a case was filed against 51 AL men, including

Former state minister for disaster management and relief Mohibbur Rahman and 50 other AL men were sued by a local BNP activist in Patuakhali's Kalapara Police Station on Sunday night for allegedly attacking and vandalising a BNP office in Kalapara upazila on August 30 last year.

In Chattogram, a case was filed against 27 people, including former MP ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury, on charges of kidnapping, extortion and attempt to murder.

Sirajuddaula, the former chairman of Paschimgujra union under Raozan upazila, filed the case with a court in Chattogram yesterday.

[Our Correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report]

বাংলাদেশ
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন

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তারিখঃ ০৩ ভাদ্র ১৪৩১
১৮ আগস্ট ২০২৪

উচ্চশিক্ষাস্তরে মৌলিক ও অনুবাদ পুস্তক প্রকাশের জন্য পাণ্ডুলিপি আহ্বান

বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন উচ্চশিক্ষাস্তরে মৌলিক ও অনুবাদ পুস্তক প্রকাশ করে আসছে। প্রতিবছরের মতো এবছরও (২০২৪ সাল) বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষক, অবসরপ্রাপ্ত শিক্ষক, বিভিন্ন শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, গবেষণা প্রতিষ্ঠান/সংস্থার শিক্ষক/গবেষক, কমিশন কর্তৃপক্ষ ও কর্মকর্তাগণের নিকট হতে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তে পাণ্ডুলিপি আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

শর্তাবলিঃ

(১) ইউজিসি পুস্তক প্রকাশনা নীতিমালা, ২০২০ অনুযায়ী নির্বাচিত লেখককে প্রকাশিত পুস্তকের জন্য এককালীন ১,০০,০০০.০০ (এক লক্ষ) টাকা সম্মানী প্রদান করা হবে।

(২) বাংলায় সর্বোচ্চ ১২ ফন্ট ও ইংরেজিতে সর্বোচ্চ ১০ ফন্ট কম্পিউটার কম্পোজ করে ০৪ (চার) কপি পাণ্ডুলিপি A4 সাইজের কাগজে স্পাইরেল অথবা খোলা বাঁধাইপূর্বক কমিশনে দাখিল করতে হবে।

(৩) পাণ্ডুলিপি ১/১৬ ডবল ডিমাই বা ১/৮ ডবল ডিমাই/ক্রাউন সাইজে সিঙ্গেল লাইন স্পেসে ফরমেটিং করে পেনড্রাইভে কমিশনের রিসার্চ সাপোর্ট এন্ড পাবলিকেশন ডিভিশনে দাখিল করতে হবে।

(৪) নির্বাচিত পাণ্ডুলিপি সাধারণভাবে ১/১৬ ডবল ডিমাই সাইজে ৩০০ পৃষ্ঠা বা ১/৮ ডবল ডিমাই/ক্রাউন সাইজের ক্ষেত্রে ২৫০ পৃষ্ঠার মধ্যে সীমাবদ্ধ থাকবে। তবে এ ক্ষেত্রে কমিশন কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

(৫) লেখক কর্তৃক প্লেজিয়ারিজম (Plagiarism) সফটওয়ারের রিপোর্টসহ পাণ্ডুলিপির মৌলিকত্বের ঘোষণাপত্র এবং প্রকাশিত বইয়ের কতটুকু অংশ স্নাতক ও স্নাতকোত্তর পর্যায়ের সিলেবাস সংশ্লিষ্ট (Cover of Syllabus) তা উল্লেখপূর্বক প্রমাণকসহ আবেদনপত্রের সঙ্গে জমা দিতে হবে।

(৬) বাংলা ও ইংরেজি উভয় ভাষায় পাণ্ডুলিপি প্রণয়ন করা যাবে। পুস্তক প্রকাশনা নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী পাণ্ডুলিপি নির্বাচন করা হবে। অন্য কোনো প্রকাশক বা ব্যক্তি উদ্যোগে পূর্বে প্রকাশিত পুস্তক পুনঃমুদ্রণ বা পুনঃসংস্করণের জন্য গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

(৭) অনুবাদ পুস্তক প্রকাশ করার ক্ষেত্রে উদ্যোগী ব্যক্তি হলে ব্যক্তি এবং প্রতিষ্ঠান হলে প্রতিষ্ঠান কর্তৃক লেখক ও প্রকাশকের (যিনি মূলকপি রাইটের অধিকারী তার নিকট হতে) অনুমতিপত্র সংগ্রহ করে তা আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সংযোজন করতে হবে।

(৮) পাণ্ডুলিপির বানান রীতিতে প্রমিত নিয়ম অনুসরণ করতে হবে এবং বিশেষজ্ঞের মতামত নিয়ে পাণ্ডুলিপি মুদ্রণ ও প্রকাশনা প্রক্রিয়া গ্রহণ করা হবে।

(৯) পুস্তক প্রকাশনা কমিটি কর্তৃক প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্বাচনের পর বিষয় বিশেষজ্ঞের মতামত অনুযায়ী যদি পাণ্ডুলিপির বিষয়গত ও ভাষাগত মানোন্নয়নের আবশ্যকতা দেখা দেয়, সেক্ষেত্রে সংশ্লিষ্ট পাণ্ডুলিপি প্রণেতার সঙ্গে কমিশনের পক্ষ থেকে যোগাযোগ করা হবে।

(১০) সাধারণভাবে নির্বাচিত পাণ্ডুলিপির প্রথম সংস্করণ ৫৫০ (পাঁচশত পঞ্চাশ) কপি প্রকাশ করা হবে। তবে চাহিদার পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে কত কপি পুস্তক প্রকাশ করা যাবে তার সংখ্যা কমিশন কর্তৃক নির্ধারণ করা হবে।

(১১) ইউজিসি পুস্তক প্রকাশনা কমিটি কর্তৃক প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্বাচিত পাণ্ডুলিপি সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ের এক বা একধিক বিশেষজ্ঞ দ্বারা মূল্যায়ন এবং আনুষঙ্গিক সম্পাদনার কাজ শেষে চূড়ান্ত পর্যায়ে পাণ্ডুলিপি পুস্তক আকারে প্রকাশের ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

(১২) চূড়ান্তভাবে নির্বাচিত পাণ্ডুলিপি পুস্তক আকারে মুদ্রণ ও প্রকাশের জন্য লেখককে, কমিশনের সাথে নন-জুডিসিয়াল স্ট্যাম্পে পুস্তক মুদ্রণ এবং প্রকাশের জন্য সমঝোতা স্মারকে চুক্তিবদ্ধ হতে হবে।

পুস্তক প্রকাশে আগ্রহী লেখকগণকে আগামী ৩০ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে ৪ (চার) কপি পাণ্ডুলিপি কমিশনের রিসার্চ সাপোর্ট এন্ড পাবলিকেশন ডিভিশনের পরিচালক বরাবর জমা দেওয়ার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

মোঃ শাহীন সিরাজ
অতিরিক্ত পরিচালক
রিসার্চ সাপোর্ট এন্ড পাবলিকেশন ডিভিশন
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সদস্যসচিব, ইউজিসি পুস্তক প্রকাশনা কমিটি
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GD- 202

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Bring discipline back in civil admin

Stability needed to keep public offices running smoothly

We are concerned about the chaos gripping the civil administration following the fall of the Awami League government two weeks ago, resulting in disruptions in regular activities and services. According to a report by this daily, disorder, mainly due to a lack of qualified leadership, has been reigning in the ministries housed at the Secretariat Building, with frequent processions seen throughout last week. This situation must be handled deftly, lest the chaos leads to a deadlock in public services.

One issue highlighted by some mid-level officials is accumulated anger over top officials failing to lead by example. During the 15-year rule of Sheikh Hasina, these officials—mostly secretaries—spent their time running after various benefits. As the regime fell, a number of them did not show up at work—some even switching off their phones—when their presence was needed. Moreover, there are no specific instructions yet about the general administration from the interim government, which took office on August 8.

On the other hand, officers from different ministries, mainly BCS cadres, have been demonstrating with various demands. Their grievances range from denial of promotions to unfavourable transfer orders to change of designation. What is astonishing is that a majority of them are seeking to safeguard their personal interests during a crisis. Given how the top officials acted so far, it is perhaps natural that those below them would follow suit. One secretary lamented that "it is unimaginable that BCS cadres... can behave like this." We can't say we are surprised, though. When competent and sincere officers are pushed aside while incompetent and corrupt officials are favoured, such an outcome is inevitable. There have been no administrative reforms over the last 15 years; those who sought such reforms were ignored or not allowed to work, said a joint secretary.

Crisis has taken hold of the police administration as well. According to a report in Prothom Alo, there, too, partisanship has helped some police officials make impressive gains while those deemed remotely affiliated with the opposition were deprived of due benefits. Now, many of the police officers are in hiding while many have been dismissed from duty or made to retire because of past records. This has led to a sense of uncertainty among the junior and low-ranked officials.

This state of affairs cannot continue. A civil administration cannot continue to be dysfunctional, just as the police force cannot wallow in uncertainty. We would like to remind public servants that their job requires a bit of compromise, especially during a crisis. We know that some of their grievances are genuine and need attention of the authorities. But given the current situation, they need to be patient and follow due process to get what they have been deprived of. The interim government, meanwhile, must deal with this situation firmly and judiciously to restore discipline, getting rid of the unruliness. It must also address all genuine grievances and bring to the fore competent, honest officials with good track records. Lastly, an administrative overhaul is crucial to ensure that the civil and police administrations are able to operate independently and efficiently, regardless of who sits at the helm of the government.

Energy reforms are long overdue

CPD's three-step proposal deserves consideration

The Awami League government's questionable policies in the power and energy sector badly affected the economy over the last 15 years, prompting experts to frequently call for reforms but to no avail. Now that the interim government has taken charge, we hope to see the initiation of some much-needed actions in that regard. The three-step proposal given by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) shows where the focus should be. It has put forth a 100-day plan highlighting the key priorities, followed by significant reforms stretching over the next six months.

In particular, four acts and policies highlighted by the CPD need immediate revisions since those were made primarily to benefit vested interest groups. For instance, through the enactment of the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act, also known as the Indemnity Act, the erstwhile government awarded public works to conglomerates without issuing any tender notices, while no public procurement rules were followed either. This act should be repealed immediately. The other acts that need revisions are the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) Act, the Renewable Energy Policy, and the Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan (IEPMP).

The need for the BERC to operate independently cannot be stressed enough. The amendment to the relevant act, done in 2022 to empower the government to set power and energy tariffs on its own under "special circumstances," without holding any public hearing, was a shady decision that frequently shot up energy prices. This needs to change. In addition, the IEPMP needs to be revised because the government allegedly projected faulty energy and power demand in it. Moreover, the suggestion to link the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority with the chief adviser's office also deserves consideration, as it will hopefully speed up phasing out of the fossil fuel-based power plants.

Phasing out the inefficient power plants should be another goal for the interim government. According to the CPD, the Awami League government paid a total of around Tk 105,000 crore as capacity payments to power plant owners in the 14 years up to August 2023, which is outrageous. So much money was squandered while citizens were either deprived of power or forced to pay exorbitantly for it. Revising the power purchase contracts and incorporating a "no electricity, no pay" clause will lessen the burden of capacity payments.

These are just a few key areas that need immediate attention from the interim government. There are many other short- and long-term suggestions given by the CPD which are quite well-thought-out, and can, if properly implemented, ensure competition, efficiency, transparency and accountability in the power and energy sector.

How a banking commission can address challenges in the sector

MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun
is executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue and non-resident senior fellow at of the Atlantic Council. Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

In a welcome move, the Bangladesh interim government intends to establish a banking commission soon to introduce crucial reforms in the banking sector. This initiative is a response to our long-standing demand for taking meaningful measures to rescue the financial sector from inadequate governance.

It is unfortunate that the previous government fell short of its commitments to strengthen the banking sector, as outlined in various policy documents and strategic plans. This lack of action has left the sector exposed to increasing vulnerabilities.

Institutional challenges in the banking sector include the appointment of bank directors often influenced by political connections, loans granted for political reasons, the rescheduling of loans despite poor repayment records, writing off loans to reduce tax burdens and clean bank balance sheets, weak internal controls, inadequate compliance and risk management, and the failure of some banks to meet international standards.

Additionally, regulatory weaknesses have contributed to the sector's vulnerability. These include the lack of independence of the Bangladesh Bank, overlapping regulations by the Financial Institutions Division (FID) and the Bangladesh Bank, leniency towards defaulters by the Bangladesh Bank, arbitrary issuance of bank licenses to crony capitalists, government-led recapitalisation of banks, and the quasi-monopolistic power held by a few bank oligarchs.

The most alarming indicator of the banking sector's fragility is the substantial increase in non-performing loans (NPLs) accumulated over the past 15 years, exacerbated by both direct and indirect support from the previous government's policymakers. In 2009, NPLs in banks totalled Tk 22,480 crore, which surged to about Tk 1,82,000 crore by March 2024. The true extent of NPLs would be considerably higher if distressed assets, loans in special mention accounts, loans under court injunctions, and rescheduled loans were included.

High NPLs limit banks' fiscal flexibility by constraining their ability to expand lending and forcing them to forgo interest income. They also reduce banks' capacity to take on risks, leading to an increase in the cost of funds. Additionally, banks face capital shortfalls as they must set aside provisions to cover their NPLs, which in turn negatively impacts their return on assets, equity, and capital liquidity.

Often, loans were approved without proper commercial considerations, heightening the risk of defaults during the previous regime. When the central bank is not allowed to operate independently, it is more likely to make poor decisions. Unfortunately, the Bangladesh Bank was unable to penalise wilful defaulters due to the loss of its independent decision-making authority, which has been overridden by politically connected interest groups.

VISUAL: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

Given the worsening performance of the banking sector, we have consistently advocated for the establishment of a temporary banking commission to address these pressing issues. The purpose of this commission would be to thoroughly investigate and propose solutions to the challenges facing the sector. To ensure the commission is effective, its Terms of Reference (ToR) should be clearly outlined and may include the following objectives.

First, the objectives of the banking commission should be clearly defined and focused. These should include: i) conducting a critical assessment of the overall state of the sector; ii) ensuring transparency in data and information related to the sector; iii) identifying the root causes of current problems and potential future challenges; iv) determining which groups and institutions are responsible for the sector's crisis; and (v) providing specific, actionable recommendations for administrative, regulatory, legal, and structural reforms in the short to medium term.

Second, the commission's timeline should be concise and strictly timebound, not exceeding three to four months, to enable the government to begin implementation promptly.

Third, the commission should adopt an inclusive and participatory approach in preparing its report. This approach should include: i) conducting desk research using existing data and information; ii) holding individual meetings with relevant stakeholders; iii) consulting with experts; iv) organising public dialogues and hearings; and v) engaging in discussions with a wide range of stakeholders including policymakers, entrepreneurs, bank customers, small savers, small and medium-sized businesses, experts, bank officials, economists, representatives of banking-related organisations, women, youth, grassroots organisations, and the media.

Fourth, to ensure transparency, the commission should regularly update the public on its progress. Interim reports should be prepared and made available to citizens, and a draft of the final report should be posted online to gather feedback from stakeholders.

Fifth, commission members should be highly competent, experienced, honest, and impartial, and they must carry out their responsibilities with the utmost professionalism.

Sixth, the commission must be allowed to operate independently, free from any external influence.

Seventh, the interim government should establish a clear roadmap outlining when and how the commission's suggestions will be implemented. The government should also be required to provide full transparency regarding the proper implementation of these recommendations and their impact on the banking sector.

The banking sector has undeniably played a significant role in expanding trade and business within the economy. In the 1980s, the government of Bangladesh initiated the liberalisation process by privatising nationalised commercial banks. This reform process continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s, guided by the directives of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Alongside these reforms, the National Commission on Money, Banking, and Credit was established in 1984. A banking commission was formed in 1996, followed by the creation of a banking reform committee in 2002. In 2003, the Central Bank Strengthening Project was initiated to develop a robust and effective regulatory and supervisory framework for the banking sector. The Bangladesh Bank Amendment Bill, 2003, which granted Bangladesh Bank autonomy, was passed by the parliament. However, despite this mandate, Bangladesh Bank ultimately lost its independence.

The recommendations for the commission can only improve the banking sector if it is allowed to operate without political interference. While the interim government is dedicated to implementing institutional reforms during its term, it must also ensure that these reforms are sustained beyond its tenure.

The darkest hour

Manzur-al-Matin
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MANZUR-AL-MATIN

After a decade of separation, my four sisters and parents had planned to finally meet in the US. My elder sister travelled across the Atlantic from the UK, my father from Bangladesh, another sister from the West Coast to meet the rest in the East Coast of the US. One of my sisters, Mouna (whom I have always addressed as Myna), almost managed to convince me to apply for a US visitor visa. But then, the attacks on Gaza happened. I could not get myself to travel to a country that continued to supply weapons and provide unconditional political support to the Netanyahu regime.

Then Abu Sayed appeared before all of us. With his outstretched arms, with his head held high, with his simple yet impenetrable courage! That changed everything.

I, who always thought it wise to stay out of the political binary, decided the time for patience and silence was over. As I stepped out of our apartment the next day, I found my wife, Sara, and my friend, Snehadri, by my side. I was certain of one thing, if we didn't go out and protest, the next child to receive a bullet in his chest would be mine.

> **I, who always thought it wise to stay out of the political binary, decided the time for patience and silence was over. As I stepped out of our apartment the next day, I found my wife, Sara, and my friend, Snehadri, by my side. I was certain of one thing, if we didn't go out and protest, the next child to receive a bullet in his chest would be mine.**

Out there we found so many of our children. Boys and girls alike. The age-old trifurcated system of English, Bangla, and Madrasa mediums of education had suddenly evaporated. They were all there. All chanting the same slogan, "WE WANT JUSTICE!"

To my surprise, I found the mothers closely following their sons and daughters. They were afraid. Afraid of the tear gas, the rubber bullets, the cleavers, and the live rounds. But falling back was not an option. Because falling back meant betraying Abu Syed. And he was standing right there. All the while.

I managed to upload several images and video footages on social media. One of these was particularly disturbing for my family, who had managed to come together in the East Coast by that point. I can hardly imagine what they went through when all communications in the country were severed by the government. I later learnt my 83-year-old father barely slept during those five days and nights. My mother, whose life revolves around her plants that have often made us siblings envious, went out to join a gathering outside the White House defying incessant rain. An umbrella in one hand, and a placard in another. The support I received from my family moved me to the core. Even my uncle, with whom I had fallen out of contact a long while ago, reached out, spoke out, and wholeheartedly supported our cause.

During the days of the internet blackout, all social media platforms were hushed. All we had remaining on TV was the voice of Tanvir Chowdhury on Al Jazeera English. BBC would follow his lead a couple of days later. But at least four newspapers kept fighting: *Prothom Alo*, *The Daily Star*, *Samakal* and last but not the least, *New Age* with the uncompromising Nurul Kabir as its editor. I must thank all the brave journalists who fought on despite all odds, risking their lives. Within my TV station, Channel 24, Zummatull Bida was my inspiration. Despite being hit by shotgun pellets, despite the attempts to seek her out when she was hiding among the students, she somehow managed to gather the courage to fight on. She went back out onto the field the very next day after being shot. That night, she had to keep her location a secret, even from her colleagues. You will always be remembered as the pioneers of truth, strength, and courage!

These people have shown us, no matter how ruthless an oppressor gets, no matter how much pressure is there to silence the media, there are always ways to keep on fighting. As individuals entrusted to inform the public, journalists must ask themselves at the end of each day, whether they have done justice to the duty they have taken up on their shoulders. It is a very personal burden that each news crew carries.

In Zumma's own words, "If at the end of a day's work we can look at the mirror and see no shame or guilt in our eyes, we are then fit for the next day's work."

These dark days and nights have taught us plenty. My only hope is that we remember the strength that lies with every individual. The strength to call a spade a spade, to speak out, when everyone else falls silent.

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After the euphoria, the concerns

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AHRAR AHMAD

The young people of the country deserve to be congratulated, their heroism celebrated, and their momentous accomplishments acknowledged. Their dedication, bravery and sacrifices to free the country from a deeply unpopular regime justly earned them the affection, admiration and gratitude of the people.

However, the pace and abruptness of these unprecedented developments must give us pause. After all, the actual movement and the fall of the regime occurred within only one month of turmoil and bloodshed. Moreover, the political and psychological legacy left by the previous regime heightens some concerns.

First and foremost, some resentments and frustrations of the people that had accumulated over several years, some sentiments of revenge and retribution among those who had suffered injustice, and some opportunists simply taking advantage of a fluid situation, have all led to various incidents of violence and vandalism. While some of this is expected, it must be resisted.

This lawlessness is particularly worrisome since some people have ransacked government (read people's) properties, destroyed revered historical markers relating to our Liberation War, and attacked minority communities simply because they are vulnerable. Given the fact that the police themselves remain discredited and demoralised, such crowd gangsterism becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and invites disaster.

Even though people like Gustave Le Bon, Sigmund Freud, Nobel Laureate Elias Canetti and others have studied the psychology of mob behaviour, the phenomenon remains unclear. There are theories of deindividuation when people supposedly lose their sense of individual identity, personal responsibility or moral authority; of people demonstrating "bystander effects" that attract random participants by appealing to their sense of enhanced power; of people responding to simplistic, exaggerated and overly sentimental rhetoric, signs and codes; or of people becoming emboldened to do what they can get away with in the culture of impunity typically associated with the fall of an autocrat.

These groups must be calmed and contained as soon as possible, or it will become progressively difficult to do so later. It is uplifting to witness courageous and committed young people volunteering to combat such sinister forces and protect public order and minority communities. The worst seems to be over. But the anxieties persist, made sharper in the age of social media, AI bots, and deep fakes. One hopes, like Lincoln, that "the better angels of our nature" will prevail. But let us not forget that he himself was killed.

Second, the rapidity and drama with which the situation unfolded made it impossible for any "day after" scenarios to emerge. There was no time or opportunity to develop any ideals, programmes, goals, or a clear direction forward. So, the situation remains fraught and fragile. This becomes more problematic in the moral vacuum, personal distrust and social erosion that resulted from years of misrule and mischief, and the hyper-polarised political environment that had been created.

Moreover, the very idea of "politics" had been devalued and mangled by successive regimes. The classical notion of "politics" was built around concepts of public service, the common good, and the people's welfare. But in Bangladesh it had become a sport (the word "*khela*" had been routinely used) in which cynical, cunning and self-serving people desperately and shamelessly pursued the acquisition of personal profit and power.

> **The problems Bangladesh faces today are surely daunting. But an incredible opportunity has been created to build a more democratic, just and beautiful country. The youngsters have fulfilled their responsibilities. Will the elders find the moral clarity, economic foresight and political courage to fulfil theirs?**

Additionally, the guardrails that protect democracy, such as independent judiciaries, robust parliamentary oppositions, vigilant media houses, lively civil society platforms, or autonomous institutions of higher education had all been overwhelmed, finessed out of existence, or serially threatened and undermined.

Similarly, political parties that exist are not based on policies, ideologies, or democratic practices. They merely represent some patron-clientelist configurations where some sycophantic and opportunistic followers cluster around a "leader" who demands a cultish reverence (which is often shown in extravagant and comical ways).

The two organised parties which had held power in the past are burdened by their own history of bad governance, electoral abuses, violence against opponents (including assassination attempts and farcical cover-ups like Joj Miah), ethical lapses, constitutional tinkering, endemic corruption, and nepotistic family control. Other parties are shadowy and limited in their organisation and appeal. The consequent political vacuum in the country looks like an abyss staring back at us.

Even the "deep state" in Bangladesh has been debilitated by inefficiency, bribery and political patronage. Access to almost all government services (which are people's rights) as well as the regular functioning of the economy, became contingent upon payments to syndicates, power brokers and toll collectors, and navigating through serpentine and costly procedures and paperwork.

KLEPTOCRACY
ONE TAKA

The economy was turned into a vast kleptocracy of the lumpen-bourgeoisie and their bureaucratic enablers. VISUAL: **STAR**

The economy, suffering from inequality, inflation, unemployment, low forex reserves, and a banking sector in shambles, was turned into a vast kleptocracy of the lumpen-bourgeoisie and their bureaucratic enablers. It embraced the principles of predatory capitalism and concentrated on maximising aggregate indicators of growth and undertaking some dazzling megaprojects, while disregarding quality-of-life indicators such as human rights, civil liberties, ecological conservation, economic justice, gender equity, and public safety. To re-set directions and craft policies that would prioritise the interests of the people would be a complex undertaking.

Third, the previous regime is down, but not out. They may lie low for the time being, some may have fled, some arrested, some may announce retirement. But they are still there. The fact that so many of their followers are armed, are used to violence and, unlike most other parties, have a mass basis, makes their presence more ominous.

However, while we condemn their behaviour that brought us to this sad situation, that party's role in our national movement for independence and, particularly, the charismatic presence of Bangabandhu in that struggle, cannot be dismissed or minimised. One must demonstrate some maturity and objectivity in separating his inspiring leadership at that critical juncture in our national history from his obvious missteps and misjudgements later.

Along the same lines, weaponising "*muktijuddher chetona*", the hawking of "official" narratives by claiming exclusive partisan ownership over the war (even pitting freedom fighters against the people e.g., through "quotas") and interjecting the hateful word "Razakar" during the current unrest, were all crude and cruel interventions. However, the war itself, and the artefacts and relics of that glorious period of our national history, must not be tarnished but appreciated, preserved and studied (hopefully by scholars and researchers and not slogan-mongering party hacks).

Finally, the "India factor" lurks around the corner. There is no doubt that India deserves our respect and gratitude for its actions and sacrifices in our Liberation War. It had harboured millions of our refugees, hosted our government in exile, provided weapons and training to our freedom fighters, offered critical diplomatic support and, eventually, fought a war with Pakistan in which 3,843 of its soldiers were killed and 9,851 wounded.

The initial relationship was predictably rosy but soured later. Many bilateral issues (such as trade barriers, market access, illegal immigration, borders, water sharing, etc.) could all be resolved if good faith negotiations between equals had been pursued. However, India's patronising attitudes and the insensitivity to the interests and demands of Bangladesh increasingly forced the latter to look weak and dependent. In popular perception, India turned from a "good neighbour" into a "neighbourhood bully."

The relationship became more complicated through the unleashing of communal forces in India through the ascent of proto-fascist forces pursuing a Hindutva agenda of supremacy and intolerance which led to systematic assaults on India's Muslim history and heritage, as well as the rights and practices of minorities. This would affect the people of Bangladesh as well.

Finally, India left the impression that it was more interested in cultivating a relationship with a particular "party" than with the sovereign country that international law and norms dictate. This politicised its role and compromised its neutrality. And since that "party" stands discredited in Bangladesh today, and its leader has found protection in India, the situation becomes murkier yet.

The problems Bangladesh faces today are surely daunting. But an incredible opportunity has been created to build a more democratic, just and beautiful country. The youngsters have fulfilled their responsibilities. Will the elders find the moral clarity, economic foresight and political courage to fulfil theirs? The nation wishes them success and waits in hope and prayers.

'Any VC or teacher is expected to stand by students'

Dr Gitiara Nasreen, *professor, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism at the University of Dhaka, talks with* **Naznin Tithi** *of* **The Daily Star** *about ways to end the current stalemate in our public universities and the reforms needed to ensure a better educational environment.*

After the July uprising, what kind of changes do you want to see in our public universities? What kind of reforms are needed for a better academic environment on the campuses?

Many will admit that it is now difficult to call the public universities in Bangladesh "universities" in an ideal sense. They have gradually become stagnant, losing the environment for knowledge exploration. While their numbers have increased, their quality and standards have diminished. I believe the main reason behind this is, for many years those in power have maintained their control over the universities. Since there are many sagacious and conscious young people in the university, political power has been used to manage them through all spheres including students, teachers and administration. Now, to bring about positive changes in the universities, several changes need to be made in both the short-term and the long-term.

First, those who will lead the university, namely the vice-chancellors and pro-vice-chancellors, should not be appointed based on their educational and research qualifications only, they must have a clear goal to advance the institution and the capacity to fulfil that goal. Secondly, it is necessary to guarantee a proper educational environment for students with adequate accommodation and other necessary facilities. Thirdly, it is important to ensure teachers' accountability. Evaluation of teachers by students must be implemented quickly and effectively.

What should be done to end the stalemate that has been created in the public universities with the mass resignations of vice chancellors, pro-VCs and other key position holders? What should be the standard procedure for appointing new VCs?

The ideal method for the appointment of a vice-chancellor at a university should be through open competition so that qualified individuals are entrusted with this responsibility. The vice-chancellor must be academically sound, and at the same time, a visionary who knows which direction he wants to lead the university. After the anti-discrimination movement, students now want a vice-chancellor who will stand by their side. This is what any vice-chancellor or a teacher is expected to do—stand by students. Since partisan politics has dominated these appointments until now, vice-chancellors were subservient to the dictates of those who appointed them. Therefore, the welfare or safety of the students did not get priority to the VCs. Another part of this control structure was the ruling party's student organisation. They kept ordinary students in a state of fear through various forms of direct or indirect coercion.

Gitiara Nasreen

During the student-led mass movement, the relationship between the teachers and students became strained for obvious reasons. What should be done to mend this relationship?

The positions of proctor, provost and resident teachers have so far been given on political considerations. And since the nature of their work is controlling, this creates a distance between them and the students. When students believe that a teacher is sincere in teaching and related activities, and does not discriminate, no complications are created between the students and teachers. A teacher is a human being, and he can make mistakes, and he can also apologise for those mistakes. Sadly, many teachers and students do not think this way.

Do you think banning partisan student politics will bring the much-awaited change on our campuses?

We are observing a growing hatred towards politics among ordinary students. But this anti-discrimination movement is indeed a part of politics. In that case, it is their responsibility to determine how they will organise to ensure their rights. However, it is important to re-establish all the hall councils and central student councils in the universities as soon as possible. It is also necessary to fix the method through which students can participate in the decision-making process at the Senate and all other levels.

What about teachers' politics? What kind of reforms are needed in the university teachers' recruitment process?

It is natural for a teacher to be politically conscious. It is also not unusual for teachers to have their demands and claims and also their own unions. But by the term teacher politics, we now only understand the sharing of positions and titles among the teachers affiliated with power and the various ways they gain personal benefits. We have seen that the members of the teachers' association in every university are mainly from the political party in power. Therefore, they are by no means the representatives of all teachers. We hope that the teachers' associations will engage in the necessary reforms with the participation of all types of teachers, without being influenced by those in power.

What immediate measures should be taken to make all the campuses and residential halls safe for the students?

There are specific rules for seat distribution in the hall, which were not followed.

It is possible to ensure the security of the students if the seats are distributed according to the rules if no individual or group is allowed to dominate the halls, and if those involved in harassing the students are given appropriate punishment.

I feel as much pain in the abuse of the students as I do for those who are learning to abuse and torture. Eliminating discrimination means that no student—male or female—should be subjected to any kind of abuse in the universities.

The sexual harassment prevention cells that universities are supposed to have are either absent or not set up according to the rules. Students are often not aware of their existence. In some recent cases, it has been seen that even when complaints are filed with the cells, they often end up accusing the victim and absolving the accused.

There should be clear guidance on where and how to file complaints in case of any harassment or bullying. There is a need to create policies to prevent any form of harassment that the proctorial team will implement. In addition, we, on behalf of the University Teachers' Network, have been calling for the formation of an education commission that will formulate policies and monitor them to bring about the necessary changes in university education.

CHITTAGONG PORT AUTHORITY
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (MECH)/ZONE-AB

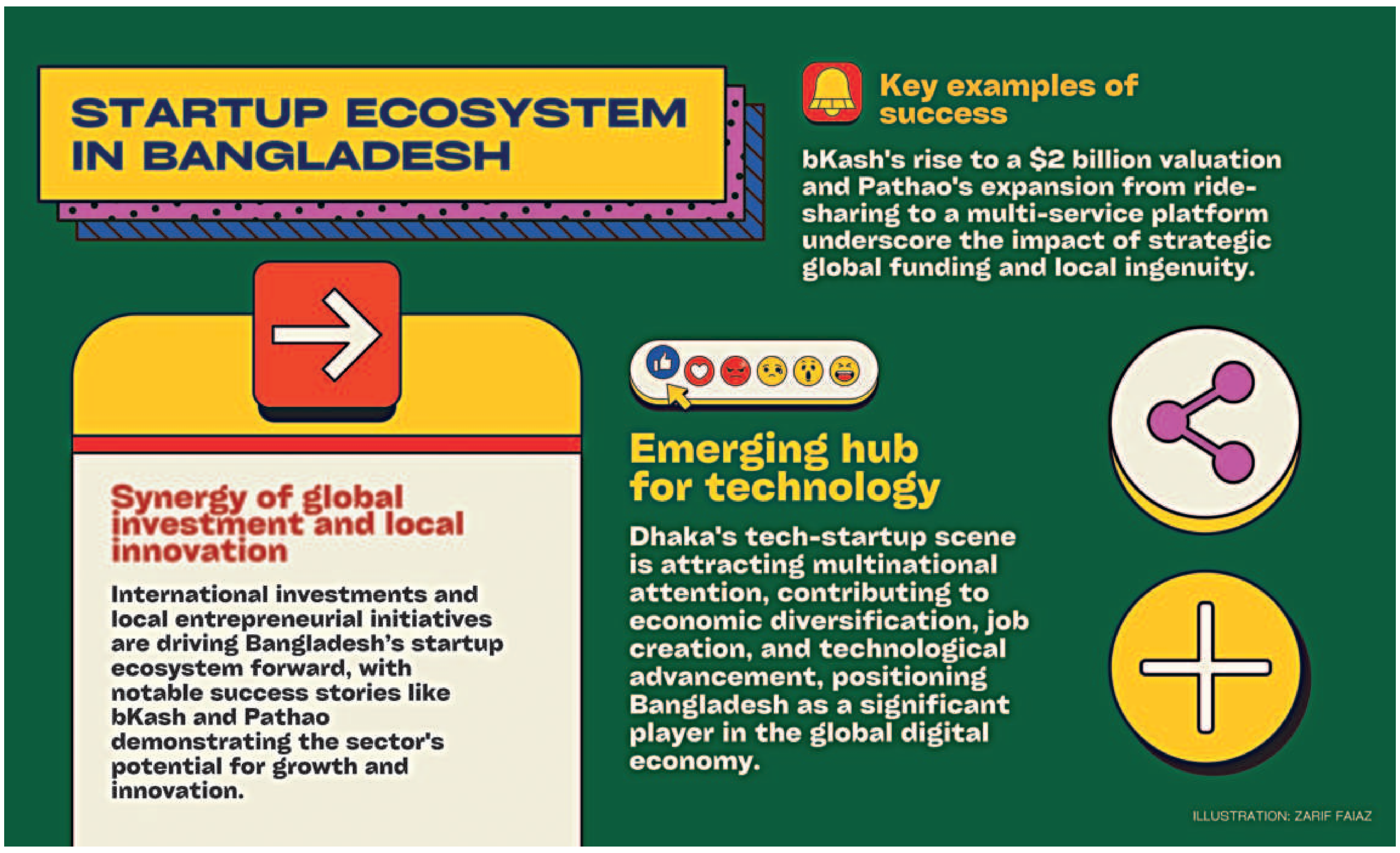
Invitation for Tenders

1. Ministry/Division : Ministry of Shipping
2. Procuring Entity Name : Chittagong Port Authority
3. Procuring Entity District : Chittagong
4. Invitation for : Procurement of Kits Allowance (liveries & Commodities) of 3rd & 4th class Employees for Financial Year 2023-24 of Zonal Workshop-AB.
5. Invitation Ref No : 18.13.0000.382.07.081.24
6. Date : 01/08/2024
7. Procurement Method : Open Tendering Method
8. Budget and Source of Funds : CPA's own resources.
9. Development Partners : Not Applicable
10.
11. Tender Publication Date : 25-08-2024 at 12.30 PM
12. Tender Last Selling Date : 11-09-2024 at 17.00 PM
13. Tender Submission Date and Time 12-09-2024 at 12.00 PM
14. Tender Opening Date and Time : 12-09-2024 at 12.30 PM
15. Place of Selling Tender Document : Executive Engineer (Mechanical), Zonal Workshop-AB, (Near jetty gate no. 02), Chittagong Port Authority, Chittagong-4100, Bangladesh.
16. Place of receiving & Opening Tender Document : -Do-
17. Eligibility of Tenderer : Tenderer who fulfill the qualification stated in the Tender Document and countries with which Bangladesh has commercial relation.
18. Price of Tender Document (Tk) : 500.00 (Five Hundred only)
19. Tender Security amount (Tk.) : 16,000.00(Sixteen Thousand Taka only)
20. Name, Designation & Address of Official Inviting Tender : Kishor Kanti Das
Executive Engineer (Mechanical),
Zonal Workshop-AB, (Near jetty gate no. 02),
Chittagong Port Authority, Chittagong-4100, Bangladesh.
21. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders
22. Tender will be treated as cancelled due to one or more of the following reason:
    a. If the specified tender security is not submitted.
    b. No initial of contractor in the place where correction is made after over writing the quoted rate or fluid is used.
    c. If there is no signature of tenderer on each page of tender documents.
    d. If the tender submitted is substantially non responsive.

23. No tender schedules will be sold on the date of opening tender.
If selling/receiving/opening of tender is not possible on the last date of selling tender or the date of receiving tender or on the date of opening tender under unavoidable circumstances then the tender will be sold.
24. The "Public Procurement Regulation-2008" will guide this tender.

Executive Engineer (Mech)
Zonal Workshop-AB
Chittagong Port Authority

GD- 206



STARTUP ECOSYSTEM IN BANGLADESH

Key examples of success

bKash's rise to a $2 billion valuation and Pathao's expansion from ride-sharing to a multi-service platform underscore the impact of strategic global funding and local ingenuity.

Synergy of global investment and local innovation

International investments and local entrepreneurial initiatives are driving Bangladesh's startup ecosystem forward, with notable success stories like bKash and Pathao demonstrating the sector's potential for growth and innovation.

Emerging hub for technology

Dhaka's tech-startup scene is attracting multinational attention, contributing to economic diversification, job creation, and technological advancement, positioning Bangladesh as a significant player in the global digital economy.

ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

How international investment and local innovations shape our **startup ecosystem**

The startup ecosystem in Bangladesh is on an impressive growth trajectory, powered by a blend of international investments and local innovations.

IMAAD AHMED

The startup landscape in Bangladesh is undergoing rapid transformation, spurred by significant inflows of international investments and the innovative prowess of local entrepreneurs. This growth is evident across various sectors, with mobile financial services and tech-based startups leading the charge. With a strategic mix of global funding and local entrepreneurial flair, Bangladesh is carving a niche as an emerging hub for innovation in South Asia.

The impact of remittances and foreign investments

The interplay between local entrepreneurial spirit and foreign financial support has been pivotal. For instance, bKash, a mobile financial service provider that revolutionised digital payments in Bangladesh, emerged from this ecosystem. Starting with seed capital from BRAC Bank and international backers like the Gates Foundation and Ant Financial, bKash has scaled to a valuation close to $2 billion, highlighting the potential for local startups to achieve substantial growth.

Beyond their own successes, financial technology startups are playing a crucial role in the startup ecosystem by facilitating seamless transactions between investors and startup founders, thus enhancing the flow of capital within the sector. This capability has been instrumental in accelerating growth and allowing startups to rapidly scale and innovate.

Case studies of innovation and success

Pathao is another illustrative example, evolving from a ride-sharing service to a multifaceted platform offering delivery and logistic services, demonstrating the scalability of startups in addressing diverse consumer needs. This growth was supported by strategic investments from international venture capitalists, including Indonesian ride-sharing giant Go-Jek, showcasing the confidence of global investors in Bangladeshi startups.

Moreover, the tech-startup scene in Dhaka is becoming a hub for software and mobile application development, attracting attention from multinational corporations seeking to tap into the local talent pool. These startups are not only contributing to economic diversification but are also fostering job creation and technological advancement.

The startup ecosystem in Bangladesh is on an impressive growth trajectory, powered by a blend of international investments and local innovations. As this sector expands, it will play a crucial role in shaping the country's economic future, making it imperative for policies to align with the evolving needs of this dynamic sector. With continued support and investment, Bangladesh is poised to become a significant player in the global digital economy.

THE ARTICLE ABOVE IS AN ABRIDGED VERSION. TO READ THE FULL VERSION ONLINE, PLEASE SCAN THE QR CODE.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

BRAC University
Manager, International and Scholarship Office
Deadline: August 31
Eligibility:
- Minimum postgraduation from a reputed university and with excellent academic credentials.

Minimum experience: 5 years

MetLife Bangladesh
Manager, Financial Reporting
Deadline: August 22
Eligibilities:
- Graduation or postgraduation in Accounting or Finance from a reputed university.

Minimum experience: 2-3 years

UNDP
Project Manager
Deadline: August 31
Eligibility:
- Master's Degree or equivalent in Social Science, Business Administration, Public Administration, Economics, Political Sciences, or any other relevant discipline.

Minimum experience: 2-4 years

H&M
Component Developer, Knit/Jersey
Deadline: August 30
Eligibility:
- Academic background in Textile Engineering.

Minimum experience: 5-6 years

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.

> **"Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower."**
>
> **STEVE JOBS**

The art of embracing feedback for self-improvement

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

In today's fast-paced competitive workplace, a small positive comment like "Good job" from your employer can go a long way. Inversely, a negative comment can leave you feeling deflated – and repeated instances can even lead to burnout and wanting to quit. However, when approached with the right mindset, both types of feedback can significantly contribute to professional development.

Keep an open mind

The first step is to approach feedback, both positive and negative, with an open mind. It's natural to feel defensive with negative feedback or complacent with positive feedback, but inappropriate responses to either type could hinder your growth or leave a bad impression. When given feedback, listen carefully and focus on understanding the message without immediately reacting. Taking time to reflect helps differentiate emotional responses from constructive actions.

Distil the core message

Feedback often includes emotions and subjective opinions. To use the comment for your betterment, focus on the core message instead of getting bogged down by the unnecessary details. For example, rather than fixating on a critique like "Your presentation lacked energy", focus on the actionable part: "Consider varying your tone to maintain audience engagement."

Avoid complacency with positive feedback

Positive feedback isn't just a pat on the back; it's an opportunity to understand what you're doing well and how to build on it. Rather than letting it lead to complacency, use it as a springboard for further improvement. Consider how the praised qualities can be developed further, such as by mentoring others, taking on more complex projects, or refining your skills.

Don't let negative feedback get you down

Negative feedback, though often hard to swallow, is invaluable for pinpointing areas that need improvement. For example, if you receive feedback that your time management needs improvement, consider it a priority, as this skill affects many aspects of your work, and potentially, the work of your colleagues as well. Once you've identified key areas for development, create a concrete plan to address them. This might involve seeking additional training, asking for guidance from a mentor, or setting specific goals for yourself.

Shikho was blacklisted from government funding, says CEO

NEXT STEP DESK

Shahir Chowdhury, the founder and CEO of the Bangladeshi edtech startup Shikho, recently stated in a Facebook post that his company had been blacklisted from receiving government funding. According to Chowdhury, Shikho was close to securing an investment, which included BDT 5 crore from Startup Bangladesh Limited (SBL) as part of a larger USD 1.5 million funding round. However, SBL abruptly withdrew its support just before the agreement was to be signed, citing political reasons.

In his post, Chowdhury claimed that SBL's decision was influenced by information from a third party, leading SBL to believe that it could not provide funds to Shikho due to political concerns. In his post, he expressed his surprise and disappointment, noting that this situation has posed a significant challenge for the company.

Chowdhury also stated that it later became clear that Shikho had been "blacklisted" from all official activities of the government. Despite efforts to maintain contact and seek assistance, he said that the Ministry of ICT and SBL chose to support only the institutions of their choice.

In his Facebook post, Chowdhury referenced comments made by Bangladesh's new ICT advisor, who has called for a re-evaluation of the startup ecosystem. He highlighted the importance of supporting startups that have faced challenges, alongside those that were previously supported by the government.

Earlier in March 2023, Shikho successfully raised USD 900,000 in a strategic funding round involving four investors, including three foreign venture capital funds: Goodwater, Sturgeon Capital, and Black Kite Capital. The Sajida Foundation, a charitable organisation, also participated in the fundraising effort.

To date, Shikho has raised USD 6.5 million, the highest amount secured by any edtech startup in Bangladesh, according to a previous company press release. Shikho's investor base includes notable global entities such as Learn Capital from Silicon Valley and Wavemaker Partners from Singapore.

Ola electric hits $7 billion valuation after e-motorcycle launch and battery plan

NEXT STEP DESK

Ola Electric Mobility, India's leading e-scooter manufacturer, saw its valuation soar to 586.64 billion rupees ($6.99 billion) on Friday, following the launch of its new line of electric motorcycles. The company's shares surged by 20%, reflecting investor confidence in its plans to reduce costs by manufacturing its own batteries.

The launch marks Ola Electric's entry into the highly competitive Indian two-wheeler market, where it will compete with established players like Bajaj Auto, TVS Motor, and Hero Motocorp. Two-wheelers are a dominant mode of transport in India, with 18 million units sold last year.

Ola Electric's stock has jumped 75% since its August 9 IPO, which raised $734 million. Despite initially lowering its valuation target to $4 billion due to global tech market corrections, the company's current growth trajectory has exceeded expectations.

Star
SPORT
DHAKA TUESDAY AUGUST 20, 2024, BHADRA 5, 1431 BS

"I'd find it hard to fathom playing [the Women's World Cup] there [in Bangladesh] at the moment, as a human being, I feel like it might be the wrong thing to do... but I'll leave it to the ICC to work out."

Australia women's cricket captain
Alyssa Healy

BCB in flux as key ICC meeting approaches

SPORTS REPORTER

There was plenty of activity in Bangladesh cricket yesterday, and while this will influence how the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is run, the focus will be on today's ICC virtual meeting, where the decision on whether Bangladesh will be able to host the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup will be made.

While the Youth and Sports Adviser, Asif Mahmud, visited the BCB headquarters for the first time, the highlight of the day was the resignation of board director and cricket operations chairman Jalal Yunus, which signalled significant developments in store.

The BCB's modus operandi has garnered interest ever since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, which saw many board directors go into hiding, including its president, Nazmul Hassan Papon.

Although there were suggestions from various quarters that the BCB directors might resign altogether, the National Sports Council (NSC) route was ultimately chosen to keep the board functional.

The NSC has five councillors and nominated two board directors, Jalal Yunus and Ahmed Sajjadul Alam Bobby, in the BCB's 25-member board of directors. Eventually, Yunus resigned from his directorship role under the NSC quota. "I have resigned as director for the greater good of cricket," Jalal told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, Bobby informed The Daily Star that he will not follow Yunus's lead, having received a call from NSC secretary Aminul Islam earlier on Monday.

"The secretary called me in the morning. He said that I would have to resign from both the councillorship and directorship. I told him that the NSC nominated me as a Councillor for four years, and by that equation, I am a director. So they should decide what they want to do with this Councillorship and Directorship and then inform me of their decision," Sajjadul said.

According to BCB constitution, a councilor can only be ineligible for nomination or remain a member if the person has been convicted or declared bankrupt by a court or found to be mentally ill. Regarding the matter, The Daily Star attempted to contact NSC secretary Aminul but he did not pick up his phone.

Meanwhile, with the BCB president missing, questions have been raised about who will attend the ICC's virtual meeting on the board's behalf. "The meeting will be attended by the existing members of the board," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said at a press conference yesterday, adding that the ICC's communications about the BCB's World Cup arrangements so far have been positive.

It is expected that Nizamuddin and another senior board director, Mahbub Anam, will attend the ICC meeting.

Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal and BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury show Asif Mahmud, the adviser of Youth and Sports Ministry of the interim government, around inside the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. It was Mahmud's first visit to Bangladesh's home of cricket since taking charge of the ministry. When asked in which capacity was Tamim accompanying the sports adviser, Nizamuddin said he did not know. PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

We have all our bases covered against Pakistan,

SAYS HATHURUSINGHA

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha feels that his side is ready to face any challenge thrown at them by their Pakistani counterparts in the first Test of the two-match series set to take place at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, starting Wednesday.

In a bold move, Pakistan named their playing XI for the opening Test yesterday, two days before the match begins, where they picked four pacers - Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Khurram Shahzad and Mohammad Ali – alongside seven genuine batters.

Bangladesh have packed five pacers in their 16-member squad, of which four will be available for the first Test as Taskin Ahmed is in the squad only for the second Test.

Pacers Khaled Ahmed, Nahid Rana, Hasan Mahmud and Shoriful Islam are available for selection and the Tigers also have two spin-bowling all-rounders in Shakib Al Hasan and Mehedi Hasan Miraz, which emboldened Hathurusingha to claim that they have 'all bases covered'.

"The Pindi pitch looks more favourable for fast bowling and batting. They [Pakistan] also didn't pick any spinners," Hathurusingha told reporters during a press conference in Rawalpindi yesterday.

"Lately, we have developed a lot of good fast bowlers in our rank as well. If the condition favours, they will do well. Shakib Al Hasan and Miraz are two world-class allrounders. We have all our bases covered for whatever they throw at us," he added.

Batting department has been a real concern for Bangladesh for quite a long time and when it comes to the longest format, their performance has been especially poor.

Bangladesh could not go past the 200-run mark in five of their last eight innings in Tests. They went past the 300-run mark thrice with a highest total of 338 runs against New Zealand in November last year in Sylhet.

"Batting has been a concern for a while, but not for one reason. We play in result-oriented wickets back home. Sometimes 250 is a winning score in those pitches. Obviously when you play on these pitches, the batters have a tough time.

"The pitches in Pakistan generally favour batting. It is a good contest between bat and ball. We will show better results on these pitches," he said, adding that Shakib is doing well with his batting despite his recent struggle with an eye problem.

"He is actually batting well. He has looked fitter. He has done some eye testing as well. He is saying that it helped him with the problem he had," said the Sri Lankan.

Meanwhile, Hathurusingha claimed that spin-bowling coach Mushtaq Ahmed has gelled really well with the group and the players are taking his advice not only on bowling but also about other sectors as well.

> **"I don't know what's happening back home. I have signed a contract till whatever the date [February 2025]. I am looking forward to serve the term. If the board changes, and the new people want to make a change, I am okay with that. If they want to continue with me, I am happy to continue."**

"I know Mushy. We met in 1988. That's how old we are. He has fitted into the coaching group really well. He has a lot of experience working with England and Pakistan. He has a lot of local knowledge and experience from other parts of the world. Not just bowling, we take his advice in certain decisions."

Women's NCL to start from August 24

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Women's Cricket League, which will be held in T20 format keeping the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup in mind, will get underway on August 24 at two different venues in Rajshahi.

The league was originally scheduled to start on August 19 but due to the political crisis in the country, it was deferred by five days. Now the eight-team event will be held at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium and Bangla Trac Cricket Academy venue.

According to a BCB women's wing official, the players will travel to Rajshahi on August 22 before attending a training session on the following day.

The tournament will be held in round-robin league system and there will be a rest day after two rounds. Four matches will be held in two venues on each match day. The last league matches will be held on September 2.

The women's NCL will be the last preparatory tournament for the Tigresses ahead of the ninth edition of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled to start on October 3 in Bangladesh. However, the recent unrest and the subsequent fall of the Awami League government on August 5 has put a serious question mark over the fate of Bangladesh hosting the mega event.

Cameroonian club field only eight players in continental tie

AFP, *Johannesburg*

Cameroon club Fovu Baham fielded only eight players in a CAF Confederation Cup qualifier on Sunday and suffered a 4-0 loss away to Paynesville of Liberia.

A Confederation of African Football official told AFP that "only eight of the Fovu players who travelled to Monrovia were registered to play in the competition".

It was not immediately known why the Cameroonian outfit did not take at least 11 eligible players to Liberia for the first round, first leg so they could field a full-strength side.

Playing with a goalkeeper and seven outfield players, Baham were no match for the hosts, who scored twice in each half to build a convincing aggregate lead before the August 25 second leg.

Mark Paye netted in each half for African debutants Paynesville, whose other goals came from Lawrence Kumeh and Dean Weah.

The failure of Fovu to field 11 players came 24 hours after another unusual incident in the African equivalent of the UEFA Europa League.

AS Otoho from Congo Brazzaville travelled to Equatorial Guinea for a fixture against 15 de Agosto only for the match to be called off because the match venue was staging a concert.

CAF reacted by ordering both legs to be played in the Congo with the first on August 25 and the second three days later.

Nsoatreman of Ghana were another west African club to win convincingly at home as two goals from Mohammed Abdul Rahaman and one from Meider Kwabena earned a 3-0 win over Elect Sport of Chad.

U-20s set sights on semis in SAFF opener

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are eager to make a strong start in the SAFF U-20 Championship as they face Sri Lanka in a Group A fixture at the ANFA Complex in Nepal today.

The match is set to kick off at 3:15 pm (Bangladesh time).

Bangladesh are still seeking their first title in this competition, having finished as runners-up three times in last five editions. In the previous edition, however, the boys in red and green were eliminated in the group stage after losses to India and Bhutan.

With Sri Lanka suffering a 1-0 defeat to hosts Nepal in their campaign opener, a winning start for Bangladesh will secure them a place in the semifinals before they face Nepal.

The team, under the guidance of coach Maruful Haque, are optimistic about overcoming the island nation -- a team they defeated twice in the 2019 and 2022 editions of the competition.

"We are not taking Sri Lanka lightly as they are good opponents, but we are hopeful of leaving the ground with a victory if the players can execute the coach's plan and remember their responsibilities on the field," said captain and goalkeeper Mehedi Hasan Srabon in an audio message provided by Bangladesh Football Federation after the practice session.

Srabon, who is also the second-choice goalkeeper for the senior side, believes their mission will be only half done if they can beat Sri Lanka today.

UEFA A-licenced coach Maruful had nearly two weeks of preparation with his charges, most of whom have experience playing in the country's top-flight football league.

"Before coming to Nepal, we stated that our goal is to play in the final. I believe the boys are on the right track with the hard work, dedication, and sacrifices they have shown in training.

"We have analysed Sri Lanka's strengths and weaknesses and prepared our game plan accordingly. Playing in the final and winning the title is always a challenge, so the first match is very important," said Maruful, who has also coached the Bangladesh national team.

Manchester City's Norwegian striker Erling Haaland (R) celebrates his team's first goal against Chelsea in their first match of the English Premier League season at Stamford Bridge on Sunday. It was Haaland's 91st goal in his 100th appearance for the English champions. Mateo Kovacic later added another as the Citizens won the match 2-0. PHOTO: **AFP**

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Internet blackout had no legal basis

Say legal experts

MAHMUDUL HASAN

No legislation explicitly permits the internet blackout enforced by the Sheikh Hasina government to quash protests centring the quota reform movement.

The disclosure came in the government's official response to a joint communication from three UN special rapporteurs Irene Khan, Morris Tidball-Binz and Gina Romero asking for the legal and factual basis for internet disruption in Bangladesh.

In its response on August 13, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission said the internet shutdown was done by the Awami League government to fulfil political interests.

"To fulfil the political interest of the former government, BTRC was forced several times to shut down telecommunication networks by the former state minister. At the end, political government tried to achieve its own political interest," reads BTRC's response.

The BTRC cited Section 97 of the telecom law as the rationale for the internet shutdown.

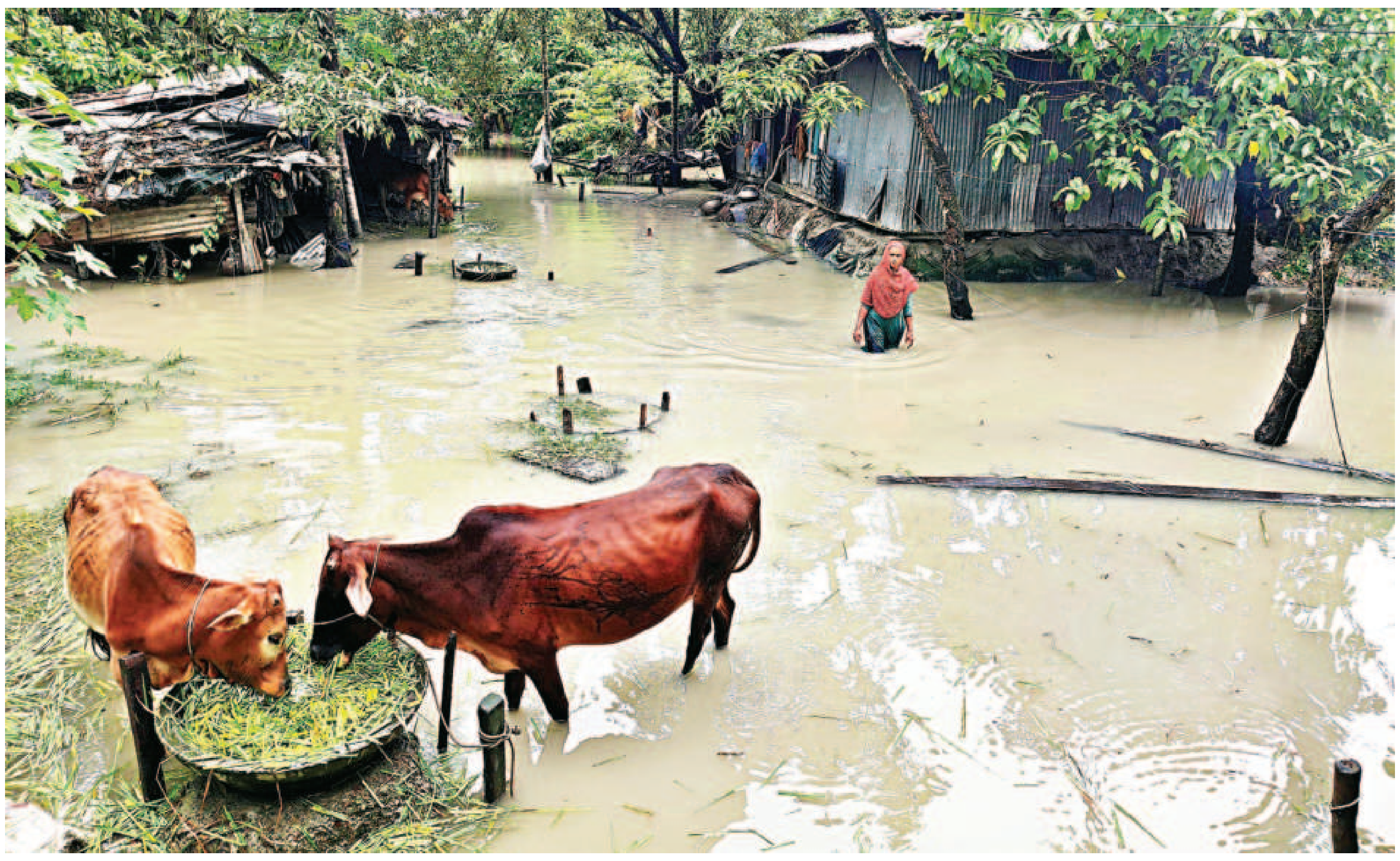
The section states that the government will have preferential access to the internet during war or when a foreign power causes a warlike situation, internal rebellion or disorder.

Preferential rights of usage would also be given to the government "for any other reason the defence or other security of Bangladesh or any other urgent state-affair are required".

The sub-section (2) states that telecom services may be withheld if the president declares a state of emergency or if the government deems it fit to sustain law and order.

> **"To fulfil the political interest of the former government, BTRC was forced several times to shut down telecommunication networks by the former state minister."**
> **-- BTRC**

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Since Sunday night, the coastal district of Bhola has experienced heavy rain due to a low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal. As a result, the Meghna river swelled and flooded communities living near the village protection embankment in Razapur union of Sadar upazila yesterday.
PHOTO: **MONIR UDDIN ANIK**

Hasina faces another ICT case

Inu, Menon, Manju also accused; 5 more murder cases filed against her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina faces charges of crimes against humanity in another complaint at the International Crimes Tribunal, this time with allies Hasanul Haq Inu, Rashed Khan Menon and Anwar Hossain Manju, among others, as her co-accused.

Besides Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Inu, Workers Party President Menon and Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman Manju, Tariqat Federation President Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizvandary from the Awami League-led 14-Party Alliance has also been named in the complaint.

Md Abul Hasan, father of Shahriar Hasan Alvi, a 15-year-old ninth grader of Desh Polytechnic College who was killed during the student-led uprising in Dhaka's Mirpur on August 4, filed the complaint yesterday afternoon.

The complainant also accused around 500 unidentified members of the Awami League, Jubo League, Chhatra League and police as a group.

The 27 people named in the case include former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former law minister Anisul Huq, former prime minister's adviser Salman F Rahman, and Awami League general secretary and minister Obaidul Quader.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Last chance to end Gaza violence

Warns Blinken; 40 more Palestinians killed in strikes

AGENCIES

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned yesterday that the latest push for a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal was probably the best and possibly last opportunity, urging Israel and Hamas towards an elusive agreement.

Palestinian group Hamas has cast doubt on the chances of reaching a deal since talks in Qatar last week paused without a breakthrough, but the negotiations are to resume this week based on a US "bridging proposal".

Blinken met Israeli President Isaac Herzog yesterday before heading into a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu while in Gaza Israeli forces thrust further into Khan Younis, residents said, in the latest phase of their assault. At least 40 Palestinians were killed in the past 24 hours, according to Gaza health ministry figures.

"This is a decisive moment, probably the best, maybe the last opportunity to get the hostages home, to get a ceasefire and to put everyone on a better path to enduring peace and security," Blinken told reporters before meeting Herzog.

Months of on-off talks have circled the same issues, with Israel saying the offensive can only end with the destruction of Hamas as a military and political force, and Hamas saying it will only accept a permanent, and not a temporary, ceasefire.

There are disagreements over Israel's continued military presence inside Gaza, particularly along the border with Egypt, over the free movement of Palestinians inside the territory, and over the identity and number of prisoners to be freed in a swap, reports Reuters.

Hamas accused Netanyahu on Sunday of "thwarting the mediators' efforts", and Turkey said after meeting Hamas envoys that Gaza's ruling group had told it that US officials were "painting an overly optimistic picture" of the talks.

Netanyahu told Israel's cabinet on Sunday that "we are conducting negotiations and not a scenario in which we just give and give," his office said.

Israel's military campaign has levelled swathes of Gaza, driving nearly all of its 2.3 million people from their homes, giving rise to deadly hunger and disease, and killing at least 40,139 people, according to Palestinian health authorities.

The main UN agency in Gaza, UNRWA, said yesterday that 207 of its staff had been killed since the offensive began. "They were engineers, teachers, medical staff. They were humanitarian workers," UNRWA said in a statement.

- Talks to resume this week based on US proposal
- Israeli forces push north of Khan Younis in latest fighting
- Death toll in Gaza rises to 40,139

2 DU deans step down in face of protests

DU CORRESPONDENT

Professor Abdul Bachir, dean of the Faculty of Arts, and Professor Nisar Hossain, dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, at Dhaka University, were forced to resign yesterday in the wake of student protests.

In the morning, students began separate demonstrations on campus, demanding the resignation of these two deans, who were elected from the Awami League-backed "Blue Panel" teachers' association.

However, their resignations will not take effect right away, as the vice-chancellor's post is currently vacant.

Additionally, students demanded the resignation of Professor Rahmatullah, dean of the Faculty of Law and a leader of the Blue Panel teachers' association.

As the dean was absent, it is not clear whether he had resigned till the writing of this report. In the meantime, his office was sealed off by protesting students.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

INSTIGATING VIOLENCE

Ex-judge, 4 former ministers, 10 MPs sued in 8 districts

STAR REPORT

A retired Supreme Court judge, a former minister, three former state ministers, 10 former MPs and six police officers have been sued in the last two days over murder, vandalism, extortion and other charges in eight districts.

Police have confirmed the filing of the cases amid a barrage of charges being brought against AL leaders after the party's ouster.

In Dinajpur, retired Appellate Division judge Justice M Enayetur Rahim and his brother M Iqbalur Rahim, a former MP and whip of parliament, are among 20 people sued in a case filed yesterday.

A local BNP leader filed the case at Dinajpur Sadar Police Station over the killing of Rahul Islam, 18. The student of Raniganj Ahiya Hossain School and College was shot dead during a clash between protesters and law enforcers on August 4.

M Enayetur Rahim

Abdur Razzaque

The case in Tangail was filed against six AL MPs, including two former cabinet members, on charges of killing 10th grader Md Maruf in a clash between protesters, police and AL men on August 5 during the anti-discrimination student movement.

Former agriculture minister and AL presidium member Abdur Razzaque, and former state minister for commerce Ahasanul Islam Titu are among the accused in the case filed by Maruf's mother Morsheda Begum at Tangail Sadar Police Station on Sunday night.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

RAPE, MURDER OF DOCTOR

Indian medics refuse to end protests

REUTERS, *Kolkata*

Thousands of Indian junior doctors yesterday refused to end protests over the rape and murder of a fellow medic, disrupting hospital services nearly a week after they launched a nationwide action demanding a safer workplace and swift criminal probe.

Doctors across the country have held protests and declined to see non-emergency patients following the August 9 killing of the 31-year-old medic, who police say was raped and murdered at a hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata where she was a trainee.

A police volunteer has been arrested and charged with the crime. Women activists say the incident has highlighted how women in India continue to suffer from sexual violence despite tougher laws brought in after the 2012 gang-rape and murder of a 23-year-old student on a moving bus in New Delhi.

Friends and relatives mourn over the body of photojournalist Ibrahim Muhareb, who was killed while covering the advance of Israeli forces in north of Khan Yunis the previous day, at Al-Nasser hospital in Gaza Strip yesterday.
PHOTO: **AFP**

Wreck of WWI warship found in 'amazing' condition

CNN ONLINE

For more than 100 years, the otherworldly wreck of a British warship sat lost on the seabed, covered in barnacles and seaweed, after it was torpedoed by a German U-boat during World War I.

Now, specialist divers working with Lost In Waters Deep say they believe they have found the wreck of the HMS Hawke, which sank on October 15, 1914, off the coast of Scotland, the organization posted on Facebook.

"She's lying on her starboard side and under there ... seems to be quite intact," Will Schwarz, one of the divers, told CNN in a phone interview on Friday. "The guns look as if they're still active, they're so highly polished it's unbelievable ... I've never seen guns like that in such amazing condition, it's absolutely beautiful. But, we're very aware that 524 lads lost their lives on it."

It took just seven minutes for the warship to slip beneath the waves once it had been hit, Schwarz said, adding that historians believe the ship's magazine, where ammunition was stored, exploded.

As a result, 524 sailors lost their lives, including many cadets who were younger than 18 years old. The youngest to die in the shipwreck was a 14-year-old cadet, Schwarz said.

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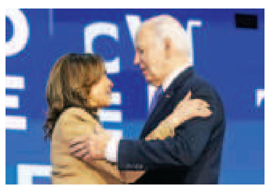
BCB set for major shake-up
P11

Echoes of colonialism in Bangladesh
P9

Our transitional political settlement and ways forward
P8



Biden passes baton to Harris
P7

Govt transfers 25 DCs in one go

BAHARAM KHAN *and* **MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR**

DCs feel insecure, fear embarrassment

At least 17 were PS to former ministers

'Deprived' officers lobby to become DCs

Amid lobbying by deputy commissioners seeking transfer from their once desired post, the interim government yesterday transferred 25 of them.

The interim government has also been facing pressure from officers, who feel they were "discriminated against" during the Awami League-led government, and want to be DCs.

The officers are seeking transfer from the usually coveted post of DCs because many of them have been fearing attacks and embarrassment following the ouster of the Hasina-led government on August 5.

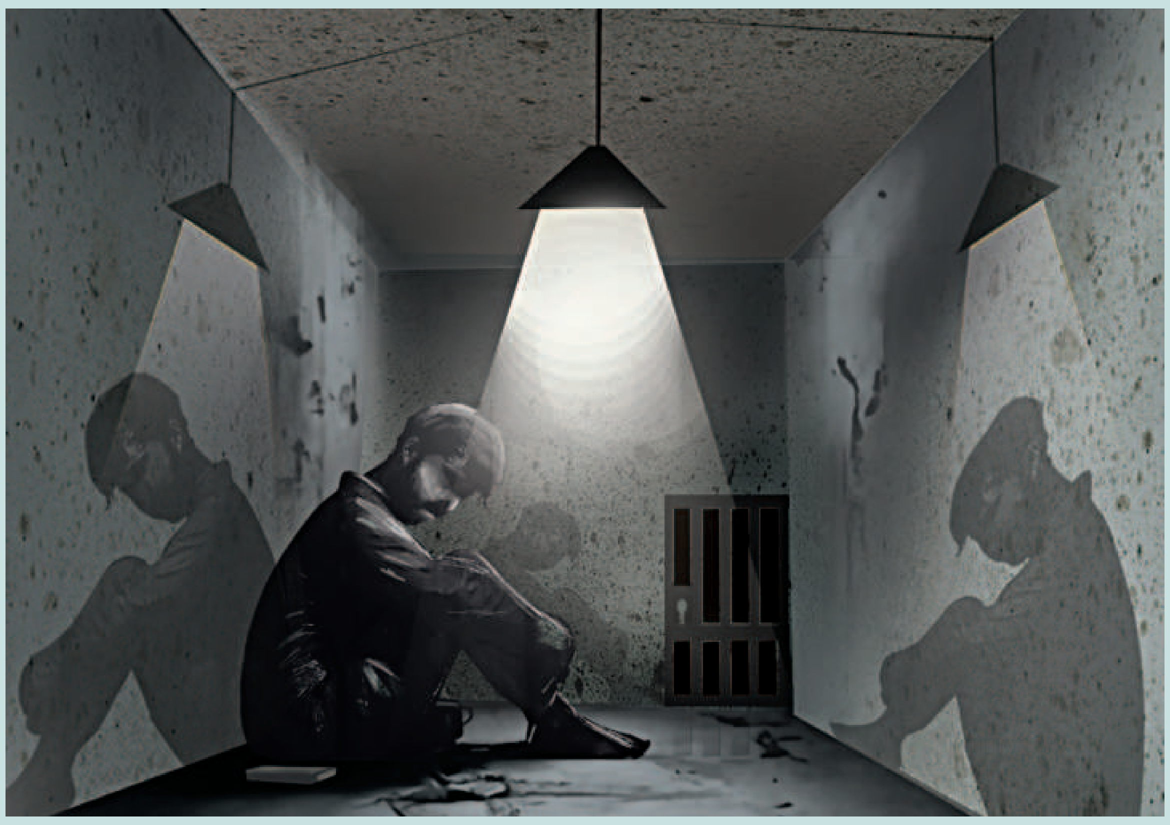
Many DCs say they are receiving threats over the phone.

In the tumultuous weeks leading to the fall of the previous government, law enforcers and Awami League supporters opened fire on protesters in many places. When the mass uprising peaked and the government fell, government facilities and officers were attacked by locals in many places.

DCs are the head of civil administration in the districts. Since Monday, the DCs oversee the Zila Parishad and school managing committees.

A top officer of the public administration ministry, requesting

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Inside the Aynaghar

MUNTAKIM SAAD *and* **SAJJAD HOSSAIN**

After years of denial by the authorities, chilling details about secret prisons are now emerging as victims of enforced disappearance begin to speak out after their release following the dramatic fall of Sheikh Hasina's 16-year regime.

Victims who once kept themselves shut are now providing distressing accounts of these detention facilities, commonly known as "Aynaghar," (house of mirrors), where victims of enforced disappearance were held in inhuman conditions over the last one and a half decades.

Although these victims come from different age groups and political and social backgrounds, their narratives of these thick-walled, iron-door prison cells are strikingly similar.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

READ VICTIMS' STORIES ON PAGE 2

Star BUSINESS

Steps against S Alam Group

Three state agencies yesterday made a series of moves against S Alam Group, its chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam, and his family members amid allegations of loan irregularities during the tenure of the recently ousted Awami League government.

Bangladesh Bank dissolved the board of National Bank linked with S Alam Group, and the stock market regulator restricted transfer and sale of shares of six banks with ties to S Alam.

Also, an NBR field office formed four teams to audit VAT compliance status of 18 concerns of the Group.

STORY ON B1

AL govt leaves behind $156 billion debt

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

When Sheikh Hasina returned to power in 2008, Bangladesh's total debt was just $33.66 billion. When she fled amid an unprecedented student-led uprising on August 5, she left behind a burden of $156 billion in local and foreign loans for the country to carry.

Converted to the local currency, the country's total debt stood over Tk 18.35 lakh crore as of June 30, according to finance ministry data.

These included $88 billion or over Tk 10.35 lakh crore from domestic sources and the remaining $68.33 billion or nearly Tk 8 lakh crore was external debt.

To put in words how the vast debts are affecting Bangladesh's finances: Tk 1.135 lakh crore or 14.02 percent of the total has been kept for interest payment in the proposed budget for this fiscal year, which is the highest among the sectors in the outlay of over Tk 8 lakh crore.

Economists have blamed stagnant revenue growth against a huge rise in expenditure, coupled with corruption in mega projects, for the massive debts.

The government spent around Tk 54 lakh core in total in its three consecutive terms while revenue earnings amounted to just Tk 37 lakh crore. Government expenditure increased from Tk 94,000 crore in FY09 to over Tk 7 lakh crore in the revised budget for FY24.

Bangladesh's revenue-GDP ratio has hovered around 9 percent, one of the lowest rates in the world.

A lack of government initiatives to bring reforms to the National Board of Revenue (NBR), along with tax dodging and huge tax exemptions provided to different pressure groups is blamed for the low revenue collection.

- Total debt soared fivefold in 15 years
- As of June 30, total loan Tk **18.35** lakh crore
- Stagnant revenue, mega project graft blamed

Besides, corruption in different mega projects increasingly made the revenue-expenditure gap bigger, said some leading economists.

Most of the mega projects were riddled with corruption, said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office.

"Big Projects, big corruption," he told The Daily Star last night.

He mentioned Bangladesh built the Padma Bridge with its own funds that came from domestic loans while the funds for the Karnaphuli Tunnel and the under-construction Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant have come from foreign sources.

"Corruption happened through cost escalation. Many, many unnecessary layers were added to the projects," he said, citing the Rooppur power project as an example.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Dipu Moni, Joy placed on remand

Assaulted while taken to court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former social welfare minister Dipu Moni and former deputy sports minister Arif Khan Joy were placed on remand yesterday in a murder case.

The case was filed over the death of a grocery shop owner Abu Saeed in Dhaka's Moham-madpur on July 19.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Sultan Sohag Uddin placed Dipu Moni on a four-day remand and Joy on a five-day remand.

Earlier, Dipu Moni and Joy came under attack by a group of people when they were being taken to court for the hearing.

Witnesses said that some people reached over the police escort to land blows on both the accused.

In the courtroom, the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK

20yrs on, justice not served yet

ASHUTOSH SARKAR *and* **SHARIFUL ISLAM**

Uncertainty looms over quick delivery of a High Court judgement in the August 21, 2004, grenade attack cases as the hearing on appeals and death references has recently been halted.

It has not been specified when the HC will resume the hearing and the verdict will be delivered as the bench concerned of the HC dropped the case from its list of matters to hear.

The hearing is very unlikely to resume before October 20, when the court reopens after its annual vacation.

The horrifying grenade attack on an Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue claimed 24 lives and left about 300 injured.

Then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, who later ran the country for 15 years as prime minister and was forced to resign and flee on August 5 following a mass uprising, narrowly escaped the attack on this day 20 years ago.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

RECENT VIOLENCE

UN team flies in tomorrow to discuss probe framework

PORIMOL PALMA

A team of UN experts is set to arrive in Dhaka tomorrow to set a framework for the fact-finding mission that is expected to probe the "atrocities" committed during the unrest that toppled former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

They are expected to discuss detailed terms and conditions for investigating all the human rights violations that took place between July 1 and August 15, a UN official based in Dhaka told this correspondent yesterday.

"This is the primary UN team of experts before the UN fact-finding mission comes and investigates [the atrocities]. We are expecting to sign an agreement of framework for the probe," a UN official based in Dhaka told this correspondent yesterday.

The delegation will stay here for at least a week and meet the civil society groups, victims of human rights violations, students and government officials and any other actors concerned, the official added.

Foreign ministry officials also confirmed the arrival of the three-member UN team.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

HSC examinees protesting inside Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday demanding cancellation of their remaining tests. They blocked the gate of the Secretariat and prevented people from getting in and out of the compound. PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

Remaining HSC exams cancelled in face of protest

Decision on results to come later

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday cancelled the previously postponed Higher Secondary Certificate and equivalent examinations after hundreds of students entered the Secretariat and demonstrated for hours.

The students gathered in front of the Secretariat in the morning and around 2:00pm, they entered the premises defying restrictions at the gate and then demonstrated there until around 5:00pm.

A 10-member delegation met Education Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud to submit a memorandum. But at one stage, several hundred students went to the education ministry on the 18th and 19th floors.

Hasnat Abdullah, a key organiser of the student movement against discrimination, tried in vain to calm the protesters.

By 4:00pm, the protesters blocked the gates of the Secretariat, barring anyone from leaving or entering the premises.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

PREMIER cement
ঢালাইয়ের রাজা

INSIDE THE AYNAGHAR

MIKEL CHANGMA
UPDF leader
Detention: Apr 9, 2019 to Aug 7, 2024

'It felt like living in a grave'

MD ABBAS

Mikel Changma, a political organiser of the United Peoples' Democratic Front (UPDF), could not see daylight for five years after being picked up by some plainclothes men on April 9, 2019.

"During my captivity, the only sunlight I glimpsed was through the gap under the door or the ventilator. I finally saw the outside world again early on August 7 this year when they [abductors] released me," he said.

Following his detention from the capital's Shyamoli, he had been held in four to five secret prisons, widely known as "Aynaghar".

When Mikel was dropped off on a road in Chattogram, he was unaware of the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government two days ago.

Over the last five years, his family has endured severe pain and mental anguish.

Believing that Mikel was dead, the family even performed his funeral rites. His father passed away "mourning the loss of his son".

In an interview with The Daily Star, the leader of the Chittagong Hill Tracts-based UPDF on Monday remembered his ordeal in the secret prisons.

"On the night of August 6, I was blindfolded and forced into a car. I thought they would take me somewhere and kill me....

"After picking me up, the abductors interrogated me on putting logs on a road in Khagrachhari in support of a blockade during a rally of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina. They enquired about a case in which I was accused of a murder. I told them that I was not involved in those incidents," Mikel said.

Even though he was not physically tortured, his time in solitary confinement was so harsh that he described it as severe psychological torture.

"I was held in such inhumane conditions that felt like living in a grave. The room had no windows and no fresh air, just four enclosed walls."

Mikel, aged about 45, had a run-in with a prison supervisor. After that

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

M MAROOF ZAMAN
Former diplomat
Detention: Dec 4, 2017 to Mar 16, 2019

'Captors kept watch on my family'

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

On the evening of December 4, 2017, around 6:45pm, M Maroof Zaman, former Bangladesh ambassador to Vietnam, was on his way from his Dhanmondi home to receive his daughter at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

While driving, he noticed a microbus tailgating and attempting to ram his car.

Near the airport, his car was intercepted, and two men in plain clothes got off the microbus, assaulted him and dragged him out of his car.

They forcibly placed Maroof into the microbus, where several other individuals blindfolded him, tied his hands, and covered his face with a cloth.

Under duress, he had to call a family member to instruct him to hand over his laptops to a "technician" who would visit his home.

"They wanted my laptops. I initially resisted, but after the assault I had no choice but to cooperate. They eventually took my laptops from my home," he told The Daily Star.

After driving for about 20 minutes, the microbus stopped, but he could not see where they were as he was blindfolded.

Maroof, also a retired captain of Bangladesh Army, said he was confined to a small, filthy room furnished with a wooden bed, a CCTV camera, and four fans. The space was barely livable.

"Many people were detained in this room at different times, and some had written their names, addresses and dates on the walls. These writings were painted over every three months."

During his captivity, the former diplomat, 67, faced interrogations more than nine times.

"They [abductors] questioned me about certain people I didn't know. They enquired about some agreements between India and Bangladesh. They also wanted to know how I became aware of an Indian intelligence agency training members

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

FIROZ MAHMUD HASAN
Labour leader
Detention: Jun 30, 2022 to Jul 6, 2022

'They didn't even let me drop off the milk for my child'

MUNTAKIM SAAD

After years-long legal battles, all 110 cases against Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus and his organisation Grameen Telecom over alleged labour law violations were dropped by union workers and employees on May 23, 2022, following a settlement regarding payment claims.

Around a month later, on June 30, Grameen Telecom Workers' Union General Secretary Firoz Mahmud Hasan, 44, was picked up by plainclothes men.

He was then taken to the infamous "Aynaghar", a secret detention facility, where he was subjected to torture in an attempt to force him to make a statement against Prof Yunus and Grameen Telecom authorities.

This is the story of his abduction, his experience in "Aynaghar", and his eventual release.

HOW HE WAS PICKED UP

It was around 10:30pm on June 30, 2022. Firoz, along with his wife and children, had just sat down for dinner when they realised they were out of milk for their one-and-a-half-year-old child. So, Firoz left his dinner and went to buy some at a shop close to his home in Mirpur's ECB Chottor.

> **"I couldn't tell day from night. I didn't even hear the call to prayer. I could only tell it was morning when they brought me breakfast."**
>
> **FIROZ MAHMUD HASAN.**

On his way home, 10-15 masked men stopped him and asked for his identity. They took his mobile phones and forced him to go with them.

They didn't even let him drop off the milk for his child. He was quickly blindfolded and taken away on a microbus.

Hours later, Firoz found himself in a detention centre, which he was unaware at the time was the infamous "Aynaghar."

There, he was tortured, both physically and mentally, and threatened with the same treatment for his family if he did not comply with their request.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

FROM PAGE 1

Piecing together the details of their narratives, it is now clear that many of these facilities were run by the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), which operates under the defence ministry. DGFI heads are reportable directly to the prime minister and prime minister's security adviser.

These facilities are notorious for their complete isolation, with detainees unable to see any light from the outside world.

The Daily Star spoke to four such victims who endured mental and physical torture inside these secret prisons for days, months and even years during the Awami League regime.

CHT-based United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) leader Mikel Changma is one of them. After five years of captivity since April 2019, he was freed just two days after Hasina fled the country in the face of a popular uprising.

"For the first time in five years, I saw daylight in the early hours of August 7 when they released me," Mikel told The Daily Star, adding that he was unaware of the August 5 political changeover.

Former Bangladesh ambassador to Vietnam Maroof Zaman had gone missing on December 4, 2017, and returned home after nearly 16 months (467 days) in March 2019. Talking to this newspaper yesterday, he narrated how his captors tried to establish him as an anti-government element.

ABDULLAHIL AMAN AZMI
Former army officer
Detention: Aug 23, 2016 to Aug 6, 2024

MIR AHMAD BIN QUASEM
SC lawyer
Detention: Aug 9, 2016 to Aug 6, 2024

KAMRUZZAMAN
Labour leader
Detention: Jul 1, 2022 to Jul 6, 2022

His accounts also clearly indicate that his captors were linked with the army, as he saw words like "Sena" (army) in the water bottles; Defence Medicine, trading prohibited, on the medicine leaf; and Station Headquarters Library and Senabahini Library in the Quran he was provided during his captivity.

The two other victims are Kamruzzaman, president of Grameen Telecom Workers Union, and its General Secretary Firoz Mahmud Hasan. Their 2022 captivity in the so-called Aynaghar was short – only seven days – but their secret imprisonment appears to be directly linked to Sheikh Hasina's reported dislike of Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Both said they were forced to give confessional statements against Yunus. They were also forced to claim that they coerced workers into withdrawing the cases against the Nobel laureate after secretly agreeing with the Grameen Telecom authorities in exchange for money.

FALSEHOOD FALLS APART

The AL government has persistently denied the existence of the secret prisons run by security forces, and maintained that the term "enforced disappearance" was used to malign the government and its achievements.

"Upon investigation of the alleged enforced disappearance cases, the findings reveal that people often disappear voluntarily to avoid legal action for cases lodged against them. Sometimes they choose to disappear due to family feud or to avoid business liability, and some often willingly disappear with the intention of embarrassing the government," the government wrote to the UN on May 12, 2022.

But this version started falling apart after the release of former army brigadier general Abdullahil Amaan Azmi and Mir Ahmad Bin Quasem on August 6, the day after Sheikh Hasina's fall. Azmi, son of late Jamaat leader Ghulam Azam, and Ahmad, son of executed Jamaat leader Mir Quasem, were held in secret prisons for eight years.

"I was kept in darkness, not allowed to see the light of day. Even the ventilator in the room was sealed off," Azmi said in a video posted on social media after his release.

> **"Upon investigation of the alleged enforced disappearance cases, the findings reveal that people often disappear voluntarily to avoid legal action for cases lodged against them."**
>
> **BANGLADESH WROTE TO UN ON MAY 12, 2022.**

In a recent interview with AFP, Barrister Ahmad, a defence lawyer fighting the war crimes case against his father when he simply vanished, shared his ordeal inside Aynaghar and how he got fresh air for the first time in eight years.

"Slowly, slowly, I could realise that I am not alone," he said. "I could hear people crying, I could hear people being tortured, I could hear people screaming."

The story of Aynaghar first came to light on August 14, 2022, when Netra News, a Sweden-based news portal, revealed in a report the location of a secret prison in which the victims of enforced disappearances were kept.

For over a decade, hundreds of families in Bangladesh have lived with the unbearable pain of not knowing the fate of their loved ones. These individuals—mostly critics of the government and members of the opposition parties—disappeared during its 16-year rule, allegedly abducted by state agencies.

In its 2021 report, Human Rights Watch said that security forces have committed over 600 enforced disappearances since Hasina came to power in 2009.

While some people were later released, produced in court, or said to have died during gunfire exchanges with security forces, nearly 100 people were still missing, HRW said.

Rights activists have noted an increase in enforced disappearances before and after elections, as well as during political movements.

According to rights organisation Odhikar, at least 708 people were victims of enforced disappearance between 2009 and June 2024. Of these incidents, 454 occurred between 2013 and 2018, during which Bangladesh held two general elections.

Odhikar data show that 98 people were victims of enforced disappearance in 2018, 95 in 2017, 97 in 2016, 69 in 2015, 41 in 2014, and 54 in 2013. In the lead-up to the last election, state agencies allegedly abducted 54 people in 2023.

AN INVITE TO AYNAGHAR

On August 6, members of Mayer Daak, a platform for family members of victims of enforced disappearance, gathered in front of the DGFI office inside Dhaka cantonment seeking information about their missing relatives.

Azmi and Ahmad, also known as Arman, suddenly returned home that day, and Mikel the next day.

At a meeting with DGFI on August 6, a six-member team including rights activists and a UN representative, demanded access to the detention facility. The team was allowed to visit the DGFI headquarters on August 7.

After coming out from the facility, rights activist Shireen Huq told families of some victims, "They invited us to visit the facility. The DGFI said there were no detainees in their Dhaka facility. They also said that they will form a joint commission to arrange visits for rights activists to 23 other facilities across the country to see if the victims of enforced disappearance are there."

Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Choudhury and Law Adviser Asif Nazrul did not respond to our calls and text messages seeking their comments. Inter Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR) also declined to comment, saying it does not deal with matters related to DGFI.

At a meeting with members of Mayer Daak on August 13, Prof Yunus expressed deep concerns after hearing the distressing accounts of families whose loved ones have gone missing over the years.

On Sunday, the platform sent a list of 158 missing people to DGFI.

Afroza Islam Akhi, cofounder of Mayer Daak, told The Daily Star that the interim government has assured them that it will address their concerns.

"We saw that Lt Gen Ziaul Ahsan was arrested and placed on remand. This was one of our demands to investigate his role. We have also demanded the formation of an enquiry commission, which they agreed to," she said, adding that they also want information about the numerous secret detention cells across the country.

Nur Khan Liton, a noted rights activist who has long been voicing concerns about enforced disappearance, said many people still remain unaccounted for after being taken away by alleged state agencies.

"It is time to demand their release or for the state to provide information on their whereabouts," he said.

Govt transfers 25 DCs in one go

FROM PAGE 1

anonymity, said, "The situation in local administration has created a crisis, especially since the government's priority is to maintain law-and-order."

The DC from a southern district who was transferred yesterday, told this newspaper that he was so relieved that he would celebrate by distributing sweetmeat worth several thousands.

"I could not take the pressure anymore," he said.

The Ministry of Public Administration last night issued a notification stating that the DCs of Dhaka, Sylhet, Habiganj, Mymensingh, Magura, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Naogaon, Natore, Cox's Bazar, Chattogram, Noakhali, Gazipur, Cumilla, Moulvibazar, Khulna, Gopalganj, Faridpur, Sherpur, Kushtia, Jhenaidah, Pabna, Bogura, Joypurhat and Chandpur had been transferred.

As of last night, no DCs were appointed to these districts.

Several experts on civil administration said they have never seen so many DCs getting transferred in one go.

INSECURE AND AFRAID

On Sunday, activists of several student organisations entered the DC office in Jhenaidah and openly accused DC SM Rafiqul Islam of acting like an Awami League supporter and taking bribes.

Rafiqul then sought a three-day leave while the students surrounded him.

After the fall of the AL government, the residence of Mymensingh DC was ransacked. Offices of upazila nirbahi officers and assistant commissioners were vandalised in Cumilla, Bhola, Sunamganj, Narsingdi and Chuadanga, officials said.

Several top officials said that information regarding many DC's previous involvement in Chhatra League were spreading.

"This is putting more pressure on them. We heard that in some cases, certain colleagues of the DCs are giving the information to local students," said a top official of the public administration ministry.

Many former bureaucrats say the previous government's appointed DCs are perceived to be close to the ruling party.

A top public administration ministry officer said, "Political considerations used to be a decisive factor in government appointments. Very few officers were appointed solely because of their professionalism, merit, and qualifications."

In July 2023, less than six months before the last general election, the government appointed 30 DCs. Seven of them worked as personal secretaries to different ministers.

As of yesterday morning, at least 17 DCs had previously worked as PS to different ministers of AL governments.

Under the AL government, officers of the 25th batch of BCS faced the most discrimination because they were recruited during the BNP-led government. Now they are lobbying for the post of DCs.

An officer of the 25th batch said, "Many good officers of our batch did not even try to be DCs under the previous government. Now, we are interested.

"If corrupt officers who behave like party cadres are placed across the country, the government will be harmed. This is a different kind of government. We need efficient and honest officers who are not partisan."

Former cabinet secretary Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said, "DCs must be honest and efficient. Appointment to the posts should be made on special considerations, especially due to the volatile situation."

Neither the cabinet secretary nor the public administration senior secretary could be reached for comment.

20yrs on, justice not served yet

FROM PAGE 1

The then BNP-led alliance government had the case investigated, but the probe was farcical as senior CID officials cooked up a story involving one Joj Mia.

They detained the man from Noakhali, along with 20 petty criminals, and forced Joj Mia and two others to make confessional statements.

During the caretaker government rule after the January 11, 2007, changeover, the CID submitted two charge sheets in two cases accusing 22 people, including Huji chief Mufti Hannan and BNP leader and former deputy minister for education Abdus Salam Pintu.

One of the cases was filed under the Explosive Substances Act while the other was for murder.

The trial began after charges were framed against them in October 2007 and the court recorded testimonies of 61 prosecution witnesses.

After the AL assumed power in January 2009, the prosecution appealed for further probe and the court in August that year issued the order for it and a new investigation officer was assigned.

The CID in July 2011 submitted a supplementary charge sheet, accusing 30 more people, including BNP acting chairperson Tarique Rahman and Lutfozzaman Babar, state minister for home 2001-2006.

A Dhaka court on October 10, 2018, sentenced 19 people, including Babar to death, in the two cases.

Nineteen others, including Tarique, were given life imprisonments and 11 people were handed different terms in prison.

The convicts included former top officials of police, DGFI, NSI, CID, and top militants of Huji.

While delivering the verdicts in the two cases, the court observed that it was a well-orchestrated attack executed abusing state power.

Eighteen convicts are absconding and 31 are in jail.

The death references of the cases reached the HC on November 27, 2018, for examination of the trial court's verdict.

On January 13, 2019, the HC accepted the appeals filed by the convicts for hearing.

The HC bench of Justice Shahidul Karim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman has so far held hearings on death references and appeals for around 100 working days since December 5, 2022.

A lawyer, who was involved in the cases, recently told The Daily Star that the HC could have concluded the hearings on the appeals and death references this month if it could have heard those continuously.

The last hearing on the cases was held on August 1, the lawyer said.

Contacted on Monday, Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman, who was appointed on August 8, told The Daily Star that the HC bench led by Justice Shahidul Karim on August 18 dropped the cases from its hearing list as its junior judge was assigned to another bench.

"When the court reopens [after its annual vacation], I will examine the relevant papers and documents and decide on the cases," the AG said.

He, however, said, "The cases will be in the hearing list after the annual vacation."

The Appellate and High Court divisions of the Supreme Court are scheduled to go into its annual vacation on September 6 and reopen on October 20.

HC sources said for 61 days, the prosecution read out from books case details, trial proceedings, statements, evidence, verdicts, and other documents before the HC bench.

The defence lawyers for 24 out of the 49 convicted placed their arguments for 30 days until June 12 this year.

After concluding the hearings, the HC bench will deliver a verdict on the death references and the appeals. When the HC releases the full text of its verdict, the state and defence would have the opportunity to appeal before the Appellate Division.

A few years may be required after that for the Appellate Division to dispose of the appeals. Both parties will then have the option to move review petitions challenging the apex court judgement.

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Islamic Banking services are provided through online from all our branches and sub-branches

RECENT KILLINGS

Independent probe body has to be formed

Says HRSS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Human Rights Support Society yesterday demanded the formation of an independent investigation commission to ensure justice for all the killings during the recent anti-discrimination students' protest.

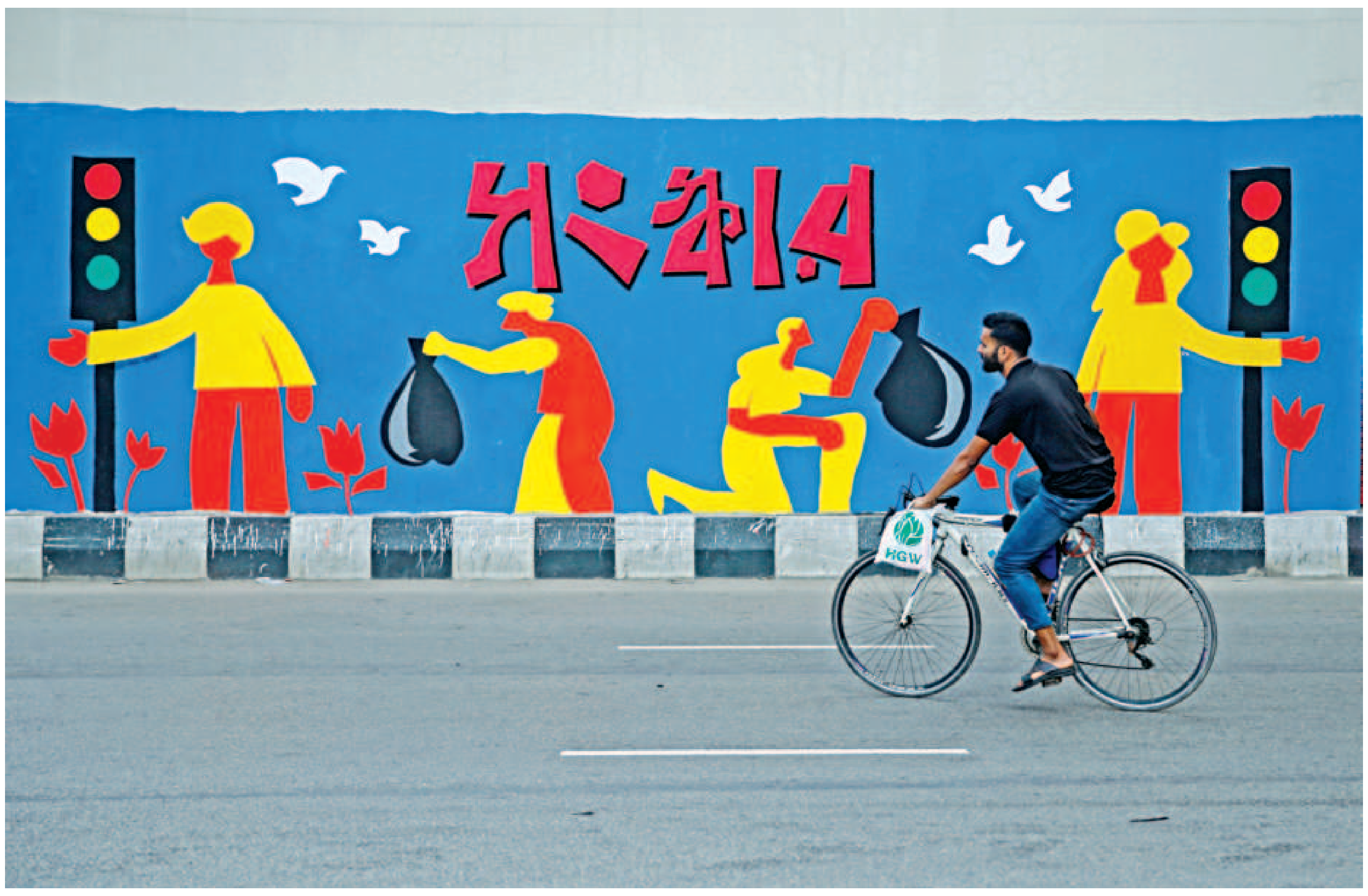
The rights body, in a statement, also demanded compensation for the families of the deceased, coverage of medical expenses for the injured, and their rehabilitation.

They also demanded to take steps against those involved in the recent attacks on minority communities across the country.

HRSS statement read they have got information on the deaths of 819 people from the victims' families, hospitals, witnesses, and national dailies.

According to their

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A cyclist coasts through the empty streets in the Agargaon area, right by a graffitied wall that features only one word, "Reform". The characters in the wall art show an ideal Bangladesh, one where people follow traffic lights and dispose of their waste properly. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

High-ranking cops concerned as ACC probe looms

DIPAN NANDY *and* **MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN**

The high-ranking police officials loyal to the previous Awami League regime, are now passing days amid fear of losing their jobs, lawsuits, arrests and public wrath.

Their concerns follow the Anti-Corruption Commission's recent decision to launch investigation into allegations of corruption, irregularities, and amassing wealth illegally by abusing power, against at least 80 present and former police officials.

Confirming the ACC's move, ACC's secretary Khorsheda Yasmeen said, "Decision has been taken to investigate the corruption and illegal wealth of Habibur Rahman, former commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, and Harun Or Rashid, former chief of Detective Branch. An investigation team has also been formed."

Khorsheda said complaints against any other police official will come under the jurisdiction of the commission and will be investigated.

Sources alleged that these police officials amassed ample wealth through bribery, recruitment, posting, tender manipulation, interference in cases, and arrest trade.

Some of these top police officials used ruthless force and opened fire to stop the protesters who joined the quota reform protest.

A dozen cases have already been filed including murder charges against top police officials including the former inspector general of police, former DMP commissioner, and dozens of other officials.

Some officers have yet to join their workplace after Hasina's fall, while others submitted medical certificates

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

ISPR protests misleading media report

BSS, *Dhaka*

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday protested a report published by various media outlets titled, "Army Chief faces anger by young army officers at a meeting that day."

In a rejoinder, ISPR said the news was published based merely on a report in the Indian newspaper "The Week", which was motivated and misleading. It is advisable to contact ISPR for an accurate presentation of any internal information related to army affairs, said an ISPR press release.

In fact, the meeting was a regular internal meeting of the Bangladesh Army, held in a very cordial and conducive atmosphere, and ended amicably. An attempt has been made to tarnish the glorious image of the Bangladesh Army before the public

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Take clear stance on women's issues

Demand women leaders at meeting with chief adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DEMANDS

- **Establish a Women's Rights Commission**
- **Ensure equal inheritance rights**
- **Increase budget allocation for women**
- **Find truths about Kalpana Chakma, Tonu, Munia**
- **Recognise women's unpaid work**

Leaders of women's rights organisations proposed the establishment of a Women's Rights Commission to tackle women's issues in a more comprehensive and unified manner.

They made the call in a meeting with chief adviser of the interim government Dr Muhammad Yunus yesterday.

The meeting, held at the state guesthouse Jamuna, was attended by around 30 women leaders and two coordinators from the anti-discrimination student movement.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Adviser, briefed the media on the meeting's outcomes.

She said the Information Commission and National Human Rights Commission have faced difficulties under partition governments and emphasised the need to ensure their independence and effectiveness.

Rizwana announced the interim government's plan to set up a foundation to provide medical treatment for individuals injured during recent student protests. Supported by the interim government, the foundation will expedite treatment and rehabilitation through donor funds.

"While setting up the foundation will take time, an immediate interim solution is needed to provide funds for urgent medical needs," Rizwana said.

Discussion also centered on the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

"While the ministry implements various projects, it is also expected to oversee 45 other ministries, a role it is not adequately fulfilling," she added.

Addressing gender discrimination, the leaders highlighted both national and international discriminatory laws.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

BLAST condemns remands of women

Calls for adherence to SC directives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) has expressed deep concern over the recent arrests and remands of women in various cases, calling for strict adherence to Supreme Court directives by law enforcement agencies.

In a press release issued yesterday, BLAST highlighted reports from newspapers and social media indicating that women have been arrested and taken on remand following the recent anti-discrimination movement.

The organisation noted that these actions often disregard the directives set by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court regarding arrests and interrogations during remand.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

MUNIA MURDER CASE

Family demands reinvestigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The family of college student Mosarat Jahan Munia, whose body was found in a Gulshan flat in 2021, yesterday demanded reinvestigation into the rape and murder case filed against Bashundhara Group Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir and seven others.

Saying that previous investigation officers were bribed to cover up Anvir's crimes, Munia's sister Nusrat Jahan Tania appealed to the interim government to immediately arrest and interrogate the accused.

Tania, the complainant in the case, was speaking at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club.

Following Munia's death, two cases were filed against Anvir, his family members, and some others. The accused were later cleared in both cases.

The other case was filed over abetting her death by suicide.

Tania alleged that several law enforcement officials, including the then IGP Benazir Ahmed and deputy commissioner of Gulshan Division, played a "shameless role" in saving Anvir.

She termed the previous investigation and the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Metro likely to resume Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The metro rail authority aims to resume operations on Sunday after employees, who had been on work abstention since August 6, returned to work yesterday.

However, trains will not stop at the vandalised Mirpur-10 and Kazipara stations, the road transport and bridges ministry announced.

Employees from grades 10 to 20 resumed work after the Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd board agreed to their demand for a pay rise, according to two officials.

Speaking to The Daily Star* on Sunday, DMTCL Managing Director MAN Siddique said that five days would be needed to complete all necessary tests, including a trial run, once employees returned.

On Monday night, the DMTCL board held a lengthy meeting and eventually invited

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

DHAKA SOUTH, NORTH

New administrators vow to improve services

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The newly appointed administrators of Dhaka North and South City Corporations yesterday pledged to ensure smooth and efficient service delivery.

Speaking to reporters on their first day in office, Md Mahmudul Hasan, administrator of Dhaka North City Corporation, emphasised the importance of meeting public expectations.

"The interim government was formed through a student uprising. We will prioritise fulfilling the students' expectations from this government," Hasan said.

DNCC will enhance its services, particularly in mosquito control, to combat dengue during the rainy season, he added.

He also pledged to clear canals of illegal encroachments and maintain routine services like birth and death registration.

Dr Mohd Sher Ali, administrator of Dhaka South City Corporation, echoed a similar commitment.

"The services provided by DSCC will continue uninterrupted," Ali assured.

He highlighted improvements in the birth and death certificate services, now managed through a central server, and vowed to ensure the efficient delivery of trade licenses and other services.

Ali also warned that any deliberate obstruction by officials in providing these services would result in legal action.

Jisa Chakma stands with her one and a half year old daughter in front of the secretariat yesterday. They have come all the way from Khagrachhari to demand for the job regularisation for those working in field services delivery in the current healthcare system.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Take clear stance on women's

FROM PAGE 3

They urged he government to take a definitive stance on issues like equal inheritance rights and enforce international laws that address discrimination in family, guardianship, and citizenship matters.

There were also calls to withdraw the state's reservations on these issues and to support ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the workplace, among other international regulations.

The meeting also emphasised the need for a societal shift to combat violence against women effectively, arguing that focusing solely on empowerment is insufficient.

Leaders called for a thorough investigation into the disappearances and deaths of women such as Kalpana Chakma, Tonu, Munia, Runi, and Nusrat, and demanded accountability for those responsible.

Dr Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, proposed increasing the budget allocation for women and enhancing monitoring of expenditures.

She pointed out that while many banks have programmes claiming to support women, their effectiveness is limited, and women face significant challenges in accessing finance.

She also suggested economically recognising women's unpaid work through a satellite system of accounts.

Naripokkho advocated for reforms across various sectors, including infrastructure, politics, civil rights, and laws.

They proposed political reforms that include providing women with opportunities to express their views within and outside political parties, suggesting that 50 percent of candidates on each party's election list should be women.

They also recommended introducing a "no vote" option on ballots.

For legal reforms, they recommended updating laws to prevent rape, revising the Evidence Act, and including informal sector female workers in labour laws.

They also called for judicial reforms through the Judicial Reform Commission to prevent past mistakes.

Additionally, the meeting discussed appointing qualified individuals to the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

They also demanded consultation of relevant stakeholders on decisions affecting the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

There were also calls to protect NGOs from harassment by the NGO Bureau under party-based governance.

High-ranking cops concerned

FROM PAGE 3

to avoid being present.

Among them are DMP additional commissioner AKM Hafiz Akter, former DB chief Harun Or Rashid, DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker, PHQ additional IG Anowar Hossain, additional IG Atikul Islam, and additional IG Devdas Bhattacharjee.

Also, a section of non-cadre police officials has been calling for a work abstention from today, protesting the countrywide cases filed against policemen.

However, terming it illogical, a high official from Police Headquarters, said, "These officials, who were beneficiaries of the last government, are trying to create instability."

Several officials of the rank of superintendent of police said, there is panic among the officials about whether they could be "politically victimised" as they had good postings during the last government's tenure.

Although many have joined their workplaces, however, they have become cornered there. For this, no operational activities have been started by police yet, they added.

TOP COPS UNDER ACC SCANNER

ACC sources said while they are yet to finalise the list of the top police officials to be investigated, it can be confirmed that the list includes former IGP Benazir Ahmed, former DMP commissioners Asaduzzaman Miah, Shafiqul Islam, and Khandaker Faruq Hossain.

The list also includes former PBI chief Banaj Kumar Majumder, former Special Branch chief Monirul Islam, additional IG YM Belalur Rahman, Industrial Police chief Mahbubur Rahman, former RAB director general Harun Ar Rashid, former CID chief Mohammad Ali Miah, additional IG Devdas Bhattacharya, Khandaker Lutful Kabir, former Chattrogram Metropolitan Police commissioner Krishna Pada Roy, and Tourist police additional IG Meer Rezaul Alam, PHQ additional IG Anowar Hossain, DMP additional commissioner AKM Hafiz Akter and Kh Mahid Uddin, Rangpur Range former DIG Abdul Baten, retired CID DIG Sheikh Nazmul Alam, Rangpur Range former commissioner Md Moniruzzaman, PHQ DIG Joydeb Bhattacharjee, DMP CTTC chief Md Asaduzzaman, DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker, and Subrata Kumar Halder.

A high official of ACC's intelligence wing said they have so far started investigation against three police officers of BCS 12 batch, 10 officers of 15 batch, seven officers of 17 batch, four officers of 18 batch, 21 officers of 20 batch, 12 officers of 21 batch, four officers of 22 batch, eight officers of 24 batch, and 10 officers of BCS 25 batch.

Family demands

FROM PAGE 3

the order of the court as blatant examples of the culture of lawlessness during the AL regime.

Tania hoped that by ensuring justice for Munia, the culture of impunity in the country will stop.

She expressed her frustration at not being able to meet former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, despite repeated attempts. Tania said she even wrote a 26-page letter and sent it to her several times.

M Sarwar Hossain, Tania's lawyer, said officials of the home ministry wing that supervises sensational murder cases, police, and the court were influenced by bribes.

The lawyer also alleged that former law minister Anisul Huq, currently on remand in a murder case, played a key role in the cover-up.

"Why didn't the investigation officer arrest Anvir... and why didn't collect DNA samples from Anvir and match them with those found on Munia's body?" he asked.

Tania alleged that Anvir had offered her bribes, through intermediaries, of Tk 20 crore to drop the case.

The 21-year-old college student was found dead at a Gulshan flat in April, 2021.

Tania later filed a case at Gulshan Police Station against Anvir, accusing him of instigating the victim's death by suicide.

On August 18, 2021, Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury cleared Anvir of the charges, following a police report.

On September 6, 2021, Tania filed a case with the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-8 of Dhaka, bringing allegations of rape and murder, where Ahmed Akbar Sobhan alias Shah Alam, chairman of Bashundhara Group, and six others were also accused. On September 29, the High Court refused to grant bail to Anvir.

On October 19, 2022, PBI submitted a probe report clearing all the accused of the charges.

After the rape and murder case was filed, Bashundhara Group, in a statement, said the group's chairman, managing director, and any other family members were not involved in the incident, and claimed the case was "conspiratorial" and "baseless".

BLAST condemns remands

FROM PAGE 3

BLAST condemned these practices, stating they violate constitutional rights, including equality before the law (Article 27), protection of law (Article 31), the right to life and personal liberty (Article 32), safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention (Article 33), and protections during trial and punishment (Article 35).

The organisation emphasised that these actions contradict the Supreme Court's landmark judgement, which provides clear instructions to law enforcement agencies and magistrates on the proper procedures for arrests and remands.

Referencing the Supreme Court's verdict, BLAST pointed out that law enforcement officers must notify the nearest kin of the arrested individual in writing within 12 hours of the arrest. Additionally, under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), a specific case must be filed against the arrested person before they can be taken on remand, into custody, or sent to judicial custody.

BLAST also reminded law enforcement officers to disclose their identity during an arrest and to present their identification upon request. If the arrested person has any injuries, the arresting officer is required to document the details, arrange for medical treatment, and obtain a certificate from the attending physician. Furthermore, the arrested individual must be allowed to consult with a lawyer of their choice or meet with family members.

The organisation also underscored the provisions in Chapter 6.6 of the Bangladesh Police's "Criminal Investigation Guidelines," which mandate that police must adhere to international norms when arresting women, ensuring their dignity and privacy are protected during investigations.

In light of these concerns, BLAST urged immediate action to safeguard justice and ensure that constitutional rights and Supreme Court directives are upheld during the arrest and remand of individuals.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 21

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-25	12-45	4-45	6-38	8-00
JAMAAT	5-00	1-15	5-00	6-41	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

ACC restarts probe against

FROM PAGE 5

term was extended seven times before he resigned.

He faces allegations of violating regulations in his reappointment.

Additionally, Taqsem and others were under investigation for irregularities and corruption in various projects, including embezzling Tk 1,100 crore in Padma-Jashaldia project, embezzling Tk 1,000 crore in Gandharbpur Water Treatment Plant project, Tk 1,000 crore in Dasherkandi Sewage Treatment Plant project, and Tk 50 crore in Gulshan-Baridhara Lake Pollution Control Project.

Further allegations include inflating project costs, colluding in contractor appointments, accepting bribes, showing favouritism in contractual appointments, and transferring disfavoured employees to OSD positions.

ACC formed a committee on Monday to probe the allegations. The committee, led by Assistant Director Mahbubul Alam, has been instructed to obtain necessary information from the Local Government Ministry by August 28.

The letter to the ministry requests verified photocopies of Taqsem's appointment letters, advertisements, experience documents, job term extensions, and relevant records. It also seeks any reports or actions taken regarding past allegations of irregularities.

ACC has also imposed a travel ban on Taqsem. A letter in this regard was sent to the Special Police Superintendent (Immigration) on Monday.

In May 2023, ACC recommended filing a case against Taqsem and nine others for illegally appointing favoured individuals outside DWasa's organisational structure and paying them Tk 1.98 crore in salaries from April 4, 2018, to August 2022.

Although the case was not approved previously due to Taqseem's influence, a new recommendation for filing the case is now under consideration.

ACC Secretary Khorsheda Yasmin confirmed the development.

Metro likely

FROM PAGE 3

representatives of the agitating employees to join.

"The board agreed to give us 2.3 times more than the pay scale and formed a committee to discuss the dues with the finance ministry. So, we decided to end our work abstention from today[yesterday]," one of the employees said.

Meanwhile, Md Ehsanul Haque, senior secretary of the roads and highways department, visited the Secretariat Metro Rail Station yesterday and directed officials to resume operations as soon as possible.

Metro rail services have been suspended since July 18 after the Mirpur-10 and Kazipara stations were vandalised during the quota protests. After fall of the Hasina-led government on August 5, the interim government instructed DMTCL to resume services by August 17, except at the vandalised stations. However, DMTCL announced delays due to an "unavoidable situation," later revealed to be a work abstention by around 700 employees from grades 10 to 20, who began striking on August 6, demanding a pay hike to match their higher-grade colleagues.

Independent probe

FROM PAGE 3

findings, the highest number of deaths occurred on August 5, with 205 fatalities, followed by 130 on August 4 and 119 on July 19.

Of the deceased, 455 were shot to death, 79 were burned to death, while 78 others were beaten to death, the rights body claimed.

HRSS demanded that the government issue a public notice seeking information from people to create a list of those killed.

HRSS also demanded the formation of an independent commission to ensure justice for previous incidents of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

It also demanded identifying the false cases filed beforehand and taking steps to withdraw those in the quickest time possible.

ISPR protests

FROM PAGE 3

by spreading such news about the patriotic and professional army.

The Bangladesh Army, according to the ISPR release, always expects responsible and objective reporting from the media. Every member of the army performs their duties with strong loyalty and fidelity to the chain of command, which they have constantly demonstrated and continue to demonstrate.

In the future, the statement said, the Bangladesh Army expects the media to reflect the statements of all parties concerned in order to disseminate objective news.

A special request has been made not to create confusion in the public mind and unintentionally help spread rumours by reporting the news solely on the basis of misinformation spread by any foreign media, said the release.

The Bangladesh Army is determined to provide all-out cooperation to the news media in disseminating objective and constructive news.

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

IOM
UN MIGRATION

TENDER NOTICE

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar hereby announces the launch of the following tenders:

TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTION
ITB/HCR/CXB/2024/011	FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRAME AGREEMENTS FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BORAK AND MULI BAMBOO

Interested and bona fide vendors are invited to participate in this INVITATION TO BID (ITB) by accessing and downloading the tender documents at the following web link:

https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/242315

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

We would appreciate you informing us of the receipt of this ITB by sending an e-mail to **TAREKM@UNHCR.ORG** with a copy to SUVEGES@UNHCR.ORG as to:

- Your confirmation of receipt of this Invitation To Bid
- Whether or not you will be submitting a Bid

Bid to be submitted:
Bids should be submitted as per the guidance in section 2.6 of the ITB document via the URL below:
http://etenderbox.unhcr.org

Bid submission deadline: Thursday, 29 August 2024 – 14:00 hrs BST. Bangladesh time.

Please Note: As per the applicable Admin Instructions on procurement during COVID, please note that hard copy submissions are no longer accepted, only soft copies are accepted.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Madrasatun Noor, located at Madani Avenue, Panchkhula, Beraid, Dhaka is declaring the following vacancies:

Serial	Post	Quantity	Requirements
1.	Assistant Ustaz (English) **Male**	02	1. Practicing Muslim/Muslimah 2. Graduate from any reputed University 3. Preferably **O/A level** qualified 4. Fluency in English communication
2.	Assistant Ustazah (English) **Female**	02	
3.	Assistant Ustazah (Math) **Female**	01	
4.	Assistant Ustazah (Science) **Female**	01	
5.	Ustaz (Arabic) **Male**	02	1. Minimum Dawra-e-Hadis from any reputed University 2. Preferably graduate from any reputed University from **Middle Eastern Countries** 3. Fluency in Arabic communication
6.	Ustazah (Arabic) **Female**	02	
7.	Hafez **Male**	02	1. Hafez of entire al-Qur'anul Kareem 2. Minimum Dawra-e-Hadis from any reputed University 3. Conversant with Computer operation
8.	Hafeza **Female**	02	
9.	Admin Manager **Male**	01	1. Practicing Muslim/Muslimah 2. Graduate from any reputed University 3. Fluency in English communication
10.	Assistant Admin Manager **Female**	01	
11.	Assistant Manager (IT) **Male**	01	1. Practicing Muslim 2. Expert in using MS Office, Google Forms, Classroom and other services 3. Knowledge on Net Software, Networking, Router Configuration and various Reporting Systems
12.	Assistant Accountant **Female**	01	1. Practicing Muslimah 2. Graduate in Accounting from any reputed University 3. Fluency in English communication

Salary is negotiable based on qualifications, experiences and performance in the interview.

Interested candidates are requested to submit their **CV** at **madrasatunnoorbd@gmail.com** by **31 Aug 2024.** Only shortlisted candidates will be called for an interview. Visit our website to know us: **www.madrasatun-noor.org** or call us at **01407070280, 0140707028**

OFFICE SPACE TO-LET

Ground floor 525 sqft, 7th floor 2700 sqft and 14th floor 1570 sqft. Office space available for rent in Banani. 3 Bathrooms, 2 Lifts and Basement Parkings.

Contact: 0173-6895822

বাণিজ্যিক প্লট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা বারিধারা আবাসিক এলাকায় পুরাতন **আই-ব্লকে** ও **আই-এক্সটেনশন ব্লকে** ২ বিঘা, ৩ বিঘা, ৪ বিঘা ও ৫ বিঘার বাণিজ্যিক প্লট। প্লটগুলো রেজিস্ট্রেশন, মিউটেশন ও বাউন্ডারী সম্পন্ন করা আছে।

যোগাযোগ: ০১৭১১ ৫৪৬৬৮৭

Company on sale

Kind attention to investors: A very prospective private limited company is on sale. This company has an e-commerce business with multi-vendors (A-Z) options. It has its own website, app, social media pages and other associated pages and it is fully in running condition. This company also has its own inventory (estimated cost TK30 lacs approx), two covered vans (Truck) and well equipped office and warehouse in Dhaka. Company directors decided to sell this company at the soonest possible time. Interested investors can contact the following phone number: **01819-908055, 01773-570302**

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Gopalganj PWD Division, Gopalganj
Phone/Fax: 02-478821657
Email: ee_gopal@pwd.gov.bd

Memo No. 25.36.3500.110.222.23.21.24.1805
Dated: 20-08-2024

e-Tender Notice-2024-25

e-Tender has been invited in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works.

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of work
1.	1009604	Construction of 1-storied Armory Building with 2-storied foundation for Bangladesh Ansar Battalion one at Gopalganj.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted through the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal.

Kamrul Hasan
Executive Engineer
PWD Division, Gopalganj

গ্লোবাল ইন্স্যুরেন্স লিমিটেড
Global Insurance Limited
Symbol of Security & Peace

Al-Razi Complex (12th Floor),
166-167, Shaheed Syed Nazrul Islam Sarani,
Purana Paltan, Dhaka

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is for kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of the Company in its 194th Board meeting held on **Tuesday, 20th August 2024** at **2:30pm** has taken the following Price Sensitive decisions regarding the 24th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Company.

Sl.	Particulars	Decisions	
1.	Recommendation of dividend for the year 2023	**10% Cash Dividend** for the year ended 31st December 2023 subject to approval at the 24th AGM.	
2.	Date & time of the 24th Annual General Meeting	**Saturday, 26th October, 2024 at 11:00am.**	
3.	Venue of the 24th AGM	Meeting to be arranged through **Hybrid System** at Banquet Hall, "FARS Hotel & Resorts" 212, Shaheed Syed Nazrul Islam Sarani, Purana Paltan, Dhaka with both **physical presence** and **Digital Platform**. The link to join the meeting will be notified later on.	
4.	Record Date	**Tuesday, 01st October 2024.**	
		Consolidated for the year ended on 31.12. 23	**Consolidated for the year ended on 31.12. 22**
5.	Net Asset Value (NAV)	Tk. 56,60,67,871.00	Tk. 55,97,21,845.00
6.	NAV Per Share	Tk. 13.96	Tk. 13.80
7.	Earnings Per Share (EPS)	Tk. 1.38	Tk. 1.63
8.	Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFS)	Tk. 0.68	Tk. 4.09

***To change the registered name of the Company to "GLOBAL INSURANCE PLC" from "GLOBAL INSURANCE LIMITED":**

The Board of Directors also decided to adopt the registered name of the Company to **"GLOBAL INSURANCE PLC"** from "GLOBAL INSURANCE LIMITED" in accordance with the Companies Act, 1994 (amended in 2020) and to amend the related Clauses of the Memorandum of Association & Articles of Association of the Company subject to approval of the Regulatory Authorities and the Shareholders of the Company at the 24th Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held on 26th October 2024.

The Shareholders whose names will appear in the Share Register of the Company or the Depository on the **'Record Date'** will be entitled to the dividend and eligible to attend the meeting.

Respected Shareholders are requested to update the particulars of their Bank Account, change of address, Email and BO ID with 12 (Twelve) digits Taxpayer identification number (e-Tin) through their respective Depository Participants (DP) before the record date, failing which, Income tax at sources will be deducted from payable dividend @ 15% (fifteen percent) instead of 10% (Ten percent).

Dated: 20th August, 2024

By order of the Board
Sd/-
Md. Omar Faruk
Company Secretary

Credit Rating AAA
ISO 9001: 2015 Certified

ACC restarts probe against Taqsem

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has reinitiated an investigation against Taqsem A Khan, former managing director of Dhaka Wasa, on charges of corruption.

The investigation has been prompted by at least five major allegations against him -- corruption regarding his own appointment, favouritism in contractual appointments, corruption in major projects, collusion in contractor appointments, and embezzlement and laundering of thousands of crores of taka.

Previously, ACC had investigated these allegations and found them credible, leading to recommendations for filing cases. However, Taqsem used his influence to suppress these investigations.

Following Sheikh Hasina's fall on August 5, Taqsem resigned from his position on August 14. After his resignation, the ACC has refocused on his alleged irregularities and corruption.

According to ACC, Taqsem was appointed as Wasa MD in 2009 and his

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DHAKA UNIVERSITY

Students, teachers call for non-partisan VC

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

With growing calls for reform across various sectors, a section of Dhaka University students is advocating for a vice-chancellor who is professional, academically distinguished, visionary, and has no direct affiliation with any political parties.

The demand has not only been made by students and teachers, but the university's alumni as well as leaders of some student organisations.

After some teachers' names surfaced as potential candidates to become the next DU VC, widespread discussions have sparked everywhere, as well as on social media.

"I understand that negotiations are ongoing for the VC post. But I do not accept the process of appointing VC through political considerations," said Shakibur Rahman, a student of Physics department.

Rifat Ahmed, another DU student, said, "We all realised the importance of a student-friendly VC during the protests. If the then VC sir had not allowed law enforcers to enter the campus that day and emptied the halls, they couldn't have harmed us."

Salman Siddiqui, a DU student and president of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, said, "We want to see the kind of VC who will work in the interests of students and teachers, not political parties. Someone with academic excellence, who stands by the oppressed."

Raquibuddin Ahmed, former president of Dhaka University Alumni Association, said, "The time is perfect for a reform. As an alumnus of the university, I hope the VC position goes to a teacher who possesses a good personality, is academically sound, student-friendly, and most importantly, is politically neutral."

During the Awami League regime, teachers loyal to the party were appointed as VCs across the universities, and in many cases, those VCs were seen prioritising party interests over that of students'.

With the VCs holding the highest power in universities, the former government appointed people loyal to the party everywhere -- from teachers to hall provosts to administrative officials -- establishing a culture of partisanship.

In many cases, party lobbying and politics were prioritised for promoting teachers.

Dhaka University currently has around 2,000 teachers, and over 800 of them belong to the blue panel, the pro-AL teachers' organisation.

Meanwhile, around 300 teachers belong to the white panel, pro-BNP teachers' organisation.

Prof Lutfar Rahman, convenor of the white panel, said, "The students' demands are reasonable. However, no one is politically neutral. The university has to be run with many considerations in mind...," he added.

Meanwhile, the University Teachers' Network on Monday proposed ending political dominance and ensuring academic and administrative accountability within universities.

They urged the government to be accommodating and to allow universities to operate autonomously, without any form of political interference.

> **We want to see the kind of VC who will work in the interests of students and teachers, not any political party. Someone who will have academic excellence.**
>
> **SALMAN SIDDIQUI**
> DU student and president
> of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front

ACC to probe two staffers of ex-PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has launched investigation into allegations of corruption, irregularities and amassing wealth illegally against two staffers of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

They are: her former deputy press secretary Ashraful Alam Khokon, and former personal assistant (peon) Md Jahangir Alam.

The ACC made the decision in a meeting held at its headquarters yesterday, its press relations office confirmed.

According to ACC sources, Khokon holds dual citizenship in Bangladesh and the US, and allegedly owns a significant amount of assets, both in his name and under aliases.

Information about four private cars registered in his name has already surfaced.

In February 2021, Khokon stepped down from his position as deputy press secretary to the then premier.

On the other hand, Jahangir worked as Sheikh Hasina's personal employee after she became prime minister in 2009. He, however, introduced himself as Hasina's personal assistant, carried a licensed pistol, and went on to amass wealth worth millions in Dhaka and Noakhali through different schemes.

Ex-AL MP Bodi arrested in Ctg

STAR REPORT

Former Awami League lawmaker Abdur Rahman Bodi has been arrested by a team of Rapid Action Battalion.

A Rab team arrested Bodi, a former MP of Cox's Bazar-4 constituency, in Panchlaish of Chattogram last night, said officials from Rab legal and media wing.

He was arrested in an attempted murder case filed with Teknaf Police Station.

On May 3, 2024, Bodi was accused of shooting at a chairman aspirant ahead of the Teknaf Upazila Parishad polls. The incident allegedly took place in Moheshkhali Para area of Whykong union.

On August 16 this year, a case was filed against Bodi, and 32 others on charges of vandalism, looting and attack on businesses in Teknaf. Bodi was named as the "kingpin" of yaba trafficking on the list prepared by the Department of Narcotics Control.

826 looted arms recovered

UNB, *Dhaka*

Law enforcers have recovered 826 arms looted in recent times from police stations, police lines, police outposts and other places, till Monday.

Police headquarters shared this information yesterday afternoon.

Moreover, a total of 20,778 rounds of bullets, 1,482 tear gas shells, 71 sound grenades have been recovered till date, it said.

A large number of arms and ammunition were looted from the police stations and other protected zones after law enforcers were attacked before and after August 5. Members of the Bangladesh Army have also been working to recover the looted arms across the country.

UN team flies in tomorrow

FROM PAGE 1

According to a primary report of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights published on August 16, between July 16 and August 11, 650 people were killed in Bangladesh during the student-led protests and after the fall of the Awami League regime on August 5.

Of these, nearly 400 deaths were reported from July 16 to August 4, while around 250 people were reportedly killed following the ouster of the AL-led government on August 5 and 6, says the report.

The reported death toll is likely an underestimation, as information collection has been hindered by restrictions on movement due to the curfew and the internet shutdown, it says.

The report further says that the number of reported killings in revenge attacks since August 5 still remains to be determined. Those killed include protesters, bystanders, journalists covering the events and a number of members of the security forces, the OHCHR said.

Thousands of protesters and bystanders have been injured, with hospitals overwhelmed by the influx of patients. The majority of deaths and injuries have been attributed to the security forces and the student wing affiliated with the Awami League.

Also, there were a series of attacks on the minorities, including looting and vandalising of properties, places of worship and houses.

During a greet and meet event with the foreign diplomats and international aid agencies on August 18, Chief Adviser to the Interim Government Dr Muhammad Yunus also welcomed the UN proposal of deploying a fact-finding mission, saying the government wants an independent and impartial probe.

"All human rights violations that occurred between July 1 and August 15 will come under the purview of the investigation. However, both the UN and Bangladesh government will need to sign an agreement on the scope of investigation," the UN official said.

The agreement on the framework of the investigation will include the UN experts' access to meet the people they want, obtain documents required for the investigation and the government's commitment not to harass witnesses etc.

Based on the agreement, UN's independent fact-finding mission comprising of five respected legal experts will come to Bangladesh after one or two weeks.

"They will talk to the victims, review videos of rights violation, talk to the government officials, witnesses and whoever they need," the UN official said.

The mission will need six to eight weeks for the investigation and then submit a report including recommendations to the government.

The names of the witnesses or those accused of violence will not, however, be mentioned in the public documents of the fact-finding mission. If the government wants the names of the witnesses or those responsible for the violence, it will provide those to the government for prosecution, UN official added.

The report will put forward recommendations for the government in the prosecution process. If the government wants UN support for prosecution, including in capacity and technical expertise, evidence and even observations, it can extend the support.

"This will depend on the desire of the government," the official added.

A foreign ministry official said the UN mission may also recommend measures for reforms to the law enforcers.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Superintending Engineer, RHD
Road Circle, Noakhali.
Phone No. 02334491092
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Memo No. 35.01.7587.190.09.141.24-2536 Date : 20. 08. 2024

Corrigendum Notice No. 01

Due to unavoidable Circumstances some corrections are made in the following IFT. Bidders are requested to pay careful attention to IFT clauses in the e-GP website prior to submission of the tender.

Sl No	Tender ID No	Package No	Description of Works	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time) (Modified)	Tender Closing (Date & Time) (Modified)	Tender Opening (Date & Time) (Modified)
01.	1004639	SE/Noakhali/NRD/ PMP-Road/ 2023-2024/01 (Re-tender-01)	PMP work for DBS Wearing Course & Protective works at Ch. 21st (P) Km. to 28th (P) Km. of **Lakshmipur-Dattapara-Chatkhil Road** (Z-1510) under Noakhali Road Division during the year 2023-2024.	15/09/2024 at 16: 00	16/09/2024 at 12:30	16/09/2024 at 12:30

All other terms and conditions of the tender document will remain unchanged. This Corrigendum Notice-01 will be the part and parcel of the Tender Document.

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@www.eprocure.gov.bd).

Sd/-
(Ranapriya Barua)
ID No. 005155
Superintending Engineer (C.C), RHD
Road Circle, Noakhali

GD- 216

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়
র‍্যাপিড এ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-১০
কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০২৪-২০২৫খ্রিঃ অর্থ বৎসরের (২য় কোয়ার্টার) র‍্যাব-১০ এর সদস্যদের নিম্নলিখিত কাজের জন্য The Public Procurement Act-2006 & The Public Procurement Regulations-2008 মোতাবেক ঠিকাদার নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরযুক্ত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। এতদসংক্রান্তে প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্যসমূহ নিম্নে প্রদত্ত হলোঃ

১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	ঃ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/পুলিশ বিভাগ।
২।	সংস্থা	ঃ	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
৩।	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	ঃ	অধিনায়ক, র‍্যাপিড এ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-১০, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।
৪।	কি কারণে দরপত্র আহ্বান	ঃ	গ্রুপ-'ক' ভোজ্য তৈল (সয়াবিন), গ্রুপ-'খ' উন্নতমানের মুশুর ডাল (দেশী) এবং গ্রুপ-'গ' উন্নতমানের চিনি সরবরাহ।
৫।	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির স্মারক নং ও তারিখ	ঃ	র‍্যাব-১০/৯১০৭/কিউ/৪৩৫ তারিখঃ ১৯ আগস্ট ২০২৪খ্রিঃ।
৬।	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	ঃ	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
৭।	অর্থের উৎস	ঃ	পিএল খাতে বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ হতে।
৮।	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	ঃ	২১ আগস্ট ২০২৪খ্রিঃ।
৯।	দরপত্র (সিডিউল) ক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	ঃ	২১ আগস্ট ২০২৪খ্রিঃ হতে ০৩ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।
১০।	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	০৪ আগস্ট ২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে।
১১।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	০৪ আগস্ট ২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২৩০ ঘটিকায়।
অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানাঃ			
১২।	দরপত্র (সিডিউল) বিক্রয়কারী অফিস	ঃ	অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়, র‍্যাব-১০, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।
	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী/অফিস	ঃ	অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়, র‍্যাব-১০, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।
	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	ঃ	অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়, র‍্যাব-১০, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।
১৩।	টিওসি সভা	ঃ	০৪ আগস্ট ২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১৩০০ ঘটিকা।
১৪।	টিইসি সভা	ঃ	০৫ আগস্ট ২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২০০ ঘটিকা।
১৫।	দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয়ের প্রাক যোগ্যতা এবং শর্তাবলী	ঃ	১। বাংলাদেশী নাগরিক ২। হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনদপত্র ও ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ ৩। অভিজ্ঞতা সনদ ৪। ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী সনদ ৫। অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা যা টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল এ উল্লেখ আছে।

মালামালের বিবরণঃ

গ্রুপ নং	আইটেম	পরিমাণ	দরপত্রের মূল্য (টাকা) (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানত (টাকা) (ফেরতযোগ্য)	কাজের সময়সীমা
গ্রুপ-ক	ভোজ্য তৈল (সয়াবিন)	চাহিদা অনুযায়ী	৫০০/-	৭০,০০০/-	০১ অক্টোবর ২০২৪ হতে ৩১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত।
গ্রুপ-খ	উন্নতমানের মুশুর ডাল (দেশী)		৫০০/-	৪০,০০০/-	
গ্রুপ-গ	উন্নতমানের চিনি সরবরাহ		৫০০/-	৫০,০০০/-	

দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর বিবরণঃ

১৬।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	মোহাম্মদ ফরিদ উদ্দিন, বিপিএম, পিপিএম
১৭।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	এডিশনাল ডিআইজি
১৮।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	অধিনায়ক, র‍্যাব-১০, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।
১৯।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	ফোনঃ ০২-৭৫৫২৫৩৫/০১৭৭৭৭১১০৭৬
২০।	বিশেষ শর্তাবলীঃ ক) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না। খ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। সর্বনিম্ন দরদাতার দর গ্রহণে কর্তৃপক্ষ বাধ্য নহে। দরপত্রে উল্লিখিত যে কোন আইটেমের পরিমাণ বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে। গ) দরপত্রের সকল শর্তাবলী পিপিএ/২০০৬ ও পিপিআর/২০০৮ মোতাবেক কার্যকর হবে।	

১৮।৮।২৪
মোহাম্মদ ফরিদ উদ্দিন, বিপিএম, পিপিএম
এডিশনাল ডিআইজি
অধিনায়ক
র‍্যাব-১০, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা

GD-214

চট্রগ্রাম জিইসি মোড়ে
ইউনুসকো সিটি সেন্টারে
আনুমানিক ১০ (দশ) হাজার স্কয়ার ফিটের
একটি ফ্লোর বিক্রয় হইবে
যোগাযোগঃ ০১৭১৩১৪২৭৫৬
০১৮৯৪৬৮৭৪২২

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Jhalakathi
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo: 46.02.4200.000.07.004.24.2109 Date: 20.08.2024

Tender Notice No. 04/2024-25 (OTM: 29 & LTM: 30-32)

e-Tender is hereby invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following work.

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Name of the work with Package No.	Method of procurement	Last date of selling	Last date of receiving tender
29	**1007901**	**CAFDRIRP/Jhalokathi/AM/VR/W-26/2024-25** Rehabilitation of Bhutto Bazar RHD-Peer Moazzem Hossain RHD via Isapasha Girls School Road from Ch.1500-3200m under Nalchity. Dist: Jhalokathi. (Road ID. 542734046).	OTM	11-Sep-2024 16.00	12-Sep-2024 14.00
30	**1007900**	**GSID-2/JLK/SDW-116** Improvement of Omair-Bin Shad Jam-E-Mosque under Galua Union [Latitude: 22.53206 Longitude: 90.13139]	LTM	04-Sep-2024 16.00	05-Sep-2024 14.00
31	**1007899**	**IPCP/JHAL/KATHA/C/24-25/15.03** 1. a) Improvement of Abdul Jalil Hawlader Bari Hote Soyed Hawlader er Barir Uttar Pas Hoye Kolar Ses Porjonto Khal from CH. 0.00m to CH. 1261.106m under Kathalia Upazila, Dist: Jhalokathi. b) Construction of Reference Bed Block 03 Nos. & TBM 6 Nos. at Abdul Jalil Hawlader Bari Hote Soyed Hawlader er Barir Uttar Pas Hoye Kolar Ses Porjonto Khal.	LTM	04-Sep-2024 16.00	05-Sep-2024 14.00
32	**1005454**	**LGED/Jhal/VRRP/OL/24-25/W-14** Rehabilitation of Uttar Charial to Mokbul College Road from Ch: 00m-490m, Ch: 990m- 1675m & Ch: 3550m-4280m (Road ID: 542434061) [Salvage Material Cost: 1959691.00 Taka]	LTM	04-Sep-2024 16.00	05-Sep-2024 14.00

e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches. Details information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

২০/৮/২৪
Md. Shahidul Islam Sarkar
Executive Engineer
Phone: 02478875494
E-mail: xen.jhalokathi@lged.gov.bd

GD-221

Remaining HSC exams cancelled in face of protest

FROM PAGE 1

They said many of their classmates would not be able to sit for the tests because of injuries they received during the mass uprising that ousted the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5.

They demanded cancellation of the tests and urged the authorities to determine the scores of the cancelled exams based on the results they obtained in the corresponding SSC tests of each student.

Prof Tapan Kumar Sarkar, head of the Inter-Education Board Coordination Committee, said in a statement that the decision to cancel the exams was made due to "unavoidable circumstances".

He told reporters at the Secretariat that officials had yet to decide how the results would be determined.

The cancelled tests were scheduled to begin from September 11.

In the morning, Adviser Wahiduddin decided at a meeting that the HSC exams would be postponed for two more weeks and be held with half the usual number of questions.

On Monday, students demonstrated in front of Dhaka Education Board.

The HSC and equivalent exams began on June 30 across all education boards except Sylhet, where exams started later due to flooding. After eight days, the exams were postponed amid student protests across the country.

The exams were further delayed after questions papers stored at various police stations were burnt.

On August 15, authorities announced that the remaining HSC exams would resume on September 11 and were expected to conclude by October 8.

In 2020, HSC and equivalent exams were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Students received results based on their SSC and JSC scores.

'Captors kept watch on my family'

FROM PAGE 2

of a Bangladeshi intelligence agency.

"They repeatedly enquired why I wrote anti-government articles on international online platforms," said Maroof.

While being held, Maroof realised that he was in a cantonment area and those carrying out duties there were from the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI).

He got some clues such as a water bottle marked "Sena", medications, and a copy of the Holy Quran with military references.

"After I finished one bottle of water, they [captors] gave me another one with the label 'Sena'. The medicine they gave me had 'Defence Medicine, Trading Prohibited' written on the strips.

"When I requested a Quran from the person who looked after the detainees, he handed me one, which had 'Section Headquarters Library' stamped inside.

"They used the term 'Boro Bhai' to refer to senior officials for confidentiality," he said.

Maroof said he once heard someone outside his room loudly saying -- "Guard, Sabdhan".

He also heard planes and trains quite often early in the morning.

During an interrogation, interrogators hit him in the face.

"My mouth started bleeding and my teeth were damaged. They also struck me with sticks, injuring my hands and legs. They did not provide any medical treatment."

He also learned that his captors had been keeping track of his family's activities.

"One day, an officer told me that my daughter was at a restaurant on Dhanmondi-27. He said she had enrolled in a private university."

Throughout his captivity, he suffered from various ailments, including skin conditions, a hand ligament injury, and mouth sores.

Maroof's ordeal finally ended on March 16, 2019.

"I was asleep in my room when a man awakened me around 1:00am. They took me to an interrogation room and warned me not to reveal anything about the last 15 months," he recounted.

His captors returned his clothes but kept his laptops. They then drove him to near his house in Dhanmondi around 2:00am, and instructed him not to look back.

Maroof resigned as captain from Bangladesh Army in 1982. He was sent into forced retirement as an ambassador in 2013.

The former diplomat demanded formation of a commission to investigate all the incidents of enforced disappearance that occurred over the last 15 years.

'They didn't even let me drop off the milk for my child'

FROM PAGE 2

His captors wanted Firoz to record a statement claiming that union leaders accepted money from Grameen Telecom officials to convince workers to drop their cases.

When Firoz revealed his harrowing experience at the "Aynaghar" to The Daily Star on Monday, he said he could not open up until now for fear of reprisals and only found his voice after the Hasina-led government fell on August 5.

'HOUSE OF MIRRORS'

After Firoz was brought to his cell at the "Aynaghar", his blindfolds were removed.

His cell was very narrow. It was 3 feet wide and 6-7 feet long. Concrete walls surrounded him on three sides, and a locked iron gate led to a corridor.

"The cell was empty except for a light bulb, a fan, a water bottle, and a blanket."

Firoz said no light, sound, or air from outside reached his cell.

"The bulb was always on, and there were fans outside my cell, which were very loud. Whenever I needed to use the toilet, I had to raise my hand, and a guard would arrive. I assume they monitored me 24 hours through CCTV."

The only time he didn't have a blindfold on was when he went to the toilet and when he was inside his cell.

"I couldn't tell day from night. I didn't even hear the azaan (call to prayer). I could only tell it was morning when they brought me breakfast."

THE TORTURE

Firoz was subjected to intense interrogation and physical and mental torture.

"They beat me badly with sticks from my waist down and tortured me with electric shocks, strapping me to a steel chair and tying my hands."

They threatened that if he didn't comply with their request, his family members would be picked up and tortured as well.

"I kept thinking I would be killed any day or never see my family again."

HANDOVER TO COPS

After seven days of torture, Firoz was handed over to the DMP's Detective Branch (DB) in the early hours of July 6.

There, he came across his colleague Kamruzzaman, 39, the union president, who had also remained in detention during the same period as Firoz and underwent similar experiences.

The two were then shown arrested in a case filed over allegations of fraud and embezzlement by another union leader and subsequently placed on remand for seven days.

During the 7-day interrogation, Firoz and Kamruzzaman were forced to memorise a script, intended to serve as their confessional statement.

"A copy of the text was submitted to the court, which recorded it as my confessional statement."

Every time his lawyer requested bail in court, the court rejected it.

He was finally granted bail in April 2023 after spending nine months in jail. Even then, he continued to feel a lingering sense of insecurity and anxiety.

'It felt like living in a grave'

FROM PAGE 2

incident, he endured heightened psychological torture and was denied proper meals for a while.

"They often served me curry that was either too salty or excessively spicy. I survived on just rice for a whole month, which led to noticeable weight loss," he said.

The psychological torment became so intolerable that Mikel begged the supervisor to end his life instead of prolonging his suffering.

"When I fell sick during the last Ramadan, doctors told them that I needed care. They then started providing proper meals."

Talking about the secret prison, the UPDF leader said the rooms would be about 77 to 96 square feet in size and contain a small bed, either iron or wooden, measuring three by seven feet.

He said there were other detainees in those detention centres, but they hardly had any interaction with each other.

During his captivity, Mikel shared a room with two other prisoners -- Saidur from Rangpur and Ershad from Kochukhet in Dhaka -- at different times. He also found out about two more prisoners in adjacent cells through overhearing discussions. However, he has no idea about their fate.

Upon hearing that Saidur would be moved to another secret prison, Mikel had Saidur memorise his sister's phone number. But he later realised that he had given Saidur the wrong last digit.

He also said that he caught glimpses of some other detainees of different ages while being taken to the washroom.

Accusing state forces of abducting him, Mikel demanded those responsible for stealing five valuable years of his life be brought to book.

He said he would take legal action following his recovery from illness.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Authority(DTCA)
Road Transport Highway Division
Ministry of Road Transport Bridges

Invitation for Tenders

	GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH		
1	Ministry/Division	Road Transport and Highways Division, Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges.	
2	Agency	Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA)	
3	Procuring Entity Name	Additional Executive Director (P&P)	
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not Applicable	
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka	
6	Invitation for	Procurement of 3 Lac Rapid Pass (Felica IC) Card & Related Services	
7	Invitation Ref No	35.02.0000.008.14.030.24-073	
8	Date	20-AUG-2024	
		KEY INFORMATION	
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)	
		FUNDING INFORMATION	
10	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue Budget and GOB	
11	Development Partners	Not Applicable	
		PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
12	Tender Package No.	DTCA/CH/RP/01	
13	Tender Package Name	Procurement of 3 Lac Rapid Pass (Felica IC) Card & Related Services	
		Date	
14	Tender Publication Date	21-AUG-2024	
15	Tender Last Selling Date	17-SEP-2024, 5.00 PM	
		Date	**Time**
16	Tender Closing Date and Time	18-SEP-2024	01.00 PM
17	Tender Opening Date and Time	18-SEP-2024	02.00 PM
18	Name & Address of the office(s)		
	- Selling Tender Document	Accounts & Finance Officer Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority(DTCA) Room No: 909, Level-9, DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208 Telephone No.: 02226603718 e-mail address: afo@dtca.gov.bd	
	- Receiving Tender Document	Room No: 608, Level-06, DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208	
	- Opening Tender Document	Room No: 608, Level-06, DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.	
19	Place / Date / Time of	02-SEP-2024, at 11.00 AM	
	Pre-Tender Meeting	Room No: 608, Level-06, DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.	
	INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
20	Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	(a) The minimum of years of general experience of the Tenderer in the supply of Goods and related services as Supplier shall be 5 (Five) years. (b) The minimum specific experience as Supplier in supply of similar Goods of at least 2 (Two) contract(s) successfully completed within the last 5 (Five) years, each with a value of at least Tk. 2 Crore. (c) 20 Pieces of Rapid Pass (Felica IC) Card as Sample must be submitted to Procuring Entity within 15 days after Tender opening date. (d)The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e working capital or credit line(s) of the Tenderer shall be 21 Lac Taka.	
21	Brief Description of Goods	3 Lac Rapid Pass (Felica IC) Card & Related Services	
22	Brief Description of Related Services	3 Lac Rapid Pass (Felica IC) Card & Related Services	
23	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	Tk. 1000.00 (One Thousand Taka)	

24 Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Completion Time in Weeks / Months
1	Procurement of 3 Lac Rapid Pass (Felica IC) Card & Related Services	Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Authority (DTCA), DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208	Tk,25,00,000.00 (Twenty Five Lac Taka)	4 (Four) Months from the date of Contract Signing Date.

25	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Motasim Billah
26	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Additional Executive Director (P&P) (Additional Secretary)
27	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Room No: 608, Level-06, DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
28	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel: +88 02-226603702 Email: aed.p&p@dtca.gov.bd
29	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings.	

20/08/2024

Md. Motasim Billah
Additional Executive Director (P&P) (Additional Secretary)
Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority
DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
Tel: +88 02-226603702

GD-218

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়
ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।

"দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

স্মারক নং ২৩২৬ /১ম খন্ড(রেশন)

তারিখ- ১৯ আগস্ট/২০২৪খ্রিঃ।

২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টারের (অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪পর্যন্ত) জন্য রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয় এর নিমিত্তে দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা/২০০৬ ও ২০০৮ অনুসারে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/ জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।
২	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	পুলিশ সুপার ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
৪	কি কারণে দরপত্র আহবান	জেলা পুলিশের রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয়।
৫	দরপত্র নং	০২/২০২৪-২০২৫খ্রিঃ
৬	তারিখ	১৯/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ
কাজের বিবরণ ঃ-		
৭	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র।
অর্থের উৎস ঃ-		
৮	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	রাজস্ব খাত।
তথ্যাদি ঃ		
৯	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রচারের তারিখ	২২/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ তরিখের মধ্যে
১০	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১১/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ, বিকাল ১৬.০০ ঘটিকা।
১১	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১২/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ, দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা। (নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।)
১২	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১২/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ, দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।
অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা ঃ-		
১৩	দরপত্র ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী অফিস	০১। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া। ০২। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, কুমিল্লা।
	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারীর অফিস	০১। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	০১। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
দরপত্র সম্পর্কিত তথ্য ঃ-		
১৪	দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা	(১) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (২)টিন/ইটিন সনদ(৩) আয়কর রিটার্ন জমার সনদ(৪)। ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ (৫) ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী সনদ (৬)ব্যাংক স্টেটমেন্ট (৭) এগ্রিকালসার লাইসেন্স (৮) এনআইডি কার্ডের ফটোকপি(৯)সয়াবিন তেলের ক্ষেত্রে বিএসটিআই কর্তৃক হালনাগাদপ টেষ্টিং রিপোর্ট (১০)অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা যাহা টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউলে (PG-2/PG-3) উল্লেখ আছে।(বিঃদ্রঃ সকল ডকুমেন্টস হালনাগাদ হতে হবে)
১৫	মালামালের বিবরণ ঃ-	

ক্রঃ নং	মালামালের বিবরণ	পরিমান (টন)	দরপত্রের মূল্য (অফেরৎযোগ্য)	নিরাপত্তা জামানত (টাকা)	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময়
ক	উন্নত মানের মশুর ডাল ক্রয়	৪১.০০	১,০০০/-	১,৭৫,০০০/-	অক্টোবর/২৪-ডিসেঃ/২৪পর্যন্ত
খ	উন্নত মানের সয়াবিন তৈল ক্রয়	৪০.০০	১,০০০/-	২,০০,০০০/-	অক্টোবর/২৪-ডিসেঃ/২৪পর্যন্ত
গ	উন্নত মানের চিনি ক্রয়	২৫.০০	১,০০০/-	১,০০,০০০/-	অক্টোবর/২৪-ডিসেঃ/২৪পর্যন্ত
ঘ	গম ভাংগানো	ডি ও মোতাবেক	৫০০/-	২,০০,০০০/-	অক্টোবর/২৪-ডিসেঃ/২৪পর্যন্ত
ঙ	কুলি খরচ ও পরিবহন	ডি ও মোতাবেক	৫০০/-	১০,০০০/-	অক্টোবর/২৪-ডিসেঃ/২৪পর্যন্ত
চ	পোলাউ এর চাউল	১.৮	৫০০/-	১০,০০০/-	অক্টোবর/২৪-ডিসেঃ/২৪পর্যন্ত
ছ	খালি বস্তা নিলাম	স্টোরে খালি বস্তার মজুত মোতাবেক	৫০০/-	৫,০০০/-	কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্তির ১৫ কার্য দিবসের মধ্যে
বিঃ দ্রঃ	মশুর ডাল ৩.৫ কেজি, ৪ কেজি ও ৫.৫ কেজি ওজনের প্যাকেট, সয়াবিন তৈল ০.৫ ও ২ লিঃ বোতল জাত ,গম পেষাইয়ের ক্ষেত্রে ৫ কেজি, ৪ কেজি ও চিনি ৫০ কেজি বস্তায় করে সরবরাহ করতে হবে প্যাকেটের গায়ে স্পষ্টভাবে ওজন, প্যাকেট জাতের তারিখ ও মেয়াদ উত্তীর্নের তারিখ উল্লেখ করতে হবে।				

দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর বিবরণ ঃ

১৬	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	মোহাম্মদ শাখাওয়াত হোসেন
১৭	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	পুলিশ সুপার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
১৮	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, কাউতলী, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
১৯	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	ফোন-০২৩৩৪৪২৭৬৮০, মোবাইল-০১৩২০-১১৪৯০০
২০	ক) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। খ) দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত যে কোন আইটেমের পরিমান বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে। গ) দরপত্র পিপিআর/২০০৬ ও পিপিআর/২০০৮ মোতাবেক সকল শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে। ঘ) দরপত্র সিডিউলে যাবতীয় শর্তবলী উল্লেখ রয়েছে (বিস্তারিত জানতে রেশন শাখায় যোগাযোগ করতে পারেন ০১৭১১-০৭৮০১৫)।	

১৯-৮-২০২৪

মোহাম্মদ শাখাওয়াত হোসেন বিপিএম-সেবা
বিপি-৭৮০৬১০৯৮০৭
পুলিশ সুপার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া
ফোন-০২৩৩৪৪২৭৬৮০ ,ফ্যাক্স-০২৩৩৪৪৩২০২৪
ই-মেইল-spbrahmmanbaria@police.gov.bd

GD- 213

HK press freedom sinks to record low

Says journo survey

AFP, *Hong Kong*

Hong Kong journalists rated the city's press freedom lower than ever in an annual survey released yesterday, citing fears of sweeping national security laws.

Published every year since 2013 by the Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA) and the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (HKPORI), the Press Freedom Index ranks the city's media environment on a zero-to-100 scale -- 100 being a perfect score.

It is based on a poll of over 250 working journalists and around 1,000 members of the public.

More than 90 percent of the surveyed journalists said the city's press freedom was "significantly" impacted by a new security law enacted in March which punishes crimes like espionage and foreign interference.

INDIA LANDSLIDE

Teesta dam power station damaged

THE HINDU ONLINE

A landslide damaged six houses and a building of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) at the site of its Teesta-V hydropower station in Sikkim's Gangtok yesterday.

The power station, damaged by the glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) in October 2023, has been under construction. Officials said the incident occurred at about 7:30 am at Balutar, the site of the 510 MW Teesta Stage V project.

"The landslide damaged a structure they (the NHPC) call the GIS building, and six houses, whose occupants were evacuated to safety. The Singtam-Dikchu Road was cut off but an alternative passage has been cleared for communication," Gangtok District Collector Tushar G. Nikhare told The Hindu.

Biden passes baton to Kamala Harris

Says she will be a 'historic president' of US

REUTERS, *Chicago*

President Joe Biden cemented the Democratic Party's elevation of Kamala Harris to lead the fight for the White House against Republican Donald Trump with a convention speech on Monday evening that praised his vice president as the best hope for preserving American democracy.

Biden took center stage on opening night of the Democratic National Convention, drawing an extended standing ovation from the party faithful and delivering a farewell speech to the party he has served for half a century - even with five months left in office.

Wiping away tears after being introduced by his daughter Ashley, Biden waved to the crowd that held signs saying, "We (heart) Biden." Beaming, he responded, "I love YOU."

"Are you ready to vote for freedom? Are you ready to vote for democracy and for America? Let me ask you, are you ready to elect Kamala Harris and Tim Walz?" Biden said, adding that she will be a "historic president". Taking multiple swipes at Trump, Biden promised to be the "best volunteer" Harris and Minnesota Governor Walz, her vice presidential running mate, had ever seen.

Biden's address in Chicago kicked off a four-day event fueled by enthusiasm for Harris and relief that Biden abandoned his own reelection bid and endorsed her to replace him. d Trump for calling the United States a failing nation. "He's the loser," Biden said with fervour.

ISRAELI POSITIONS

Hezbollah fires 'rocket barrages'

AFP, *Beirut*

Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah group said it launched several rocket salvos at Israeli army positions in the annexed Golan Heights yesterday "in response" to Israeli strikes on eastern Lebanon the previous day.

Hezbollah fighters launched "intense rocket barrages" at two Israeli army positions in the occupied Golan Heights "in response to the Israeli enemy's attack on the Bekaa" Valley -- which a source close to Hezbollah said targeted weapons depots in the eastern region.

The Israeli military confirmed that around 55 projectiles were identified crossing from Lebanese territory. "Some of the projectiles were intercepted," the military said in a statement.

Tigers take on Pakistan

FROM PAGE 12

on the game in the right frame of mind.

"Everyone went through a tough time in the last few days, it's really sad. Everyone struggled. No one really wishes for it. Also there is no way to live in the past, we have to move forward. But it was a tough time for everyone, every family. Hopefully, we will have better days ahead. And as players, we want to play our game with the right mind," Shanto said.

Both teams are playing their first series since the T20 World Cup. A few from the Tigers' squad have come off the back of franchise duties. Thus, the Tigers will have to get the drift of red-ball cricket early in the match in order to have hope of staging a fight. Test series against Pakistan has however not been kind for Bangladesh as they have managed just one draw in 13 Tests, losing 12.

The onus will be on the batters in terms of how they handle Pakistan's quality pace attack as Rawalpindi Test provides another test of mentality.

AL govt leaves behind

FROM PAGE 1

Dhaka University economics professor Dr Selim Raihan cited the government's failure to mobilise domestic resources to increase public expenditure as one of the key factors behind the rise in debt.

"The government failed to increase the revenue collection over the past one decade or so," said Selim, who is also the executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM).

The second is corruption in activities surrounding the process of taking loans, especially for mega projects with foreign funds, he said.

"A group with vested interests exploited the foreign loan-based mega projects by massively increasing the costs multiple times."

As a developing nation, Bangladesh has to take loans, but the Hasina government had a tendency to take short-term loans as well as high-interest loans while the focus should have been on low-interest and long-term loans with favourable conditions.

This tendency grew over the years. Loans from single sources increased while borrowing from multilateral sources with more accountability and transparency was minimal.

Bangladesh's debt service-to-revenue ratio is projected to cross the 100 percent mark for the first time owing to rising loans and lower tax and export receipts, highlighting the growing risk to the country's capacity to repay.

The debt service-to-revenue and grants ratio stood at 58.7 percent in FY21 but it surged to 72 percent in FY22 and stood at 71.8 percent in FY23, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The ratio is projected to grow to 101.1 percent in the current financial year.

Debt service is defined as the sum of interest and amortisation of medium, long, and short-term debt.

"The increasing debt service-to-revenue ratio highlights the urgency of mobilising tax revenue to support much-needed spending to achieve pro-poor, green growth recovery," the IMF said in a report.

The ratio increased as the NBR missed its tax target for the 11th consecutive year in FY23, in the face of slowing growth of collections amidst economic slowdowns and ambitious goals set by the government.

The debt-to-GDP ratio of Bangladesh was forecast to cross 40 percent in the current fiscal year as the government continued to borrow to bankroll its expenditures amid the low collection of revenue.

It was 39.8 percent in FY23 and is forecast to be 41.41 percent at the end of FY24, according to a fiscal monitoring report of the IMF.

In the last decade, the debt-to-GDP ratio rose by 13 percentage points. The IMF forecast that the ratio would reach 43.5 percent in 2028-29.

Mpox not the new Covid

Says WHO official

REUTERS, *Berlin*

A World Health Organization official stressed yesterday that mpox, regardless of whether it is the new or old strain, is not the new Covid, as authorities know how to control its spread.

"We can and must tackle mpox together," said Hans Kluge, WHO regional director for Europe, in a UN media briefing. "So will we choose to put the systems in place to control and eliminate mpox globally? Or we will enter another cycle of panic and neglect? How we respond now and in the years to come will prove a critical test for Europe and the world," he added.

Mpox, a viral infection that causes pus-filled lesions and flu-like symptoms, is usually mild but can kill.

The clade 1b variety has caused global concern because it seems to spread more easily though routine close contact.

A case of the variant was confirmed last week in Sweden and linked to a growing outbreak in Africa, the first sign of its spread outside the continent. The WHO declared the recent outbreak of the disease a public health emergency of international concern after the new variant was identified.

Kluge said that the focus on the new clade 1 strain will also help in the fight against the less severe clade 2 variety that has spreading globally since 2022, allowing Europe to improve its response through better health advice and surveillance.

Iran cyber ops targeted Trump, Harris campaigns

REUTERS, *Washington*

The United States on Monday accused Iran of launching cyber operations against the campaigns of both US presidential candidates and targeting the American public with influence operations aimed at fanning political discord.

"We have observed increasingly aggressive Iranian activity during this election cycle," said a statement by the FBI, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which oversees the defense of government computer systems.

The statement confirmed charges made earlier this month by the campaign of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump that Iran hacked one of its websites, triggering an FBI investigation. At that time, Trump said Iran was "only able to get publicly available information."

RAPE, MURDER OF DOCTOR

India SC orders medical safety task force

AFP, *New Delhi*

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India's Supreme Court yesterday ordered a national task force to examine how to bolster security for health care workers after the "horrific" rape and murder of a doctor sparked medical strikes and furious protests.

The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata on August 9 has stoked nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women.

Doctors' associations from government-run hospitals in many cities across India have launched multiple strikes that cut non-essential services, with protests in their second week.

Demonstrators marched through Kolkata yesterday, holding up signs demanding "justice", while the country's top court issued orders in the capital New Delhi. "The brutality of the sexual assault and the nature of the crime have shocked the conscience of the nation," the three-judge bench said in its order, calling the details "horrific".

UN ready

FROM PAGE 12

on the interim government to ensure full protection of all citizens, and in particular, of minorities.

"I also strongly urge you to ensure the well-being of Rohingya refugees, especially in view of the deteriorating situation in Myanmar," he wrote.

Stating that Bangladesh stands at a crucial juncture in history, the UN chief said the UN fully supports the efforts of the interim government for an inclusive and prosperous country and remains committed to working with the interim government.

Yunus may attend UNGA

FROM PAGE 12

the governments of some of the member countries, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sources said.

This will be the first foreign visit for Prof Yunus as head of the interim government. He assumed this role on August 8, three days after the fall of the Awami League regime.

An official of the Chief Adviser's Office said the chief adviser is also likely to attend the UN General Assembly in New York. UNGA is scheduled to be held between on September 10 and 24.

"The date for the visit of the chief adviser to the UN General Assembly is yet to be fixed," the official told the Daily Star yesterday.

Bangladesh will be the next chair of the Bimstec -- the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation -- comprised of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

The official and ministerial meetings of the group will take place from September 1-3 before the summit.

As the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) remains largely inactive, India has put Bimstec at the centre of its neighbourhood diplomacy.

An official of Bimstec Secretariat in Dhaka said they are working to sign at least four agreements including maritime transport cooperation during the summit.

The maritime transport agreement would include every aspect of maritime connectivity among the Bimstec member countries. The details of the agreement will be shared once the member states sign the document, he said.

Bimstec adapted its charter on May 20 this year, 27 years after the founding of the regional body.

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দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৪/২০২৪-২০২৫

দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পিপিআর-২০০৮ এবং তৎসংশ্লিষ্ট পরবর্তী সংশোধনী অনুযায়ী সিলেট জেলা পুলিশ বিভাগের আওতাধীন বিভিন্ন ইউনিটের ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরের নিম্নে বর্ণিত আইটেমের মালামাল ক্রয়/সরবরাহের লক্ষ্যে অভিজ্ঞতা ঠিকাদার/ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১।	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।
০২।	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
০৩।	সংগ্রাহক সত্তার নাম ও ঠিকানা	সিলেট জেলা পুলিশ।
০৪।	সংগ্রহের পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
০৫।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়কারী অফিসের নাম	পুলিশ অফিস, সিলেট ও রেঞ্জ ডিআইজি অফিস, সিলেট
০৬।	দরপত্র প্রচারের তারিখ	২১/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ
০৭।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	০৪/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বিকাল ০৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
০৮।	দরপত্র গ্রহণের তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	০৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা, পুলিশ অফিস, সিলেট
০৯।	দরপত্র উন্মুক্তকরণের তারিখ ও সময়	০৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা দরদাতা বা তার প্রতিনিধি উপস্থিত থাকতে পারবেন।
১০।	দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা	পিপিএ-২০০৬ ও পিপিআর-২০০৮ এবং তৎসংশ্লিষ্ট পরবর্তী সংশোধনী অনুযায়ী।
১১।	শর্তাবলী	প্রত্যেক দরদাতাকে দরপত্রের সাথে হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর, ভ্যাট ও ব্যাংক সচ্ছলতার সনদপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। প্রদত্ত দর বাজার দরের সাথে সঙ্গতিপূর্ণ হতে হবে। কৃতকার্য দরদাতাকে তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে মালামাল সরবরাহ করতে হবে। বরাদ্দ প্রাপ্তি সাপেক্ষে বিল পরিশোধ করা। হবে। দরপত্রদাতাকে দরপত্র সিডিউলে প্রতিটির দাম লিখে স্বাক্ষরপূর্বক সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র বাক্সে দাখিল করতে হবে।

কাজের নাম, দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য), দরপত্র জামানত ও কাজ সমাপ্তির সময়ঃ

	নং	কাজের বিবরণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানত	কার্য সম্পাদনের মেয়াদ	মালামাল/কাজের পরিমাণ
১২।	০১	আসবাবপত্র সরবরাহ	১,০০০/-	৫০,০০০/-	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ সাল	চাহিদা মতে
		যন্ত্রপাতি ও অন্যান্য সরঞ্জামাদি	১,০০০/-	৫০,০০০/-	ঐ	ঐ

১৩। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২১.০৮.২০২৪
আব্দুল মান্নান, বিপিএম (বার)
বিপি-৭৯০৬১১৩৯৬৩
পুলিশ সুপার
সিলেট
ফোনঃ ০২৯৯৬৬, ফ্যাক্সঃ ৩৫০০২
Email: spsylhet@police.gov.bd

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লক্ষ্য করুন

ব্যাংকিং সেবা ও কার্যক্রমসমূহ সাময়িকভাবে বন্ধ থাকবে

সম্মানিত গ্রাহক,
আপনাদের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ব্যাংকিং সেবাসমূহের পরিধি ও মান উন্নয়ন কার্যক্রমের অংশ হিসেবে নিম্নলিখিত সময়ে নির্দিষ্ট ব্যাংকিং সেবা ও কার্যক্রমসমূহ সাময়িকভাবে বন্ধ থাকবে ঃ

ডাউনটাইম শুরু		ডাউনটাইম শেষ	
তারিখ	সময়	তারিখ	সময়
বৃহস্পতিবার, ২২ আগস্ট ২০২৪	রাত ১১ঃ০০ টা	শুক্রবার, ২৩ আগস্ট ২০২৪	ভোর ০৫ঃ০০ টা

উল্লেখিত সময়ে নিম্নলিখিত সেবা এবং লেনদেনসমূহ বন্ধ থাকবে ঃ
> ATM, POS এবং ই-কমার্স ডেবিট কার্ডের লেনদেনসমূহ
> ইন্টারনেট ব্যাংকিং, স্কাইব্যাংকিং মোবাইল অ্যাপ , ইবিএল Connect, মিসড কল এলার্ট, ই-কেওয়াইসি, ইবিএল সেলফ সার্ভিস, সাপ্লাই চেইন ফাইন্যান্স, রেমিট্যান্স সার্ভিস
> BACH নেটওয়ার্কের আওতাধীন সেবা সমূহ, RTGS এবং SWIFT
> ইবিএল ফাইন্যান্স (হংকং) লিমিটেডের ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম

তবে ইবিএল এর ইস্যু করা প্রিপেইড এবং ক্রেডিট কার্ড সচল থাকবে। আপনাদের সাময়িক অসুবিধার জন্য আমরা আন্তরিক ভাবে দুঃখিত।

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The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

We need a strong banking commission

But its goals must be clearly defined and regularly scrutinised

We welcome the interim government's decision to form a banking commission to implement sustainable reforms in the sector. The formation of such a body has been a longstanding demand from economists, as the sector has suffered massive problems and regulatory failures for years, particularly under the Awami League regime. In 2009, when the party took office, non-performing loans (NPLs) in banks totalled Tk 22,480 crore. By March 2024, NPLs skyrocketed to around Tk 1,82,000 crore. The number would be even higher if not for the accounting frauds committed under the past regime to conceal the true picture.

Over the years, experts have underscored various institutional challenges plaguing the sector, including questionable appointment practices for bank directors, loans being granted and rescheduled ad infinitum, weak internal controls, writing off of loans for dubious reasons, etc. Regulatory weaknesses—such as the lack of independence of the central bank, political influence of habitual loan defaulters, arbitrary issuance of bank licenses, and the quasi-monopolistic power granted to a few banking oligarchs—have allowed these irregularities to occur unabated.

As a result of high NPLs, the fiscal flexibility of banks has also been seriously constrained. This has had numerous spillover effects both on the health of the banks and the overall economy. Given these realities, the country urgently needs a commission to unearth the true extent of the damage done to the sector. Without such an effort to bring transparency to the sector, it will be difficult to determine the necessary remedial solutions for it.

However, in establishing such a commission, its objectives should be clearly defined, as experts have suggested. These may include ensuring full transparency in the commission's operations, identifying the root causes that have led to the current banking problems and future challenges, determining which groups and institutions are responsible for these issues, and providing specific, actionable recommendations for reforms in the short to medium term. Moreover, the interim government should also establish a clear roadmap outlining when and how the commission's suggestions will be implemented.

To ensure that the commission is able to play its desired role, its members should not only be highly competent, experienced, and honest, but they should also engage with different stakeholders to gather their input. Regarding transparency, it is encouraging that the interim government plans to prepare and publish a report on the overall situation of the financial sector and a roadmap for reforms within the first 100 days of its tenure. However, once the commission is established, it should also provide regular updates on its progress to restore confidence in the banking sector. Additionally, to ensure its long-term health, it must be guaranteed that the commission can carry out its work without any external interference in the future.

Local govt appointees must show integrity

They should ensure smooth delivery of public services

We welcome the interim government's move to appoint administrators at city corporations and all other tiers of local government, filling a vacuum created by the large-scale abstention, desertion, and eventual termination of mostly Awami League-linked public representatives. The decision comes amid concerns over the lack of leadership in these vital institutions and resultant disruptions in public services. However, we must acknowledge that this is but a temporary measure that may not resolve all longstanding grievances surrounding these bodies.

According to a report by this daily, the government got rid of the mayors of all 12 city corporations and 330 municipalities; 61 zilla parishad chairmen; 493 out of 495 upazila parishad chairmen; and 988 vice-chairmen and women vice-chairmen at upazila parishads. Instead, additional secretaries and divisional commissioners have been put in charge of the city corporations, and additional deputy commissioners and assistant commissioners (land) in charge of the municipalities. Deputy commissioners (DCs) will run 53 zilla parishads, while divisional commissioners will run the Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet, Mymensingh, Rangpur, and Barishal zilla parishads. Meanwhile, UNOs will run the 395 upazila parishads. These appointees, as government officials, should already be familiar with the modus operandi of local government bodies, and thus must prioritise the areas requiring immediate attention.

For example, in cities and municipalities, dengue control is a priority at the moment. At the same time, activities that have been suspended because of the recent unrest should be resumed on an urgent basis. For instance, Chattogram city has been struggling with waterlogging because drains have not been cleaned for almost a month. The divisional commissioner of Chattogram should address this immediately and bring respite for the city dwellers. As the LGRD adviser mentioned during an interaction with reporters, the administrators at the local levels would ensure that daily activities such as birth and death registration or implementation of Food for Work projects are not disrupted. However, we must remember that UNO or DC offices are not as accessible to villagers as that of elected representatives. Government offices also have a reputation for slow service delivery. Care must be taken so that the appointment of administrators does not lead to lengthy project implementation or sluggish services.

The government must also be mindful that the delegation of authority to administrators does not create any conflict of power among various ranks of executives, as witnessed recently in civil and police administrations. We hope that government officials, entrusted with the power to work independently of public representatives, will be accountable to the public and ensure transparency in their dealings with public funds.

Our transitional political settlement and ways forward

Dr Mushtaq Khan
is a professor of economics at SOAS University of London.

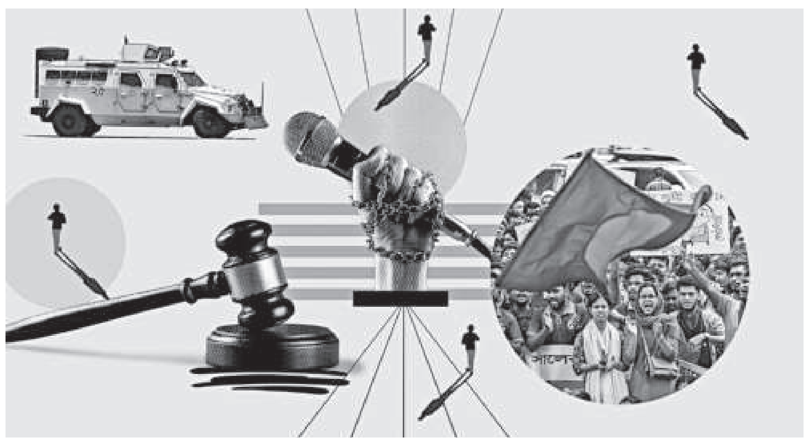
MUSHTAQ KHAN

The sham election of January 2024 was a turning point for Bangladesh. In my research and teaching roles, I began to observe young people openly saying that only violence can remove the *shoirachari* party. If that feeling becomes widespread, all it needs is a spark. When the one-point demand emerged out of the repression of students, the mass uprising that followed was not really a surprise. The students announced the government would fall in July. They also announced, as only students can, that July would be extended if necessary. July only needed to be extended to the 36th before the regime collapsed in a bloodbath. What can we do to consolidate this hugely costly achievement?

In my view, a useful way of thinking about a social order is as a political settlement—a description of the power, capabilities and interests of the organisations in a society. Organisations and their interactions deliver the social, political and economic outcomes of a society. This social structure is ultimately held together by a distribution of power. A political consensus can support this distribution of power, or challenge it, but it cannot sustain a social order on its own. In developing countries in particular, power is partially reproduced through many rules that are informal, involving corruption, clientelism and patronage. If these informal "rules" or institutions cannot be blocked by other organisations, they are part of the political settlement. Societies, therefore, differ greatly in terms of how power is reproduced, who benefits, and the path of development. But in every case, the rules that are followed or violated depend on the power and interests of competing organisations.

New laws or even constitutions will not change the political settlement if the rules are not followed. Why do we often see people standing in an orderly queue in one part of Dhaka and the same people breaking a queue not far away from the first one? If you think about it, this cannot be explained by culture, because it is the same people, or by external policing, because it is the same country.

Over the last 10 years, power was reproduced in Bangladesh by a ruling coalition using a combination of repression, fear, and mega-corruption that allowed the enrichment of party supporters and consolidated their power. Over time, economic and political power became more and more concentrated as illicit wealth concentrated at the top. The middle was increasingly hollowed out, and competing political organisations were almost entirely destroyed. This corroded the viability of the economy, and political opposition became almost suicidal, but the political settlement remained stable, till the 36th of July. The student-led mass uprising succeeded precisely because it was not an organised force. The students did not have an organisation that could be destroyed, and despite increasingly violent attempts to reproduce fear, this time violence increased the determination of the street. The political settlement that eventually emerges will depend critically on how the force on the streets translates into new organisations.



VISUAL: **ANWAR SOHEL**

New laws or even constitutions will not change the political settlement if the rules are not followed. Why do we often see people standing in an orderly queue in one part of Dhaka and the *same* people breaking a queue not far away from the first one? If you think about it, this cannot be explained by culture, because it is the same people, or by external policing, because it is the same country. The critical factor is usually the distribution of power within the queue, and how people in the queue assess how others will react if they break the line. If everyone in the queue has similar power, the first point of enforcement comes from other people in the queue. In countries with a strong rule of law, the first point of enforcement for violators comes from their peers, because the distribution of power and capabilities creates this self-interest across organisations. Without these "horizontal checks," formal enforcement by police, courts or regulators is never very effective and the enforcers are rapidly corrupted.

The deeper problem in developing countries is that most of our organisations are not likely to fully behave like this immediately. They vary greatly in power and capabilities. Moreover, for most businesses, it is not essential to have a reputation for following rules. They can do most of their business using informal assurances to their suppliers and clients. These are characteristics of developing countries. They rarely have either the interest or the power to check formal violations by others, and are happy if they can do some violations of their own, like not paying taxes or bypassing regulations. In this context, political parties raise money from black sources, and subsequently exercise power by distributing money-making opportunities from the top, rather than collecting legal donations and delivering on a manifesto. Nevertheless, even in this adverse configuration of power and capabilities, how organisations are networked and collectively organised may result in very different political settlements and social outcomes.

During our democratic interlude in the 1990s, most economic and political organisations in the country were grouped around two coalitions. They were both corrupt, engaged in many violations, but there were some effective checks and balances. This was not an advanced country liberal democracy. I described it as a "competitive clientelism." But the checks meant that no coalition had the time to hollow out entire banks or fully destroy the police or courts. But from 2014, this political settlement radically changed. The Awami League destroyed all effective means of replacing it through elections. It began destroying opposition organisations, parties, banks, businesses and eventually even sympathisers. By allying with the ruling party, big businesses rapidly became bigger and business organisations became more concentrated. The SMEs that had driven Bangladesh's growth in the previous decade languished. No new sectors emerged. Overpriced power and infrastructure projects gave the impression that the GDP was rapidly growing. In a paper I wrote in 2017, titled "Anti-Corruption in Bangladesh: A Political Settlements Analysis," I argued that the new settlement was a "vulnerable authoritarianism," with many features similar to Pakistan in the 1960s. It was based on destroying the opposition and instilling fear in others. Ironically, it also shared the same false narrative of development first and democracy later. It was not a dominant party settlement, where a single party includes most political organisations within it. A true dominant party is less violent, more stable, and it does not collapse in a bloodbath. My analysis was correct.

Now that the authoritarian political settlement has collapsed, the vested interests within business and the administration are being temporarily held at bay by vigilance on the streets, and Prof Yunus's interim administration. The entire society is holding its breath, but we must help much more actively. This current temporary settlement is fragile. The damage done by the Awami League makes even a return to competitive clientelism difficult. Opposition parties and middle sections of business have been hollowed out. The Awami League itself is a pariah with its leadership on the run. If the economy falters, a counter-revolution based on a coup cannot be ruled out. We have to work quickly to construct viable networks and organisations that can collectively exercise power to support more progressive rules than the ones that existed. Attempting too much or too little can be dangerous.

The new political settlement will emerge out of the transitional one. The transitional distribution of power is one where the unorganised force of students and citizens is valiantly checking established vested interests. This cannot last unless some of the unorganised power is converted into organised networks: new coalitions of businesses, students, political actors. They should not promise what they cannot deliver, but they should promise what their effective power can deliver in terms of enforcing better rules and strategies. This debate must intensify and inform our leadership.

The sorry state of Dhaka's road dividers

Dr Nawshad Ahmed,
a retired UN official, is an economist and urban planner.

NAWSHAD AHMED

Most of the road dividers in Dhaka city are in a sorry state, having been deteriorating for years. Many of them have not been reconstructed for a long time—for example, in areas like Mirpur Road, Nilkhet, Azimpur, Dhaka University, Shahbag, Paltan, Kamalapur, Asad Gate to Adabor, Pallabi, Mohakhali and Tejgaon areas. In many places, the dividers have fallen apart and the trees planted in the middle of dividers are dying. The few remaining trees are being damaged by the people who cross over the dividers where there is no iron fencing.

Being a densely populated city, Dhaka has lost its greenery very fast in recent decades. Since there are hardly any trees left in some city areas, road dividers are the rare strips of space to plant trees without much hindrance. The urban planning authorities have not reserved enough areas for parks and playgrounds in the city. New residential areas that have developed over the last five decades rarely have adequate areas for parks and playgrounds, and even schools, colleges and universities have very little areas devoted to playing, gardening and tree plantation.

During reconstruction of the city's road dividers, in some areas, the city authorities cut down many fully grown trees. In their places, flower plants have been planted which require high maintenance, a difficult task for the city corporations, which is why many of these plants are also on the verge of death. Planting tall trees is a better alternative for the road dividers as well as a greenery-starving Dhaka, as they provide shade and absorb and store more carbon dioxide compared to the smaller and younger plants. Old trees especially should not be felled at will since it takes about two decades on average for a tree to grow fully.

In recent years, durable concrete road dividers have been constructed by both the city corporations of Dhaka. But the time it takes to construct them is long and the vehicular traffic is seriously disrupted during the construction period. The city corporations should take note of this and look for new approaches, such as using prefabricated slabs for the dividers. Most of the steel fences in the dividers have either fallen apart or been stolen away. I believe high concrete road dividers are more appropriate for the city, which the pedestrians cannot cross, and it is also possible to plant large trees in the middle of those dividers. These road dividers, if constructed properly, will last for decades and will not also need much maintenance.

In recent years, durable concrete road dividers have been constructed by the city corporations of Dhaka. But the time it takes to construct them is long and the vehicular traffic is seriously disrupted during the construction period. The city corporations should take note of this and look for different approaches.

Planting tall trees in the road dividers will prove to have remarkable environmental benefits, too. Trees will cool down the atmosphere, absorb pollution, and result in increased rainfall. Urban trees offer localised cooling of temperature by up to three degrees Celsius. The number of vehicles on the Dhaka roads are increasing fast and traffic congestion is severe; the passengers expect to have some shade from trees while waiting in long queues.

As we have seen in recent decades, due to environmental reasons, the winter season has become much shorter in Bangladesh and cool winter days in Dhaka city are becoming increasingly rare. Thus, the importance of tall trees in the city has become more essential, and the road dividers are appropriate for plantation of these trees. In fact, where it is still possible, the road dividers should be widened to allow planting of more trees.

The city corporations of Dhaka are responsible for the construction and reconstruction of road dividers as well as the planting of trees. These should be undertaken with some urgency and done in a sustainable manner. These trees should be planted and maintained well. Adequate funds need to be budgeted by the city corporations every year and trained manpower should be engaged for this.

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Why Israel-Hamas ceasefire keeps failing

Yousef SY Ramadan
is the Palestinian ambassador to Bangladesh.

YOUSEF SY RAMADAN

Yet again, another ceasefire deal for Gaza in Doha has been rejected to pardon a sliver of misery for the Palestinians suffering through the most devastating genocide in Gaza. US President Joe Biden had touted that the latest ceasefire deal was "closer than ever" to being achieved as risks of a wider war in the region sparked fear. But if one knows Benjamin Netanyahu, and the simple fact that he faces political death if the war ends, then hopeful words regarding any ceasefire deals should always be taken with a grain of salt. It was absolutely no coincidence that Netanyahu put five new conditions on the deal and thwarted the possibility of de-escalation in the region.

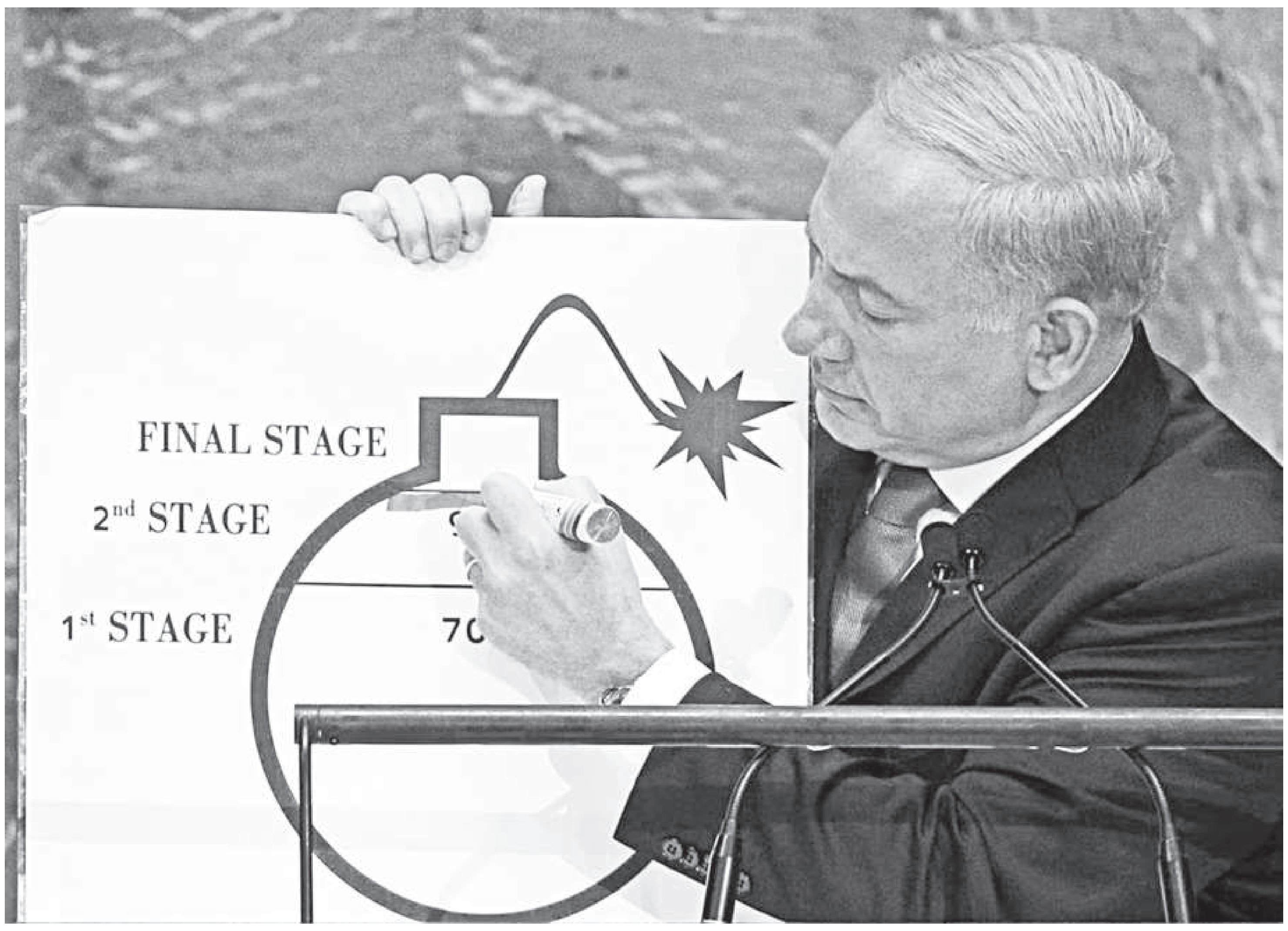
Hamas has opposed a continuing presence of Israelis in Gaza, and maintained that it will not accept a deal that is not permanent. And it is well-known that Netanyahu's extremist government does not want a permanent ceasefire. Hamas has rejected the latest deal, blaming it mainly on Netanyahu, stating that he is fully "responsible for the lives of his prisoners, who are exposed to the same danger that our [Palestinian] people are exposed to due to his continued aggression and systemic targeting of all aspects of life in the Gaza Strip."

Netanyahu's efforts to smash any efforts for a truce is so blatant that Israeli citizens have been regularly protesting against him, calling for his resignation and a ceasefire deal, which seem to now be synonyms. The families of hostages, as well as the opposition, members of the army and so on, have protested, and even Defence Minister Yoav Gallant bashed Netanyahu's lack of a "post-war" Gaza plan, admitting that it is Israel who has been the disrupter of the deals so far.

For the ninth time in 10 months, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is visiting the Middle East as talks will resume again in Cairo. All these visits have mainly been to meet Israeli ministers, and all the energy spent has led to nothing tangible except the continuation of hellish extermination of Palestinians. Former US President Barack Obama's Secretary of State John Kerry also made a record number of visits to the region, but after his realisations, he delivered a blistering speech attacking Israel's settlement policy and Netanyahu's extremist government in 2016, stating, "The policies of this government—which the prime minister himself just described as 'more committed to settlements than any in Israel's history'—are leading... towards one state." His remarks were met with criticism, as Netanyahu and the apartheid regime of Israel prevailed in the US establishment.

Netanyahu has handcuffed every mediator of ceasefire deals, especially the US, by imposing conditions that Hamas will not accept, and conditions that he *knows* Hamas will not accept. The US has failed time and again to exert any real pressure—under a weak president—to make Israel agree to a ceasefire deal; Joe Biden remarked in the *Time* magazine, as recent as in early June, that there is "every reason" to draw the conclusion that Netanyahu is prolonging the war for his own political self-preservation. Everything that has happened in the past few years has proven a fact that the US cannot deny, which is that the main weapon in Netanyahu's hand is the laxity in US diplomacy towards Israel, which has now morphed into a culture of deference.

The war, however, in many ways, is considered an "American war" with the US's involvement, backing and major backtracking from any solution proposed beforehand. But political calculations regarding the dynamics with Netanyahu suggest that it is now increasingly unobtainable for the US, under this administration, to end the war. One could argue that Blinken's efforts at so-called "peace" would have been more successful had he carried bags of rice and flour in his giant jet and given it to starving Palestinians in Gaza, instead of flying thousands of kilometres to talk and have expensive yet futile conversations.



Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu draws a red line on the graphic of a bomb during his address at the 67th United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 27, 2012.
FILE PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Netanyahu knows that a ceasefire deal would grant safety to Israeli citizens as well, but it conflicts with his aim to provoke a wider war with Iran. He has been touting messianic beliefs since October 7, 2023, because he has one aim: to use this unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the Israel that Ben-Gurion created, which can only and delusionally be done through the destruction of Iran and its axis.

Netanyahu and his cabinet were very clear in their aims to deliver a multi-dimensional blow, when they decided to assassinate Haniyeh, the head of Hamas' political bureau in Tehran, right after Netanyahu's controversial visit to Washington, where he garnered shameless applause from members of Congress. Iran has maintained that it will retaliate, leaving the US in another precarious situation to deal with a wider eruption in the Middle East. Once again, the US is flexing muscle power with its fleet, sending stealthy fighters, dozens of F-22 Raptors, even a guided missile submarine along with a squadron of Marine Corps, not to mention bolstering US forces in its bases in the region—only to show its support for Israel. As the Democrats face a high-stake elections against Donald Trump where their support for Israel's genocide can play a "make or break" role for Vice-President Kamala Harris's election bid, Biden recently approved a further $3.5 billion of military aid to Israel, as Israel bombed a religious school, Al-Tabieen, and a mosque in Gaza, and parents and family members mourned hundreds of their lost ones, many of whose bodies were dismembered and collected in plastic bags—highlighting unspeakable brutality.

Anyone who has followed the biography of Benjamin Netanyahu knows that he has always held a dream of starting a war with Iran and dragging the US into it. US presidents, including Bush, Obama, Trump and now Biden, have largely never shared Netanyahu's enthusiasm. Netanyahu has long considered Iran as Israel's primary threat to security; even in his address in Congress, he called protesters calling for a ceasefire "Iran's useful idiots," and said, "When we fight Iran, we are fighting the most radical and murderous enemy of the United States." Similarly, in 2012, Netanyahu took a paper showing a graphic bomb to the United Nations General Assembly, and ridiculously made drawings on it on the podium, to demonstrate the grave threats of Iran's nuclear capabilities.

He had waged a public campaign and failed to convince former President Obama to withdraw the US from the Iran nuclear deal, which he achieved later in 2018 with Donald Trump, convincing him to also adopt a policy of "maximum pressure" on Iran, placing it under severe sanctions.

By eschewing reaching ceasefire deals in Gaza now, Netanyahu continues to feed his disturbing obsession with Iran; Netanyahu's "Iranian file is the file of life" is an age-old title by journalists in the region that he achieved for his scorched-earth policy towards Iran since becoming the prime minister of Israel. Even when Netanyahu faced trials and charges of corruption in 2021, he escalated half-covert attacks on Iran's facilities and attacks on Iranian shipping in the Persian Gulf. The political timing of the security crisis of immense "Iranian threats" came not-so-subtly with the goal of making it easier for Netanyahu to form another government under his leadership.

Netanyahu knows that a ceasefire deal would grant safety to Israeli citizens as well, but it conflicts with his aim to provoke a wider war with Iran. He has been touting messianic beliefs since October 7, 2023, because he has one aim: to use this unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the Israel that Ben-Gurion created, which can only and delusionally be done through the destruction of Iran and its axis. This warped logic is the only way to understand Netanyahu's politics.

By taking ceasefire deals off the table, manipulating the US and the West, Netanyahu may just be poised to engineer his dreams professionally. Iran is aware of the depth of the impasse and that the US carriers have been sent with the aim of messaging, not with the aim of igniting a war. But Netanyahu's actions have left Iran with very little options: to respond or not to respond. The wolf has managed to trap everyone in his sadistic quest to become a historical wartime figure. As invincible as he might think he is with a crown on his arrogant head, Iran and Hezbollah are significant powers, and no one knows the scale of Russia's involvement if Israel were to use "unconventional" weapons. Netanyahu is venturing into dangerous territories, putting Israel, the US, and the world on the brink of catastrophe.

Echoes of colonialism in Bangladesh

Shagufe Hossain
is a Bangladeshi advocate dedicated to justice, equity, and youth leadership based in Canada.

SHAGUFE HOSSAIN

In 1757, on the plains of Plassey, a battle reshaped the destiny of Bengal and the Indian subcontinent. The British East India Company, through a mix of military might and betrayal, wrested control from the Nawab of Bengal. This marked the start of British colonial dominance in India, with East Bengal becoming a jewel in the British crown. Exploited for its wealth and strategic importance, Bengal's story continued into 1971 when the people of East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, fought for independence from West Pakistan. This struggle was not just about severing ties with an oppressive regime but reclaiming a suppressed identity. India, with its own colonial scars, played a crucial role in this liberation, but new dynamics began to emerge as the dust settled.

Colonialism in the region did not end with the lowering of the Union Jack in 1947. It's important to note that colonialism, by definition, is the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country.

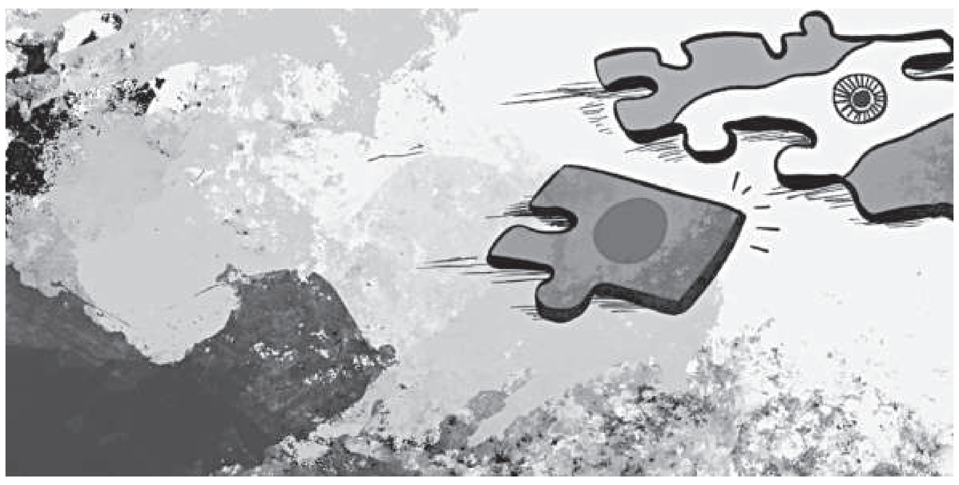
The legacies of British imperialism persisted, with the British dismantling Bengal's traditional industries and redirecting its wealth, leaving behind a fractured society marked by economic disparity, social divisions, and a controlling political system. Throughout recent history, Bengal has been colonised. Whether it is remnants of British imperialism, or the thirst for power, or the threat of regional instability—for one reason or the other—Bangladesh has been subjected to entrenched colonialism and colonialist practices.

Under West Pakistan, and even now, as Bangladesh grapples with the aftermath of dictatorship and threats of Western and regional imperialism, Bangladesh's sovereignty is repeatedly questioned and disrespected. Today, as Bangladesh navigates a new political landscape following Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation and the appointment of Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus as interim head of government, the echoes of colonialism still linger as we experience some semblance of hope.

Over the last 15 years, Sheikh Hasina's government has apparently allied herself with regional powers, aligning herself with the so-called "Emerging World Order." With deepening ties with China, through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a delicate dilemma with competing interests from China and India in the Teesta project, and with Russia as the primary investor in the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant—Sheikh Hasina seemingly positioned herself as almost an antidote to imperialism.

Meanwhile, with claims of backing Sheikh Hasina to stay in power, India's controversial position has been repeatedly highlighted during the "India Out" campaign that launched after the January elections in Bangladesh and is even echoed now.

Since Sheikh Hasina was ousted in a mass democratic uprising against her government's brutal handling of student protests, she has been sheltering in India. A recent report by *The Washington Post*, revealed that Indian officials had in fact lobbied to their US counterparts to stop putting pressure on Hasina for jailing thousands of rivals and activists before the election in January. Ultimately, the US substantially softened its criticism and "shelved further threats of sanctions," according to the article. However, US officials claimed the decision was calculated, not only borne out of mere lobbying by India, though some did consider the "downside of antagonising India," as the relationship between the two nations deepened in their shared position against China. However, the fact that Bangladesh was a topic of lobbying between the US and India also highlights the downsides of the "balance of power" that Sheikh Hasina sought, which did not serve the people of Bangladesh in the geopolitical sphere.



FILE VISUAL: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

Western actions in light of recent developments—visas revoked for the former head of government, cautious diplomacy and the EU's postponement of its Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Bangladesh—highlighted the continued influence of the West in Bangladesh, reminiscent of colonial powers, which has raised suspicion among some sections of the public.

But truthfully, much of the sanctions—both Rab and the visa sanctions—and denial of asylum to the ousted prime minister may have been responses to human rights violations. Thousands of diaspora members across the globe have campaigned for justice and showed solidarity with the hundreds of lives that have been lost in the weeks preceding Sheikh Hasina's resignation. With movements such as those for Palestine, conversations around justice are changing. There is greater awareness now, and the gradual shift of power dynamics suggest the era of unchecked imperialism may be ending.

Amidst this, India's position, with repeated propaganda in the media over rising Islamist militancy, painting Bangladesh in a broad stroke and trying to control the narrative—by embracing the Awami League's narrative—on Bangladesh's second revolution has been telling. With the swearing in of the interim government, Bangladesh's powerful neighbour and principal ally of the Awami League, India, stands to lose the most, unless there is a quick strategic shift to recognise the new Bangladesh as a people's one. Though conversations have taken place between the chief advisor and India's prime minister, the tense aura over the two nations' relations has not lifted, and whether India will truly commit itself to the people of Bangladesh remains to be seen.

In navigating colonialism, we have to ask ourselves, who is striving for control. India is seen by other countries in the region as a meddling influence; five citizens from Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh issued a letter in the wake of Hasina's ouster, published in *The Wire*, demanding "that the government of India desist from interfering in our respective polities." India's blatant support for Sheikh Hasina's regime to maintain control over its neighbour's political trajectory, reeks of colonialist strategies. When one looks at the history of British colonialism in the region, it often seems that the oppressed tend themselves to become oppressors.

During Sheikh Hasina's regime, like many others, Dr Yunus also suffered judicial harassment. The US showed significant support for Dr Yunus. In an open letter dated August 27, leaders, including former US President Barack Obama, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and more than 100 Nobel laureates, said they were deeply concerned by threats to democracy and human rights in Bangladesh specifically citing the case of Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus.

As a globally respected personality, Dr Yunus is welcomed by many—including the youth—who are seeking change. Yunus's leadership will be crucial in determining whether Bangladesh can navigate this world order, where realpolitik and imperialism persist, and preserve its sovereignty. But as the nation struggles with collective post-traumatic stress, the question that comes to mind is: can Dr Yunus remain steadfast in the face of international pressure and navigate Western imperialism with the same grace as he is doing with our most influential neighbour?

The political landscape in South Asia is fast evolving. Though in turmoil, Bangladesh—due to its size, location and economy—is well positioned to be a key player in this new world order. And how India adapts to the new change, will determine whether it can unlearn its colonial legacies to embrace a future of mutual respect and cooperation. The challenge for Bangladesh's leaders will be to assert sovereignty and resist external control, whether from former allies or new global powers. For now, Bangladesh stands as a reminder that echoes of colonialism, though faint, still resonate in New Delhi.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Anonno Mamun

Saif Chandan

Saikat Nasir

Shaheen Sumon

PHOTOS: **COLLECTED**

FILM INDUSTRY AT A STANDSTILL

How long till cameras roll again?

ZAHID AKBAR

The film industry has been in a slump ever since the anti-discrimination student movement took centre-stage. The release of new films and shooting schedules has been on hold for quite some time. With the formation of the interim government, there's a slow but cautious move toward planning new film productions. However, many scheduled shoots are still indeterminate, with no clear timeline for when filming might fully resume.

Industry insiders point to one major cause: The reluctance of production companies. In the current political climate, investors are hesitant to back new films. Producers prefer to wait until the situation in the country stabilises before committing to any major projects.

According to industry experts, it could take up to six months for things to return to normal. The ongoing political uncertainty has created a sense of caution among producers, who are choosing to steer clear of new ventures for the time being.

As a result, the cameras remain idle, with no new films entering production. The industry remains in a state of uncertainty, waiting for a more stable and favourable environment to bring back the magic of cinema.

One of the most anticipated films set to begin production is the big-budget project ***Borbaad***, starring Shakib Khan. Initially slated to start shooting at the end of September, the film has now been delayed. The production company has yet to confirm a new date, leaving the schedule in limbo. Directed by Mehedi Hasan Hridoy, the film pairs Shakib Khan with Kolkata actress Idhika Paul.

Captured at BFDC in 2019

PHOTO: **SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED**

In addition to ***Borbaad***, another Shakib Khan starrer ***Sher*** was set to begin filming in December. However, that project has also been pushed back for the foreseeable future. With two major productions now on hold, it's clear that the uncertainty in the industry is affecting even the biggest stars and their high-profile projects.

Local famed director Saif Chandan's upcoming project ***Shaheb*** was set to be shot in September this year. Starring Sariful Razz and Idhika Paul, the film is now postponed until further notice due to the ongoing industry crisis. For now, there's no clear timeline for when production might resume, reflecting the broader uncertainty gripping the film industry.

Similarly, Saikat Nasir's ***Masud Rana,*** starring Puja Chery, is another film on the list, however, the director remains optimistic, hoping to get the cameras rolling again in the coming months, despite the setback.

Another film starring Puja Chery and Ador Azad titled ***Dorodiya*** was announced earlier this year. There is no update for the film's shooting yet.

Several directors have spoken about the resumption of shooting for new films.

Shaheen Sumon, the general secretary of the Bangladesh Film Directors Association, recently told The Daily Star, "Currently, no new film shoots are happening at the BFDC. Filmmakers from outside may be working on projects, but for now, it seems the next few months will remain quiet. We anticipate that directors may resume shooting new films after this period. A clearer picture of when new shoots might begin should emerge within the next month."

Filmmaker Anonno Mamun remarked, "All the shoots that were planned have been postponed for the time being. Those who used to produce films are taking some time off. There was a plan to shoot the film ***Sher*** starring Shakib Khan, in December, but that too has been put on hold. Production companies have stepped back a bit. It seems that we might start shooting this film sometime next year. It's unfortunate that, just as the Bangladeshi film industry was experiencing a resurgence in recent years, we now find ourselves in this situation. I hope things will get back on track soon."

Director Saikat Nasir shared "We had originally planned to shoot the film ***Masud Rana*** abroad this August. Unfortunately, those plans have been put on hold for now. We're hopeful that we can resume shooting within the next two or three months. Given the current economic challenges in the country, addressing people's fundamental needs—such as survival, healthcare, and education—must take precedence. I believe things will improve soon; we just need to be patient a little longer."

Filmmaker Saif Chandan believes that the current situation is not suitable for shooting, rather, it's time to focus on nation-building. "My big-budget film ***Shaheb*** was set to start shooting in September. Unfortunately, the shoot has been postponed, and there's no clear timeline for when it might resume. The production company is currently hesitant to proceed. While there's hope that filming might happen in the future, the exact timing remains uncertain."

'Mother of Democracy': Movie to be made on Khaleda Zia

A filmmaker has expressed interest in making a movie about BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, now that Sheikh Hasina's regime has ended.

Director MK Zaman is set to direct a film titled ***Mother of Democracy***. The title has been registered with the Bangladesh Film Directors Association.

Akhond Entertainment PLC is producing the film, with the script already completed and pre-production currently in progress. Filming is planned to begin next month, on September 25.

The director refrained from disclosing the cast at this time, suggesting that there will be surprises in the announcement.

James denies political ban on 'Bangladesh' song amid rising rumours

Nagarbaul James's iconic patriotic anthem ***Bangladesh***, created by Prince Mahmud, has sparked new controversy. The song names key figures in the nation's formation, including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and former president Ziaur Rahman.

After the fall of the Awami League government, a rumour claimed James hadn't performed ***Bangladesh*** for eight years due to its mention of Ziaur Rahman, alleging a political ban.

James, however, has finally addressed the issue, clarifying that he never made such a statement.

James' manager Robin Thakur explained, "James is a professional artiste solely focused on connecting with his audience through music. He has no political aspirations. The statements attributed to him are completely false."

NEWS

Women's T20

FROM PAGE 12

take place across two venues in the UAE – Dubai and Sharjah.

With the BCB going through a sea of changes following the change of government, a number of directors of the board as well as the board president Nazmul Hassan Papon have refrained from office duties. Compounded with travel advisories on citizens of four participating countries and the ever-evolving security situation in Bangladesh, it was a matter of time before the ICC made the final call over the tournament.

"It is a shame not to be hosting the Women's T20 World Cup in Bangladesh as we know the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) would have staged a memorable event," ICC chief executive Geoff Allardice said in a statement.

"I would like to thank the team at the BCB for exploring all avenues to try and enable the event to be hosted in Bangladesh, but travel advisories from the governments of a number of the participating teams meant that wasn't feasible. However, they will retain hosting rights. We look forward to taking an ICC global event to Bangladesh in the near future."

Banking, revenue sectors need

FROM PAGE 12

They said the previous government left the country in ruins. They said deep reforms and restructuring were needed in the banking sector, revenue administrations, education, and industry.

"We are a witness to what happened over the last 15 years. The Bangladesh private sector is with you 100 percent," said Mahbubur.

Yunus asked the delegation "to think outside the box to achieve greatness as a nation".

Senior business leaders, including FBCCI President Mahbubul Alam, Tapan Chowdhury, Kutubuddin Ahmed, AK Azad, Simeen Rahman, Khandoker Rafiqul Islam, Naser Ezaz Bijoy, Fazlul Hoque, and Mohammad Hatem, attended the meeting.

ACC to probe

FROM PAGE 12

Meanwhile, financial crackdown on Awami League ministers, lawmakers and leaders continued yesterday with the freezing of more bank accounts of the officials of the past regime. Financial regulatory bodies also took other restrictive measures against several more officials.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday sought details of all types of bank accounts and transactions of Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and his family members to check if they have been paying their taxes properly.

Selim, a former member of parliament and one of the Awami League's presidium members, is also a cousin of Sheikh Hasina.

Meanwhile, the BFIU instructed all banks to freeze accounts of former education minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhoury Nowfel and his family members.

It also issued a similar instruction regarding former state minister for power Nasrul Hamid and his family members.

Banks were also asked to block the transactions of any business account of Nowfel and their family members, including his parents, for a period of 30 days.

Citing a provision of the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012, the agency also ordered banks to block the locker services of the persons, if there is any, for 30 days.

The BFIU also sought an update of the accounts within five working days since the issuance of the letter.

In another instruction, the anti-money laundering agency ordered banks to lock the accounts of Biplab Kumar Sarker, joint commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, for 30 days. The BFIU also asked banks to provide transactions and other details of Biplab.

Meanwhile, the BFIU also has asked banks to freeze accounts of former BSEC chairman Shibli Rubayat Ul Islam and his family members.

Banks have also been asked to suspend locker facilities extended to Islam and his family members for 30 days. The BSEC chairman resigned from his post on August 10 citing health reasons.

Help the govt carry out

FROM PAGE 12

"Ensuring every citizen's right to vote is the main tool of the people's political empowerment," he said.

"Let us play our responsible role from our respective positions to ensure effective state reforms and establish the discrimination-free democratic state desired by the youth, shunning the path of revenge and vengeance," Tarique said.

He described the deposed Awami League government as "the fallen anti-people forces" and called for bringing them to book to uphold the spirit of the student-led uprising.

The BNP acting chief credited the "ally force of the movement", alluding to his party, for "timely steps" to prevent the Sheikh Hasina government from making the situation worse.

He welcomed the interim government's initiative to prepare a list of the victims of violence during the uprising and extend necessary support to their families. They should be given a state reception and honour, he added. The BNP acting chairman also backed the demand for observing August 5 as a national day.

He slated Hasina for "grasping the freedom of the press" and called on the media to question her activities.

"The people expect the newspapers to write fearlessly that 'Hasina fled'. If any media adopt any evil strategy to use different words instead of 'Hasina fled', it will make your freedom of conscience questionable to the people," he said.

He said the media should also broadcast special programmes on the suffering of the victims of enforced disappearance, murder and abduction in the last 15 years.

"Ask why the investigation into the case of Sagar-Runi murders has not been completed even in one era," he said.

Continuous reporting on Hasina's wrongdoings will stop people from taking the same path in future, according to him.

EXTRADITE HASINA: FAKHRUL

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday asked India to extradite Hasina for her trial as per the people's demand.

"It is our call to you that you should hand her over to the government of Bangladesh in a legal way," he said after paying tribute to party founder Ziaur Rahman in Dhaka.

"Staying there, she [Hasina] has started various plots to thwart the revolution that happened in Bangladesh," he alleged.

Dipu Moni, Joy

FROM PAGE 1

unruly people chanted slogans demanding their execution. They continued their protest inside the courtroom until the hearing was completed.

The incident happened despite the presence of a huge number of law enforcers on the court premises.

The remands were granted after Mohammad Tofazzal Hossain, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Mohammadpur Police Station and investigation officer of the case, produced them with a 10-day remand appeal.

In the remand appeal, Tofazzal said both accused were aware of the violence and killing of the victim on July 19 during the violence centring the quota reform protests.

So, they need to be remanded to find out the masterminds and instigators behind the murder and their whereabouts, he said.

Dipu Moni was arrested from the capital's Baridhara DOHS area on Monday while Arif Khan Joy was arrested from Dhanmondi area yesterday.

On August 13, Amir Hamza Shatil, a resident in Mohammadpur area, filed the murder case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and six others with a Dhaka court.

In this case, the names of Dipu Moni and Arif Khan Joy were not included in the first information report (FIR), but later they were shown arrested.

This was also the first case lodged against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina after she resigned and fled to India amid a mass uprising on August 5.

Hasina sued for genocide

FROM PAGE 12

director (admin) of the investigation agency.

"Once we complete the preliminary investigation and visit to the place of occurrence and the tribunal is reconstituted, we, through the prosecution, will seek arrest warrants against all the accused," he said.

The other accused are Obaidul Quader, AL general secretary and former road transport and bridges minister; Reshed Khan Menon, former minister; Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, former mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation; Hasan Mahmud, former minister; Haji Selim, former lawmaker; Salman F Rahman, former advisor to prime minister; Shamim Osman, former Narayanganj lawmaker; Tarique Ahmed Siddique, former security advisor to the prime minister; AKM Shahidul Haque, former inspector general of police; Benazir Ahmed, former inspector general of police; Ziaul Ahmed, former additional director general of Rab; Harun Or Rashid, former additional commissioner (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP); Biplab Kumer Sarker, former deputy commissioner of DMP; Shahriar Kabir, president of Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee; Prof Muntassir Mamoon, member of Nirmul Committee; Tureen Afroz, former prosecutor of ICT and member of nirmul committee; Imran H Sarker, convener of Gonojagoron Mancha; Mozammel Haque Babu, chairman of Ekattor TV; Ahmed Zobayer, former managing director and CEO of Somoy TV; Subhash Singha Roy, editor of abnews24.com; Naimul Islam Khan, former press secretary of prime minister; Aziz Ahmed, former army chief; and M Manzur Ahmed, former DG of NSI.

Besides them, some unnamed ministers, state ministers, lawmakers, unnamed individuals from law enforcement agencies, and the then policymakers of some electronic and print media were accused.

According to the complaint, the accused, by giving directives and plans, committed crimes against humanity and genocide by killing Hefajat activists in Dhaka and surrounding areas and in different districts, including Chattogram, Narayanganj, and Cumilla, between May 5 and 6, 2013.

OTHER CASES

In the capital's Jatrabari, Hasina, her son Joy, daughter Putul, sister Rehana, and 17 others were sued over the killing of fruit seller Farid Sheikh at Mayor Hanif Flyover Toll Plaza on August 5.

The victim's father, Sultan Miah, filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Shakil Ahmed. The magistrate recorded the case and asked the Police Bureau of Investigation to submit a report on October 1.

In Sutrapur, a case was filed against Hasina and 49 others over the death of Md Omar Faruque, a student of Kabi Nazrul Government College on July 19.

Faruque's mother, Kulsuma Akhter, lodged the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Tariqul Islam. The magistrate asked Sutrapur Police OC to register the complaint as a first information report (FIR).

In Adabor, Hasina and 24 others were sued for the death of 18-year-old garment worker Sohel Rana on August 5.

Sohel's brother Md Ibrahim filed the case with the court of Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Sultan Sohag Uddin. The magistrate directed Adabor Police OC to register the complaint as an FIR.

In Savar, Hasina and 75 AL activists were sued over the murder of Zahidul Islam Sagar, 28, a barber, on August 5.

The case was filed with the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, which ordered the police to record the case at Ashulia Police Station within three days.

In Narayanganj, another case was filed against Hasina, seven ministers and lawmakers, and 179 others over the killing of Md Jony, 17, a bus driver's assistant, in Kanchpur area of Sonargaon upazila on July 20.

The victim's father Md Yeasin filed the case, said Sonargaon Police OC Md Kamruzzaman.

In Rangpur, Hasina, her sister Rehana, and 49 others were sued over the killing of Sajjad Hossain, a vegetable trader, on July 19.

Zitu Begum, wife of Sajjad Hossain, filed the case with the Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Rangpur. The court directed Rangpur Kotwali Police OC to proceed with the investigation.

In Joypurhat, a case was filed against Hasina along with 216 others in connection with the death of Mehedi Sheikh, 25, a three-wheeler driver, in front of Joypurhat Sadar Police Station on August 5.

The case was lodged in the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court of Joypurhat by Mehedi's wife, Jesmin Akter Srishtee. Magistrate Atikur Rahman directed the Joypurhat Sadar Police OC to register the case.

In Bogura, Hasina and Quader were sued over the killing of a rickshaw puller Kamar Uddin, 40, in Nawabbari Road area of the district town on August 4.

The victim's wife, Tahmina Begum, filed the case with Bogura Sadar Police Station, said OC Saihan Oliullah.

Earlier on Monday, Hasina and 18 others were accused in a case filed over the killing of auto-rickshaw driver Manik Mia during the quota reform movement in Rangpur.

Manik Mia's mother, Nurjahan Begum, filed the case with the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Raju Ahmed Babu in Rangpur.

Star
SPORT
DHAKA WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21, 2024, BHADRA 6, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS AND GTV
Pakistan vs Bangladesh
1st Test, Day 1
Live from 11:30 am

SONY SPORTS 5
England vs Sri Lanka
1st Test, Day 1
Live from 4:00 pm

U-20 footballers pay tribute to martyrs

Bangladesh's young footballers dedicated their first goal against Sri Lanka in their first match of the SAFF U-20 Championship in Kathmandu yesterday to the martyrs of the student protesters, who laid down their lives during the recent quota movement which eventually culminated in the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-government. Mirajul Islam scored the opening goal of the game in the 17th minute of the match, and soon pulled on a t-shirt over his jersey with the words: "In memory of Mughdho and Abu Sayed; Remember the fight and the bloodshed for our country." Piash Ahmed Nova later scored a second goal late in the second half to wrap a comfortable victory for the young Bangladesh team, who picked this occasion to pay their respects to the fallen. Sayed and Mir Mugdho were two of the earliest martyrs of the movement, allegedly killed by rubber bullets fired by the police, in Rangpur and Dhaka, respectively.

PHOTO: **BFF**

Tigers out to prove a point

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be out to prove a point against Pakistan with an eye on improving on their past performances as the first match of the two-Test series against the hosts commences in Rawalpindi today.

Bangladesh have never beaten Pakistan in Tests, having played 13 Tests against them, losing 12 and managing only one draw in 2015 in Khulna.

The last time the Tigers played a Test in Rawalpindi was back in 2020, where they suffered an innings and 44-run loss.

Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto, however, claimed the players are not feeling the burden of the poor record and are intent on breaking new ground in Pakistan.

"Records can be changed. It's not going to be easy, but as I said we have a balanced side. We believe we can do some special things this time. The players are really excited to play here," Shanto said at the pre-match press conference yesterday.

The wickets in Rawalpindi have historically been batting friendly but the presence of four seamers in the Pakistan eleven, which was announced on Monday, suggests there will be some help available for the quicks.

On flat decks, batting becomes key in order to get a positive outcome but the lack of application from the batters' has been the biggest concern for the Tigers in red-ball format in recent times.

Unlike Pakistan, Bangladesh have chosen to employ the traditional way of announcing the playing eleven on the day of the match after having a look at the wicket, said Shanto, and he also expressed optimism about his sides' chances against Pakistan.

"I felt we had a good series against New Zealand, we didn't play well against Sri Lanka. We have a good opportunity this time against Pakistan."

Bangladesh played on flat surfaces in the home series against Sri Lanka in March this year, but the batters looked out of their depths against the Lankan pacers' well planed attack in both Tests.

Inadequate preparation was argued as one of the key factors behind the batting debacle against Sri Lanka and although the bowlers have been doing well, Shanto knows the batters will have to come to the fore.

"We all know our batting hasn't been good in the recent past. But we've had a good preparation this time. Players tried to prepare well in the time they had. Everyone has the belief that our batting unit will do well this time," Shanto said.

Veteran batter Mushfiqur Rahim is fit to play according to the skipper but all eyes would be on other veteran Shakib Al Hasan, who was a member of parliament from Awami League, which fell from power in the face of a student-led people's movement.

Shanto said that Shakib will be able to put politics behind and focus on cricket.

"He has played this game for so long so he knows his role, he knows how to prepare himself. I'm not thinking about his political career. I hope he will do something special in this series," Shanto said.

» Bangladesh are yet to win a Test against Pakistan. The Tigers have played 13 matches against Pakistan and have lost 12, managing to draw a solitary match at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna in 2015.

» Babar Azam is 102 runs away from reaching 4000 Test runs.

» Amongst active players, Shakib Al Hasan has scored the most runs, 508 at an average of 63.5 in five matches, in Bangladesh-Pakistan Tests.

» Pakistan, currently sixth on the World Test Championships standings, have won two and lost three matches, while Bangladesh, with a solitary win and three losses, are eighth - one place ahead of bottom-placed West Indies.

> **Records can be changed. It's not going to be easy, but as I said we have a balanced side. We believe we can do some special things this time.**
>
> Bangladesh captain **Najmul Hossain Shanto**

> **We were sixth and seventh before [in the WTC], but we would like to play in the final this time. We have to win our home Tests.**
>
> Pakistan captain **Shan Masood**

BCB set for major shake-up

SPORTS REPORTER

The much-anticipated meeting of Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) directors will take place at the Ministry of Youth and Sports today, where major decisions are likely to be made, including the resignation of long-standing board president Nazmul Hassan Papon.

Despite repeated attempts to contact CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury -- who called the meeting on behalf of the BCB boss -- he could not be reached yesterday. However, BCB director and Game Development Committee chairman Khaled Mahmud Sujon later confirmed to The Daily Star that the meeting is scheduled to begin at 11:00 am.

"I think the decisions taken in the last board meeting and how to run the board will be discussed during the board meeting," Sujon informed.

Since the fall of the Awami League government following a student uprising on August 5, most of the BCB directors have gone into hiding, including the BCB president, leaving many positions inactive.

Papon, who is reportedly in London, is expected to join the meeting virtually alongside some other directors who also left the country, while others will attend the meeting in person.

According to the BCB constitution, if the board president resigns, the existing directors of the cricket board will decide on their next course of action to choose the next president from the directors' panel.

There has been discussion about the venue for the BCB board meeting, which is usually held at the BCB office or in hotels but will now take place at the ministry. It has been confirmed that no ministry officials will attend, as their participation contradicts the protocol.

"The Youth and Sports adviser [Asif Mahmud] isn't authorised to attend the meeting. If anyone pays a courtesy visit later after the meeting, that's a different matter," said a National Sports Council (NSC) official, adding that the adviser has urged BCB officials to follow constitutional procedures and has refrained from enforcing any decisions.

It has been learnt that NSC has already completed their framework ahead of the meeting, as they are set to nominate former national team captain Faruque Ahmed -- the frontrunner for the role of president -- and veteran coach Nazmul Abedeen Fahim as two of their directors on the board, replacing Jalal Yunus and Ahmed Sajjadul Alam Bobby.

While Yunus resigned from his position on Monday, Bobby has yet to step down; though both were asked to do so by NSC.

When contacted, Sajjadul told The Daily Star that he had not even received any notice about today's meeting. On the other hand, Fahim confirmed that he has recently been contacted by NSC officials and expressed his willingness to join BCB.

"They have contacted me recently, but until I receive a document, I can't confirm anything," said Fahim, who had contested in the BCB election in 2021 in Category C against former skipper Mahmud but lost.

Pope ready to lead England his way

AFP, *Manchester*

Ollie Pope is prepared to "do his own thing" as England Test captain but accepts he is in caretaker charge of what is still effectively Ben Stokes' side.

Pope will become the 82nd man to take up the captaincy when he leads England out in the first Test against Sri Lanka at Old Trafford starting Wednesday.

The 26-year-old Surrey batter was promoted from vice-captain after Stokes was ruled out after suffering a torn hamstring playing in The Hundred.

Stokes is set to miss the three-match series against Sri Lanka. Pope's elevation caps a rapid rise for a cricketer who was not certain of his place when Stokes took charge two years ago alongside coach Brendon McCullum.

Stokes first led England in 2020, deputising for father-to-be Joe Root who left a message reading, "do it your own way".

Pope has no qualms about sticking with the basic 'Bazball' approach and will also be able to call directly on Stokes, who will be with the England squad for all three Tests.

"It's a great opportunity for me, one of the greatest honours in English cricket," Pope told a pre-match press conference at Old Trafford on Tuesday. "But I think it's still Stokesy's team.

"That's probably the difference. I've had no message in my locker but I'm sat next to him in the changing room!

"It's going to be great to have him around. If I want to lean on him, I can lean on him and I think he's going to let me do my own thing for the course of this Test series as well.

"I've picked his brains a little bit on that moving forward. It's a lot of the same messages but from a different voice and in my own way.

"He's obviously going to be watching, chatting, so I can have those conversations in the intervals if I think anything needs to change and we can bounce a few ideas off each other.

"We've got some great coaches and obviously he's just another brain in the changing room."

Meanwhile, England have opted to include an extra fast bowler in Matthew Potts to replace the injured Stokes when they named their eleven for the first Test against Sri Lanka today. Also, Dan Lawrence earned a recall for his first Test appearance in more than two years with regular opener Zak Crawley nursing a finger complaint.

Veteran striker Jamie Vardy celebrates his equaliser that earned newly-promoted Leicester City a 1-1 draw at home with a profligate Tottenham Hotspur in their Premier League season opener on Monday. Spurs dominated the first half but Pedro Porro's opener in the 29th minute was the only time they could make one of a host of good chances count before Leicester skipper Vardy headed in his team's only goal with 57 minutes gone.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

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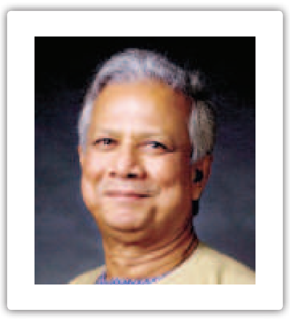
Yunus may attend UNGA and Bimstec summit



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

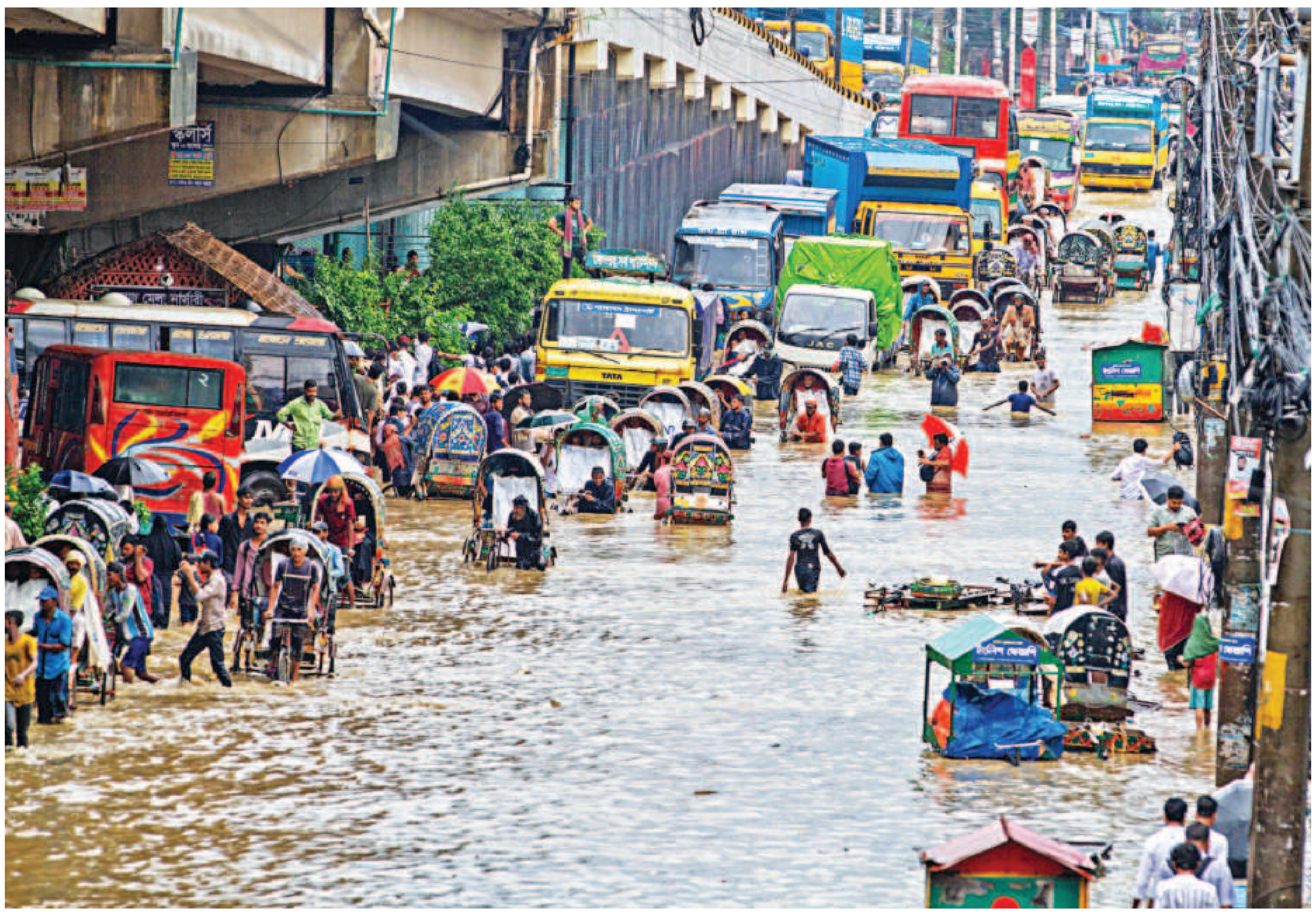
Interim Government's Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus is likely to attend the Bimstec summit and the UN General Assembly, both scheduled to be held in September.

The Bimstec summit will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from September 2 to 4.

"The chief adviser is most likely to attend the [Bimstec] summit," said a foreign ministry official yesterday.

Apart from addressing the summit, Prof Yunus will also hold bilateral meetings with the heads of

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4



Due to the nonstop rain since early morning, the port city's low-lying areas were submerged under ankle- to waist-deep waters yesterday, causing immense suffering to residents. The active monsoon is expected to bring more rain in the next few days. The photo was taken in Chattogram city's Muradpur area. PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

Banking, revenue sectors need major reforms

Business leaders tell Yunus

BSS, *Dhaka*

The leaders of the International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh, (ICC-B) called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at his office at the State Guest House Jamuna yesterday.

The delegation, led by ICC-B President Mahbubur Rahman, told him that the country's businesspeople fully support him in his new role, said a press release of the chief adviser's press wing.

Yunus said his administration inherited an economic mess, but he was confident the situation would soon improve following vital reforms.

"It's a very hard situation that we are in now. But it's also the biggest opportunity that we can get. Our job is difficult, but very much doable," he said.

The ICC-B leaders urged the Nobel peace laureate to carry out the much-needed reforms.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

UN ready to help restore democracy

Says Guterres in letter to CA

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has written a letter to the Chief Adviser to the Interim Government, saying that his leadership will be crucial in bringing an end to violence, ensuring accountability and charting a course towards democratic elections.

In the letter issued on August 16 and shared by the chief adviser's Press Wing last night, Guterres offered his best wishes to Yunus and welcomed his efforts to restore calm and to organise elections in Bangladesh.

"It is my hope that your government will take an inclusive approach, including by taking into account the voices of the youths and women, as well as that of minority and indigenous communities," the letter says.

Guterres said he counts

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6

GRAFT ALLEGATIONS

ACC to probe 2 ex-ministers, 3 former MPs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday decided to launch probes against five former members of parliament, including two former ministers, for allegedly amassing wealth illegally.

According to an ACC source, the lawmakers who will be investigated are former minister of shipping Shajahan Khan (Madaripur-2 MP), former minister of primary and mass education Mostafizur Rahman Fizar (Dinajpur-5 MP), Awami League Cultural Affairs Secretary Asim Kumar Ukil (Netrokona-3 MP), Jannat Ara Henry (Sirajganj-2 MP) and former general secretary of Jubo Mohila League Apu Ukil (lawmaker from reserved seat).

Meanwhile, ACC also launched probes against Ashraful Alam Khokan, a former deputy press secretary to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and Md Jahangir Alam, a former personal assistant to the ex-PM, over corruption allegations.

ACC sources said the decision came after allegations were made against Khokan, who holds dual citizenship of Bangladesh and the United States, that he amassed a vast amount of wealth through corruption.

Khokan held the post of PM's deputy press secretary from 2013 to 2021.

Meanwhile, Jahangir Alam, who served the former PM for a long time, has many graft allegations against him, said a senior official of ACC.

On July 14, the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) ordered banks to freeze accounts belonging to Jahangir and his wife Kamrun Nahar.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Help the govt carry out reforms

Tarique tells BNP rank and file

STAR REPORT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday urged party leaders and activists to ensure effective state reforms and said he believes the interim government will hold elections in due time.

The exiled politician made the remarks in a video message from London, state-run BSS news agency reports.

Tarique also said that a government accountable to the people "must be established by their vote to ensure their participation in the desired state reform to make the democratic rules and regulation sustainable".

So, it is the time to establish accountability-based democracy in the country, he said.

The BNP acting chief said political changeover does not mean only the handover of state power, but the qualitative change of state and politics, for which people's political and economic empowerment is a must.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Israeli air strike hits Gaza school

12 Palestinians killed; Blinken takes ceasefire push to Egypt, Qatar

AGENCIES

Gaza's civil defence agency said an Israeli strike hit a school in Gaza City yesterday, killing at least 12 people, while top US diplomat Antony Blinken was in Egypt for talks on a Gaza ceasefire.

The bodies of ten men and two children were pulled out of the building "after an Israeli plane dropped a bomb on the second floor of the (Mustafa Hafiz School) building housing thousands of displaced people," agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP.

He said 15 people were wounded in the strike. The Israeli military said the school was targeted because it housed a Hamas command and control centre. It said it carried out a "precise strike on terrorists who were operating" inside the school.

In recent weeks, the military has struck several schools across Gaza, primarily in Gaza City, accusing them of housing Hamas command centres, which Hamas denies. Tens of thousands of displaced people have taken refuge in schools since the Israeli offensive in Gaza broke out on October 7.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 40,173 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory in more than 10 months of offensive. The toll includes 34 deaths in the past 24 hours, according to ministry figures.

Blinken flew to El Alamein, the Mediterranean city famous for a World War II battle, yesterday and held talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi at his summer palace. Sisi warned of the risk of the Gaza offensive expanding regionally in a way "difficult to imagine".

- Mustafa Hafiz School housed thousands of displaced people
- After US talks, Egypt's Sisi warns of regional war
- Death toll in Gaza now 40,173

Women's T20 WC moved to UAE from Bangladesh

T20
ICC
WOMEN'S T20
WORLD CUP
BANGLADESH 2024

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Cricket Council (ICC) yesterday decided to move the Women's T20 World Cup from Bangladesh to the United Arab Emirates, owing to the uncertain situation in the country following the month-long student-led protests which unseated the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5.

The highly-anticipated ninth edition of the tournament, which was scheduled to be held in Bangladesh from October 3 to 20, will now take place in the UAE with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) continuing as hosts, confirmed the game's global body following a virtual meeting yesterday.

The tournament will

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

HEFAJAT'S SHAPLA CHATTAR RALLY

Hasina sued for genocide, crimes against humanity

Faces five more cases; Joy, Putul, Rehana sued over vendor's killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another complaint was filed with the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday, accusing former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 23 others of committing crimes against humanity and genocide during a Hefajat-e-Islam rally at Motijheel's Shapla Chattar on May 5, 2013.

Besides, seven more cases were filed against Hasina yesterday and another one the day before over the killings that took place during the recent unrest.

With these cases, Hasina is now facing 31 cases, including 26 for murder, four for crimes against humanity and genocide, and one for abduction.

Yesterday, for the first time, Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, daughter Saima Wazed Putul, and sister Sheikh Rehana were accused in a murder case.

ICT CASE

Supreme Court lawyer Gazi MH Tamim filed the complaint on behalf of Mufti Harun Ijahar Chowdhury, joint secretary general (education and law) of Hefajat.

"We've registered the complaint and the investigation has gotten underway," said Ataur Rahman, deputy

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Palestinians carry their children as they flee after an Israeli strike on a school, housing displaced Palestinians, in the Rimal neighbourhood of central Gaza City yesterday. PHOTO: **AFP**

Tigers take on Pakistan in first Test

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh national team will take on Pakistan in the first Test in Rawalpindi today, their first international fixture following a period of political unrest in the country.

The Tigers have had their preparation hampered during their stay in the country and eventually moved to Pakistan earlier than was scheduled to get the preparations on track. Former skipper Shakib Al Hasan, too, had travelled to Pakistan and joined the side in Lahore amidst the political unrest that followed the fall of the Awami League government.

Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto had to address a question on what had transpired in the country and he talked about moving on to focus

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

White paper on state of economy in the offing

Debapriya to lead panel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will prepare a white paper on the state of the economy so that strategic steps can be taken to stabilise the economy, reach the SDGs, and mitigate the challenges after Bangladesh graduates from the LDC grouping.

Economist Debapriya Bhattacharya will be the chief of a panel of economists and eminent citizens, who will come up with the white paper.

Debapriya, convener of the Citizen's Platform for SDGs and a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, will choose the members of the committee after talking to the chief adviser.

He said, "It [the white paper] will be a very pertinent transparency exercise to establish the benchmark of the economy. It will inform the future reform measures. I am grateful to the chief adviser that he has recognised its necessity and has taken immediate action."

The panel was given 90 days, starting yesterday, to submit the paper to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, said a statement from his office.

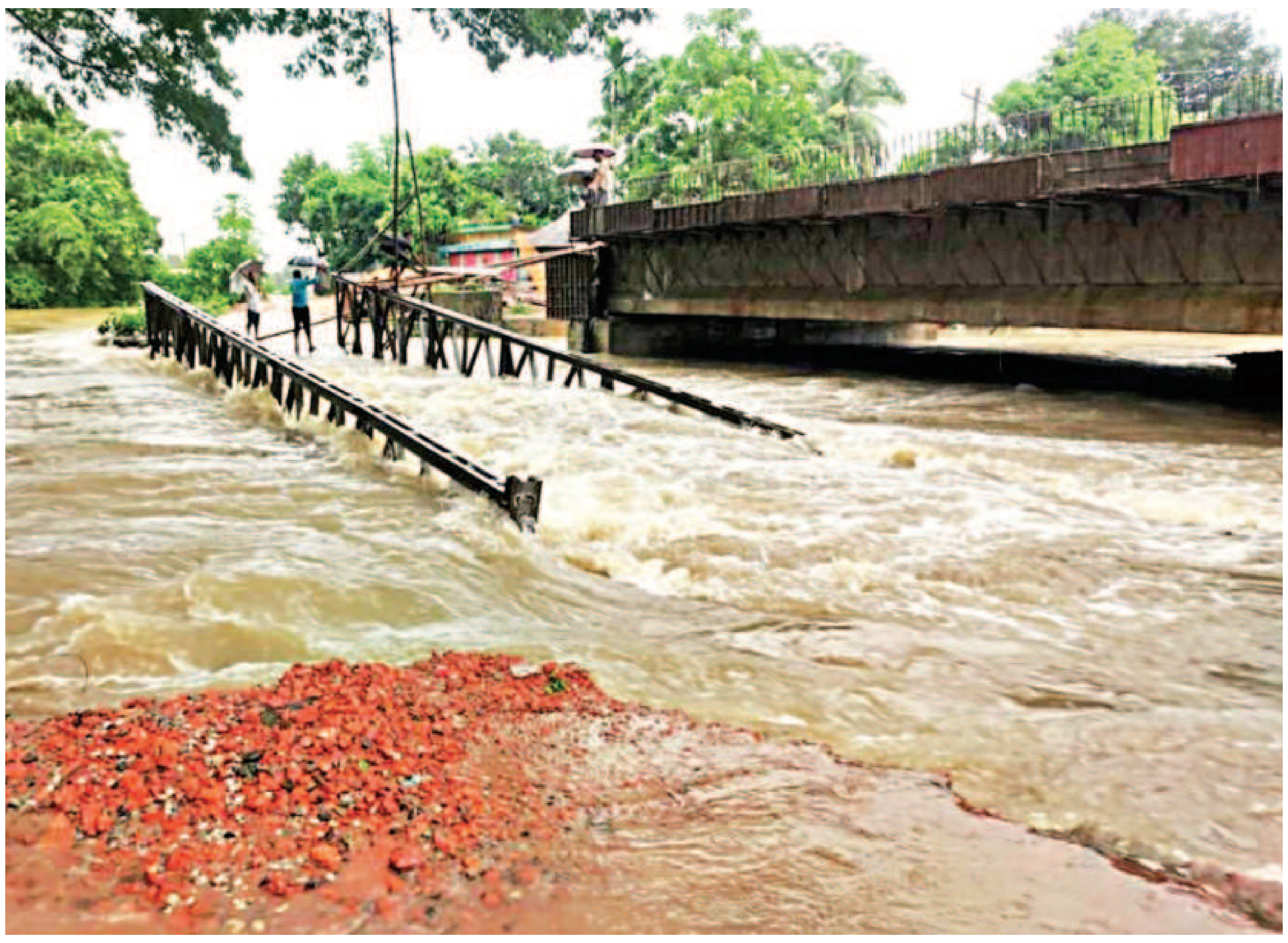
Bangladesh's economy has been suffering for a decade and a half due to mismanagement, corruption, capital flight, and unnecessary projects, said the statement.

"In this situation, the interim government should have a clear picture of the economy and [an outline of] the way out of the challenging situation. So, it decided to form a committee to prepare the white paper," it read.

The focus of the white paper will be on public finance management, inflation, food management, external balance, energy and power, private sector assessment, and employment.

Regarding public finance management, the committee will

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



A Bailey bridge over the Kalundi canal on Akhaura-Agartala road collapsed yesterday morning due to onrush of water fed by downpours upstream. At least 15 villages of Brahmanbaria's Akhaura upazila and the Akhaura land port have been hit by floods.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOY

BB appoints administrator at Nagad

MD MEHEDI HASAN, MAHMUDUL HASAN *and* **AM JAHID**

The Bangladesh Bank yesterday appointed an administrator to Nagad after one too many allegations of irregularities in the mobile financial service provider's operations and dealings.

Muhammad Badiuzzaman Dider, who served as director of BB's Chattogram office, has been appointed as the administrator for a year, as per an internal order of the central bank. To support the overall operations of the administrator, six officers have been appointed.

Tanvir A Mishuk, the founder and managing director of Nagad, welcomed the move, saying it will put an end to the recent misinformation surrounding Nagad.

"In the last few days, we were discussing with Bangladesh Bank about all these issues of propaganda. Finally, they took a positive

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Govt mulls over commission to ensure justice

Bangladesh to sign int'l convention to protect people

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR *and* **BAHARAM KHAN**

The interim government is planning to formulate an ordinance to establish a commission to ensure justice for the victims of enforced disappearances and their families.

Bangladesh may sign the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance by August 30, chief adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam said yesterday evening.

The matter was discussed at a meeting of the advisers to the interim government.

Briefing reporters at the Foreign Service Academy, Shafiqul said as the interim government is committed to investigate each and every case of enforced disappearances, a National Security Adviser will be appointed soon.

The international convention is the first universally legally binding human rights instrument of the UN intended to prevent forced disappearances.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has started preparing a draft of the "Enforced Disappearance Commission Ordinance". The government is considering whether the commission should be able to exercise its power retrospectively, said an official.

A person with the rank of a High Court judge will be head of the commission. Those with experience in working on prevention of enforced disappearance will be members of the commission.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Islami Bank finally rid of S Alam

BB to confiscate S Alam's shares; reconstitute board

MD MEHEDI HASAN

ISLAMI BANK'S S ALAM ERA

- Holds 82pc stakes in the bank
- Took out loans amounting to Tk 74,900cr
- Irregularities found in most cases

After seven years, S Alam Group's control over Islami Bank ended yesterday after the Bangladesh Bank decided to dissolve the board of the country's largest private sector bank that was heavily dominated by individuals linked to the conglomerate.

"They have looted whatever is there to loot -- we now have to rescue the bank from this shattered state," said BB Governor Ahsan H Mansur yesterday in a press briefing.

The existing board, whose chairman since June last year is S Alam group chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam's eldest son Ahsanul Alam, will be dissolved in a day or two and a new board will be formed with BB-appointed independent directors.

The central bank will take over all the shares of S Alam against its liabilities as per law, Mansur said, adding that the Chattogram-based business giant can get back the shares if it repays the amount it owes the Shariah-based bank.

"But I don't think they intend to," Mansur said.

S Alam Group owns as much as 82 percent stakes in Islami Bank, documents show, but the conglomerate maintains it has 32 percent stakes.

The move to dissolve the board comes after a group of Islami Bank officials, former chairman of the board of directors and clients requested the BB governor to do so.

Once a well-run, profitable bank, its financial health took a turn for the worse after S Alam started exerting its influence following ownership change.

Between 2017 and June this year, the Chattogram-based conglomerate and its associates' companies took Tk 74,900 crore, which is 47 percent of Islami's total outstanding loans as of March.

The loans were taken in the name of Mohammad Saiful Alam, and his wife, daughter, relatives and other officials,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

ACC revives investigation into S Alam's S'pore wealth

It comes year after Star report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has decided to resume its investigation into the alleged money laundering by S Alam Group Chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam alias S Alam.

A recently held meeting at the ACC headquarters decided this, a senior ACC official said.

An investigation by The Daily Star last year found that S Alam built a US $1 billion empire in Singapore.

ACC sources said all relevant records regarding the allegations will be collected, including how much money he borrowed from banks, what assets he might have acquired illegally, and in which sectors the money was invested.

Citing an Appellate Division's ruling, Supreme Court lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star, "The ACC

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

3m stranded as flood hits 8 dists

Feni, Noakhali worst hit; vast areas inundated due to incessant rains, rise in water levels of rivers

STAR REPORT

The overall flood situation in Feni, Noakhali, Cumilla and Noakhali worsened yesterday due to downpours and swelling of many rivers.

A pregnant woman in Brahmanbaria's Akhaura upazila died after being swept away as floodwater rushed into her home.

Vast tracts of land in Habiganj and Moulvibazar and parts of Brahmanbaria and Chattogram have gone under water.

The flooding in the eight districts has left over three million people stranded. Feni and Noakhali are the worst-affected districts.

In Feni, Parshuram, Fulgazi, and Chhagalnaiya upazilas have been badly affected. Besides, large areas under four unions of Feni Sadar and Daganbhuiyan upazilas have been inundated due to rise in the water level of the Chhota Feni river.

Many areas of the district have been without electricity since Tuesday night. The Feni-Parshuram regional road became impassable as floodwater submerged it. One person was reportedly missing in Parshuram.

The Muhuri, Silonia and Kahua rivers swelled further yesterday.

Locals said they did not see such massive flooding in the last 37 years.

Mohammad Selim, a former member of Anandapur union parishad, said Fulgazi and Parshuram upazilas experience floods every year due to onrush of water from upstream, but severe flooding like this year's did

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Papon's exit a signal of new era?

BISHWAJIT ROY

Nazmul Hassan Papon's long reign at Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) came to an end yesterday when he resigned as president of the country's most coveted sports body, paving the way for former captain Faruque Ahmed to assume the lead role.

For the past 12 years, Papon -- a lawmaker from the Bangladesh Awami League and former Managing Director of BEXIMCO Pharmaceuticals -- was in the spotlight as BCB president but, unfortunately, mostly for the wrong reasons.

Papon had earned the tag of 'Mr. Interferer' during his tenure as he involved himself in all cricketing matters, undermining the independent functioning of the board's departments and committees.

His resignation predictably saw Faruque -- nominated by the National Sports Council (NSC) as one of its two new directors on the board alongside veteran coach Nazmul Abedeen Fahim -- elected as the new BCB president during an emergency meeting of the board of directors at the Ministry of Youth and Sports yesterday.

"He [Nazmul Hassan Papon] has resigned as president but he still remains as a director and councillor," a board director told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

There had been uncertainty surrounding BCB's activities following the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5, as Nazmul and many other board directors went into hiding since then.

With the election of the new president, BCB is set to start a new chapter under ex-chief selector Faruque, who is the first to take on the role of board president as a former captain.

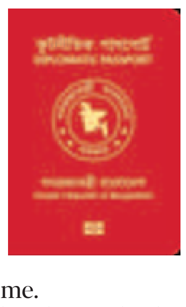
SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Red passports of former PM, ministers, MPs to be scrapped

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The government has decided to cancel all diplomatic (red) passports, including those allocated for the former ministers, members of parliament, and their family members.

It has already started the process of taking necessary steps in this regard, said Md Mashiur Rahman, senior secretary of the home ministry's Security Service Division.



A discussion was held recently at the ministry in this regard, and an order will be issued within the shortest time.

"We have already directed the Department of Immigration and Passports in this regard. They already started the process and hopefully, the order will be issued soon," the secretary told The Daily Star yesterday.

The move comes over two weeks after the fall of the Hasina-led government on August 5.

Along with MPs, their family members also carry diplomatic passports.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

অভিনন্দন
মোহাম্মদ আবদুল আজিজ
চেয়ারম্যান
স্ট্যান্ডার্ড ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
বিশিষ্ট ব্যবসায়ী ও সমাজসেবক লায়ন মোহাম্মদ আবদুল আজিজ স্ট্যান্ডার্ড ব্যাংক পিএলসি.-এর চেয়ারম্যান নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন। ২১ আগস্ট ২০২৪ তারিখে ব্যাংকের প্রধান কার্যালয়ে অনুষ্ঠিত ৩৯৬তম বোর্ড সভায় সর্বসম্মতিক্রমে জনাব মোহাম্মদ আবদুল আজিজ চেয়ারম্যান নির্বাচিত হন। ১৯৯৯ সাল থেকে তিনি ব্যাংকটির প্রতিষ্ঠাতা পরিচালক হিসেবে পরিচালনা পর্ষদে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে আসছেন।
তিনি ফারইস্ট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল ইউনিভার্সিটির প্রতিষ্ঠাতা সদস্য ও ট্রাস্টি বোর্ডের সদস্য। মানবহিতৈষী লায়ন মোহাম্মদ আবদুল আজিজ ১৯৮৫ সালে লায়নস্ ক্লাবস্ ইন্টারন্যাশনালে যুক্ত হন এবং ২০০৫-০৬ মেয়াদে ডিস্ট্রিক্ট ৩১৫ বি২, বাংলাদেশ-এর গভর্নর নির্বাচিত হন। তিনি লায়নস্ ক্লাব অব ঢাকা প্রগ্রেসিভ আই হসপিটাল নামে তিনটি চক্ষু হাসপাতালের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা ভাইস চেয়ারম্যান।
স্ট্যান্ডার্ড ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
শরি'আহ্ ভিত্তিক ইসলামি ব্যাংক

Help us get back laundered money

CA asks UK envoy; meets Japanese ambassador

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday sought UK support as Bangladesh wants to bring back the money laundered abroad over the years.

He sought the cooperation when British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sarah Cooke called on him at his office in State Guesthouse Jamuna, said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam at a briefing at the Foreign Service Academy.

"The high commissioner assured him [Prof Yunus] of looking into it."

In a statement, the UK high commission said Prof Yunus and Sarah Cooke discussed how the UK government can support the interim government, as it charts a new inclusive and democratic future for Bangladesh.

"Discussions also covered the importance of youth engagement to navigate the challenges that lie ahead," said the statement.

It said the UK is a longstanding partner and friend of Bangladesh and the two countries share a strong and enduring relationship, solidified by their deep people-to-people links and shared Commonwealth values.

Earlier in the day, during a call on by Japanese Ambassador Iwama Kiminori, Prof Yunus sought Japan's financial assistance to reconstruct and rebuild the country.

The chief adviser mentioned that huge funding will be required for this, said Shafiqul, reports UNB.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

British High Commissioner Sarah Cooke calls on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at state guest house Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Islami Bank

FROM PAGE 1

according to central bank officials with knowledge of the matter.

Documents pieced together by The Daily Star show that most of the loans were taken by bypassing banking rules and regulations, in a testament to how the Chattogram-based conglomerate exerted its influence on the country's banking sector.

Founded in 1985 by Alam, a relative of former Awami League politician Akhtaruzzanan Chowdhury Babu and former Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, S Alam Group has grown into one of the largest conglomerates in Bangladesh.

The amount given to S Alam and its associate companies has left the bank with a deficit in its current account balance with the central bank for more than a year.

To plug the deficit, the central bank provided special liquidity support to the lender without any collateral on the orders of former BB governor Abdur Rouf Talukder.

The liquidity support was stopped after Mansur took charge last week.

Islami Bank started its banking activities in 1983 with 71.50 percent capital from Middle-eastern investors and 28.50 percent from local investors.

Until 2015, S Alam Group had no stake in the bank. In 2016, the business group started buying the bank's shares through seven shadow companies, documents show.

After taking charge in 2017, S Alam Group appointed 7,240 employees-officials violating the rules and regulations. Most of them hailed from Alam's hometown of Patiya in Chattogram.

A day after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, a group of officials and staff of the Shariah-based bank started a demonstration at the bank's head office demanding the resignation of S Alam-appointed employees.

On August 11, a clash broke out between the two factions resulting in gunfire that left six injured.

Later on August 19, the bank terminated the contracts of eight top officials -- including an additional managing director and deputy managing director -- who were considered close allies of S Alam Group.

3m stranded

FROM PAGE 1

not occur since 1988.

He said floodwater entered almost every house in Parshuram, Fulgazi, and Chhagalnaiya upazilas.

In Noakhali, the flood situation deteriorated yesterday due to incessant rains and tidal surges.

Flooding has left over 1.9 million people stranded in eight upazilas, including Kabirhat, Senbagh, Companiganj and Begumganj, and several municipalities, said Dewan Mahbubur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Noakhali.

Among them are over one lakh people in the municipalities.

In Cumilla, the Gumti and the Muhuri swelled yesterday, thanks to incessant rain and the opening of a sluice gate at the Dumber Lake in Tripura, India. The flooding has affected over 50,000 people.

Floods have hit Adarsha Sadar, Burichang, Brahmanpara, Debidwar, and Muradnagar upazilas, according to the Water Development Board.

The death toll from floods caused by incessant rains and landslides has risen to eight in Tripura, according to Indian media reports.

In Brahmanbaria, the Akhaura land port went under water due to onrush of water from upstream in Indian's Tripura. At least 15 villages near the port have been affected by floods, leaving around 3,000 people stranded.

Traffic on the Akhaura-Agartala road was suspended yesterday morning after a Bailey bridge over the Kalundi canal collapsed.

In Akhaura upazila, a pregnant woman died after being swept away by floodwater.

The deceased was identified as Subarna Akhter, a resident of Birchandrapur village, said Lutfur Rahman, resident medical officer of Akhaura Upazila Health Complex.

Quoting locals, Jalal Uddin, chairman of Akhaura Dakkhin Union Parishad, said the onrush of water from Tripura broke the dam of Howrah river yesterday morning, inundating at least 15 nearby villages, including Birchandrapur.

As the floodwater suddenly entered Subarna's house, she tried to leave the house hurriedly to save herself, and fell into the strong current, he said.

As she was pregnant, she failed to swim ashore, he added.

The overall flood situation in Habiganj and Moulvibazar worsened yesterday as the Khowai, the Kushiyara, the Manu, the Dhalai, and the Juri were overflowing at many points.

More than 80,000 people were stranded as 208 villages in Moulvibazar went under water.

The flood situation in Chattogram's Fatikchhari upazila and its nearby areas deteriorated yesterday due to incessant rain. The Halda was flowing above the danger level.

A part of a dyke at the mouth of Shikder canal in Sitakunda upazila's Banshbaria area was damaged yesterday.

"A portion of the dyke was damaged due to onrush of water from upstream," said SM Tarek, sub-divisional engineer of the Water Development Board.

The interim government has taken adequate preparation to tackle the floods in the country.

"We have adequate preparation," Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam told reporters yesterday.

Briefing reporters at the Secretariat yesterday afternoon, KM Ali Reza, additional secretary of the disaster management and relief ministry, expressed concern that more areas may be flooded in the next few days.

He said they have already sent relief materials and dry food to the affected districts.

"The local administration is working in coordination with the deputy commissioners of the flood-affected districts, the coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, the army and volunteers," he added.

BB appoints administrator at Nagad

FROM PAGE 1

decision like appointing an administrator. We believe this will be a significant step forward in the country's cashless journey."

Earlier, the government had also appointed administrators to several major institutions of the country's financial sector, including some banks and top mobile operators, Mishuk said.

"We think that the decision of Bangladesh Bank will stop the conspiracy of a circle of people against Nagad. Nagad believes it will remain on top in providing service to customers as it was in the past five years," he added.

Nagad, which entered the market back in March 2019 as the digital financial services arm of the Bangladesh Post Office (BPO), is still running on a temporary licence from the BB.

In June, the central bank extended the tenure of its temporary licence for the seventh time. The licence will expire in June next year.

The post office, however, does not have any ownership of Nagad and only gets a share of Nagad's revenue, documents show.

"We used to know that Nagad is a digital financial service provider of the Bangladesh Post Office and the central bank issued an interim licence to the Directorate of Posts to run the MFS," said BB spokesman Md Mezbaul Haque.

The central bank extended the deadline for Nagad to transition into a company in accordance with regulatory requirements to operate as an MFS, Haque said.

"But it has not been able to do it yet despite getting the extended time. We heard that the Directorate of Posts has a profit-sharing agreement with a company named Third Wave Technologies. But they have yet to send the details of the agreement," he added.

Third Wave Technologies, which is owned by Mishuk, was later renamed as 'Nagad Ltd'.

Mishuk maintains that Nagad Ltd has a revenue-sharing agreement with BPO, under which BPO receives 51 percent of revenue. Nagad has provided Tk 14.60 crore as revenue share to BPO.

"This partnership has been instrumental in extending our services to a wider population across Bangladesh, particularly in remote and underserved areas," he added.

The central bank though has been accommodating to Nagad all along.

For instance, in February 2022, the central bank issued a new MFS regulation 'Bangladesh Mobile Financial Services Regulations, 2022' replacing the Bangladesh MFS Regulations, 2018 issued in July 2018.

The new regulation allowed non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) and government entities, alongside banks, to run MFS. Previously, only banks could run MFS services, which made Nagad ineligible for a full-fledged licence.

A month later, Nagad Ltd applied to the BB for an NBFI licence. A year later, the BB issued an NBFI licence for Nagad Finance, removing any licensing ambiguities for Nagad's MFS operations.

However, Nagad surrendered the NBFI licence less than three months later as its backers manoeuvred to gain regulatory legitimacy by way of a digital bank licence.

In June last year, the central bank invited applications for digital bank licences.

The BB got 52 applications and but only two got the licence: Nagad and Kori.

Nagad also got preferential treatment from various other ministries during the Awami League regime, which helped boost its customer base.

For example, the government's stipend for secondary and higher secondary students was initially distributed through payment methods such as bKash, Nagad, Rocket and various banks chosen by the beneficiaries.

However, in January 2024, without following any tender or competitive process, the Secondary and Higher Education Division of the Education Ministry issued a directive granting Nagad exclusive rights to disburse the stipends.

At that time, 5.4 million beneficiaries were receiving stipends through their preferred channels, with Nagad serving only 20 lakhs. However, the division stated that the remaining 34 lakh beneficiaries would have to convert their MFS accounts to Nagad.

In the directive's headline, the division mentioned that it has approved the disbursal of stipends through Nagad, which had 'signed a deal' with BPO.

Despite this, Nagad failed to disburse the stipends properly and was given multiple time extensions until the end of June.

Eventually, the government directed that the stipends for 19 lakh beneficiaries be disbursed through other MFS providers out of the current 65 lakh beneficiaries.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) in 2021 found some anomalies when Nagad applied to raise capital through zero-coupon bonds.

The company's liability for digital money increased unexpectedly from Tk 447.1 crore in June 2020 to Tk 858 crore in April 2021. At that time, Nagad's losses stood at Tk 147.6 crore while its paid-up capital was Tk 3.5 crore, as per its audited financial statements as of April 30 that year.

The BSEC report said that the company's main function is providing mobile financial services but as per the submitted memorandum of articles and the articles of association, it is not clear whether the company can provide MFS or can act as a payment services provider.

"There were few clarifications requested by the BSEC and we have provided those clarifications and it was fully convinced with those clarifications," Mishuk said, adding that Nagad adheres strictly to all regulatory guidelines and maintains robust financial controls to ensure accuracy and compliance in all our operations.

Papon's exit a signal of new era?

FROM PAGE 1

Faruque began his tenure yesterday with a huge task ahead, as the country's premier sport has struggled to progress in the right direction during Papon's tenure.

Bangladesh saw some sporadic success since he took charge in 2012, and he was credited with uncovering the darkest chapters of the country's sporting history, such as the franchise-based Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) match-fixing scandal in 2013.

However, under his leadership, domestic cricket lost its charm and credibility, and alleged corruption further hindered the game's progress.

Papon was elected board president three times, but these elections were marred by fraud and manipulation, with no competition due to the interference of his supporters who manipulated the process to ensure their own councillorship. As a result, the board was filled with 'yes-men' who came through the influence of Papon's allies.

Over time, competitiveness in domestic leagues evaporated due to manipulation by the core group in the board. On the other hand, the first-class tournaments were far from competitive, resembling 'picnic cricket'.

Also, the cash-rich BPL, the lone domestic T20 competition, gradually lost its credibility, which adversely affected the national team's development. Moreover, BCB had never been transparent about the BPL's financial issues.

While Papon had repeatedly promised after every election to implement the long-desired regional cricket associations to decentralise the game, he failed to execute these plans.

He apparently focused all his efforts on interfering with national team issues, where the new president was also a victim, while his selected group allegedly dealt with all corruption matters.

There was no accountability or transparency in the functioning of the board, which was essentially a one-man show. Under these circumstances, everyone will be watching to see whether Faruque can reform the board's activities.

There have been widespread allegations of corruption within the board, and Faruque's first duty will be to take proper measures to uncover the truth.

The new BCB boss will need to focus on domestic cricket if he wants to set things on the right track. He must create an environment where genuine organisers feel comfortable.

Faruque was most successful as a chief selector, but he is now embarking on a much bigger role. He must ensure that the right people are in the right positions and that every committee can perform its duties with freedom.

It's worth remembering that despite the presence of a number of former cricketers at BCB, their presence made hardly any difference to the progress of the game in the country.

Can Faruque make a difference now, with reform being the buzzword in the country following a historic student-led mass protest?

ACC revives

FROM PAGE 1

could have investigated the money laundering allegations against S Alam before. Given the current circumstances, starting the investigation now is a positive step."

On August 13 last year, the ACC began investigating the money laundering allegations against S Alam after The Daily Star on August 4 last year published a report titled "S Alam's Aladdin's Lamp".

The report said S Alam built a business empire in Singapore worth at least $1 billion, although there was no record of him taking any permission from Bangladesh Bank to invest or transfer any funds abroad. It said S Alam bought at least two hotels, two homes, one retail space, and other properties over the last one decade, all the while seeking to remove his name from the paper trails.

On August 6 last year, the High Court directed the authorities to investigate the allegations of him owning businesses abroad without Bangladesh Bank's permission.

On February 5 this year, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court scrapped the HC suo moto rule that had ordered an investigation.

However, the apex court said the ACC, the CID, and Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unity (BFIU) can take legal steps on the matter on their own.

On August 18 this year, the ACC received a copy of the Appellate Division's order. Following the order, the ACC reopened the case on Tuesday.

White paper

FROM PAGE 1

concentrate on domestic resource collection, public expenditure (public investment, annual development programme, subsidies and debt), and financing of budget deficit.

To get the picture of inflation and food management, it will analyse production, public procurement, and food distribution.

For understanding the challenges of external balance, the committee will focus on export, import, remittance, foreign direct investment, foreign exchange reserves, foreign finance flow and debt.

The panel will also delve into power demand, supply, pricing, costs and purchase agreements to get a clear idea of the problems in the energy and power sector.

Regarding private investment, it will focus on access to credit, electricity, connectivity, and logistics. It will also emphasise on employment at home and overseas, formal and informal wages, and youth employment issues.

The committee members will work for free. The committee will have its office at the Planning Commission and have secretarial support from the General Economic Division of the commission.

The chief adviser's office in the statement said the Hasina-led government left a loan burden of Tk 18,36,000 crore. The government borrowed from internal and external sources to meet its budget deficit without driving hard to raise tax collection.

Although the government's plan was to raise the tax-to-GDP ratio to 14 percent in the current fiscal year, it is now 8 percent. This is an example of economic mismanagement, it said.

In general, people are suffering mainly due to corruption, opportunity of capital flight, and syndication in the market.

Inflation was around 12 percent in July while food inflation was above 14 percent, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

The economy lost its path during the regime of the previous government, it added.

Govt mulls over commission

FROM PAGE 1

The steps come following the release of many victims of enforced disappearances from secret detention facilities, known as "aynaghar". Chilling details of the torture and inhuman living conditions are now emerging as the victims begin to speak about their distress.

The authorities under the Sheikh Hasina regime have for years denied the existence of such secret prisons.

On August 13, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus met the activists of Mayer Daak, a platform of the families of victims. He expressed deep concern after hearing the accounts of the families.

"It is uncertain whether some of the victims are alive. Therefore, the government is working to draft the ordinance," said an official.

Mayer Daak coordinator Sanjida Islam Tuli told The Daily Star that the family members of victims are eagerly waiting for the government to form a commission.

She added that an adviser to the interim government assured them that the ordinance will be finalised soon.

Rights activist Nur Khan Liton lauded the step, adding, "We have to ensure the implementation of the legal framework."

"Different state agencies are behind the enforced disappearances; it is the responsibility of the state to save the victims," he said, adding that state agencies must be transparent and accountable.

"Intelligence agencies are above accountability and they get indemnity. This must stop. There should be independent authorities to monitor them," he said.

Ratification of the international convention is also a major step because it will make "Bangladesh answerable to the international forum."

Constitution expert and Supreme Court lawyer Arif Khan said the cases of enforced disappearances could be dealt with the existing laws.

"Courts can take assistance from international laws if they feel it is necessary. We need a localised law in line with international conventions."

According to rights organisation Odhikar, at least 708 people were victims of enforced disappearances between 2009 and June 2024.

The US in December, 2021, imposed sanctions on Rab and seven of its top officers, over serious rights abuses.

It said Rab and other Bangladeshi law enforcement forces are responsible for more than 600 enforced disappearances since 2009 and nearly 600 extrajudicial killings since 2018.

Red passports

FROM PAGE 1

Asked about cancelling those passports, the senior secretary said, "As we are cancelling the diplomatic passports of the primary passportholders, automatically their family members' passports will also be scrapped.

"If anyone [holding a diplomatic passport] wants to take a new passport, the person has to surrender the diplomatic passport first and then an ordinary passport will be issued as per law," he added.

Home ministry sources said once the red passports are cancelled, former ministers, and MPs who have been accused in criminal cases or have been arrested may have to go through a legal process to get ordinary passports.

In that case, they can apply for a general passport only after getting a court order.

Along with the MPs, the officials of Bangladeshi missions abroad also get red passports. Those with red passports do not need a visa to travel abroad. They get a visa on arrival after landing in a particular country. Red passports or diplomatic passports are red in all countries.

Once the cancellation order is issued, former MPs or ministers who are currently abroad have to surrender their red passports to the DIP office in the respective countries or after coming back to Bangladesh.

According to ministry sources, former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was a red passport holder. In the face of a mass uprising against her government, Hasina took refuge in Indiaon August 5 after the fall of her government.

Several former ministers and MPs of the AL government have already been arrested. Some fled abroad before the fall of Hasina's government to avoid arrest.

However, there were no reports of anyone fleeing abroad after the fall.

Many former ministers and MPs are still hiding in the country, and law enforcement agencies are conducting drives to arrest them as over two dozen cases have already been filed against them.

According to the passport department, the ministers and MPs get diplomatic passports for five years of the tenure of parliament after the formation of a new government.

When the term of parliament ends, the validity of the passport also expires.

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Farzana Rupa, Shakil held at airport

Shown arrested in murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former head of news at Ekattor Television Shakil Ahmed and its principal correspondent Farzana Rupa were arrested at Dhaka airport yesterday as they tried to leave the country.

"We completed the immigration but they were wanted in cases. A requisition was given by the Detective Branch (DB) against the case, and they were taken into custody from the airport," a senior official of the special branch (SB) told The Daily Star.

Airport sources said they were trying to take a Turkish Airlines flight to go to France via Turkey.

According to a notification of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), Shakil and Rupa were shown arrested in a murder case filed with the Uttara East Police Station on Tuesday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

The Daily Star
ROUNDTABLE ON
VISION OF THE YOUTH
Date: August 21, 2024

Participants at a roundtable discussion titled "Vision of the Youth" organised by The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday. Nine organisers of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement from different campuses joined the discussion alongside others. Story on back page.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

BANNED FOR FORGERY

Contractors pressurise RHD to withdraw ban

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

A group of contractors who were banned by Roads and Highways Department (RHD) over the last year for indulging in forgeries to secure contracts are now putting pressure on the authority to withdraw their ban.

They have even threatened to besiege the RHD headquarters unless the authority withdraws the ban, which has debarred 47 contractors in the past year and demanded that RHD halt all ongoing work until their demands are met.

These contractors were among the highest beneficiaries under the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

On Sunday, under the banner of RHD's Affected Contractors' Coordination Committee, the group submitted a memorandum to the RHD chief engineer, incorporating 10 demands.

In this situation, the chief engineer yesterday held a meeting with the contractors to discuss their demands.

According to RHD sources, 44 contractors were banned between February and July this year for different periods for indulging in different kinds of forgeries to secure contracts. They will not be allowed to participate in any RHD bidding processes during the ban period.

Thirteen contractors, upon filing a writ with the High Court, got a stay against the debarred order, meaning the debarred order is still valid for 31 contractors, they said.

According to sources, the banned contractors had allegedly engaged in malpractice in collusion with a section of unscrupulous officials of the RHD.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

46TH ANNIVERSARY

BNP declares 5-day event from Aug 31

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday announced a five-day programme, beginning on August 31, to observe its 46th founding anniversary.

Speaking at a press conference at the party's Naya Paltan office, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir outlined the schedule.

The programme will kick off on August 31 with discussion meetings at the district and upazila levels. On September 1, the party will pay tribute to its founder, Ziaur Rahman, at his grave.

The activities will continue with rallies on September 2 at the metropolitan, district, and upazila levels. On September 3, the party plans to release fish fry in these areas.

Tree plantation drives are scheduled for September 4 across the metropolitan, district, upazila, and union levels, he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

3 top police officials sent into forced retirement

All DIGs and metro commissioners transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government sent three top police officials on forced retirement and transferred all range Deputy Inspector General (DIGs), and metropolitan commissioners outside Dhaka.

Ten district superintendents of police (SPs) were also transferred. The Public Security Divisions of the Home Ministry issued five separate notifications regarding the developments yesterday.

The three top police officials, who were sent into forced retirement from service are identified as Police Headquarters (PHQ) Additional Inspector General of Police (additional IGP) Atikul Islam, addition IGP (supernumerary) Anwar Hossain; and the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police chief Md Asaduzzaman.

According to three separate home ministry circulars signed by Senior Secretary Mohammad Abdul, the move was taken in the public interest.

The circular invoked section 45 of the Public Service Act 2018.

In a separate circular signed by the ministry deputy secretary Mahbur Rahman Sheikh, seven range DIG were transferred and attached with other police units.

DIG of Dhaka Range Syed Nurul Islam has been transferred to Rajshahi Police Academy while Chittagong Range DIG Nur-e-Alam Mina to Rajshahi Police Academy, Sylhet Range DIG Shah Mizan Shafiur Rahman to Railway Police and Rajshahi Range DIG Md Anisur Rahman has been transferred to River Police.

The three top police officials are Additional IGP Atikul Islam, addition IGP (supernumerary) Anwar Hossain; and CTTC unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police chief Md Asaduzzaman.

Khulna Range DIG Moinul Haque also transferred to Rajshahi Police Academy, Barisal Range DIG Ilias Sharif to the Anti-Terrorism Unit in Dhaka and DIG of Mymensingh Range Shah Abid Hossain has been attached to the tourist police.

Earlier on August 13, the Rangpur Range DIG Abdul Baten was sent on forced retirement.

In the same circular, the commissioner of the Chattogram, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Gazipur, and Barisal were also transferred to different police units. On August 13, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner was sent on forced retirement, following his transfer to PHQ on August 7.

In another circular, ten districts – Chattogram, Kishoregnaj, Manikganj, Magura, Natore, Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Hobiganj, and Patuakhali--- SPs were also transferred to different police units.

Besides, the deputy commissioner of the Sylhet Metropolitan Police Azbahar Ali Sheikh has been transferred to the Rajshahi Range DIG office, reads the notifications.

According to PHQ sources, these officials have played major

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Khaleda Zia back home from hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia returned to her residence in Gulshan yesterday after more than a month's treatment at the capital's Evercare Hospital.

Having been under house arrest for the past five years, she finally went home as a free person following a presidential pardon earlier this month.

She was acquitted of all charges against her following the fall of the AL government on August 5.

Party activists and senior leaders escorted her home as she left the hospital around 7:00pm, said Shayrul Kabir Khan, a BNP media cell member.

Suffering from various ailments, including liver cirrhosis, arthritis, diabetes, and issues related to kidney, lungs, heart, and eyes, the 79-year-old former prime minister was admitted on July 8.

RECOGNISING DIPLOMAS

Doctors protest BMDC decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of doctors and intern doctors staged a demonstration at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka for five hours yesterday, raising a nine-point demand against the recent decision of Bangladesh Medical & Dental Council (BMDC).

BMDC has decided to recognise medical assistants with Diploma in MATS (Medical Assistant Training School), DMF (Diploma in Medical Faculty), and LMF (Licentiate of Medical Faculty) qualifications as "Diploma Medical Practitioners".

The demonstration, titled "March to BMDC," began at 10:00am, with doctors from various healthcare institutions participating.

At the programme, Prof Nurul Amin, principal of Sapporo Dental College and Hospital, said, "Doctor is not just a matter of identity; it is a matter of qualification. Those who do not have this qualification cannot identify themselves as doctors. Technologists are helpful but are not doctors by any means."

The protesters also voiced grievances about the non-payment of salaries and allowances by some medical colleges and demanded that such institutions be held accountable, with the possibility of closure if necessary.

Among their nine demands are restricting the title of "Dr" to individuals who hold MBBS or BDS degrees, curbing the prevalence of healthcare service providers that lack qualified doctors, and enforcing stricter regulations on pharmacies that sell medicines without prescriptions.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

AUGUST 21 ATTACK

Awami League doesn't hold programme

STAR REPORT

The Awami League did not hold any programme marking the 20th anniversary of the August 21 grenade attack on an AL rally in Dhaka that killed at least 24 people.

On this day in 2004, during the BNP-Jamaat alliance government's tenure, the attack targeted an anti-terrorism rally organised by the AL, with the then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina the apparent target.

Every year, the AL placed floral wreaths at the Martyr's Altar in front of the AL's central office.

However, the party did not announce any such programme this year. The AL has been in disarray since party president Sheikh Hasina resigned from her post as prime minister.

2 AL leaders among 3 on remand for murder

Around 380 other party members sued in separate murder cases

STAR REPORT

Two Awami League leaders and a former government official were placed on remand yesterday on charges of murder and violence.

Also, around 380 AL men, including two former lawmakers, have been sued over murder charges.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Jashim placed AL organising secretary Ahmad Hossain and Chattogram Port Authority's former chairman Mohammad Sohail on four-day remand each after they were produced with a 10-day remand prayer.

Ahmad and Sohail were arrested from Rampura and Banani respectively on Tuesday night in a case filed over the murder of a shop owner, Nabin Talukder, who died after getting injured in Dhaka's Paltan on July 19 during protests.

Nabin's wife, Ruma Akhter, filed the case against unnamed persons on July 20.

Also, a Brahmanbaria court placed Captain (retd) AB Tajul Islam, former state minister for Liberation War affairs, on nine-day remand in a case filed over attacking police and snatching firearms from law enforcers.

Tajul was arrested from Dhaka's Gulshan on Tuesday night.

Police opened fire at a group of BNP men in Banchharampur upazila on November 19, 2022.

Rafiqul Islam Nayan, the then president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal's Sonarampur union unit, was injured in the incident and later died.

A day later, a sub-inspector of Banchharampur Police Station filed a case accusing 117 people, mostly BNP men, of an attack on police and snatching of firearms from police.

AB Tajul was shown arrested in this case, police said.

Nayan's father had filed a murder case with a local court accusing the then senior police officials of Brahmanbaria, but the court later dismissed the case.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

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Doctors protest

FROM PAGE 3

Additionally, they called for the establishment of a separate council for diploma medical practitioners, a standardised salary structure for private-sector doctors, including medical officers, senior medical officers, assistant registrars, and registrars, and promotions based on experience.

Meanwhile, students of four-year dental diploma course staged a demonstration in front of BMDC office in Bijaynagar yesterday, demanding private practice registration and change in course name, alongside opportunity for higher education.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 22

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Politicisation of edn

FROM PAGE 5

way. Students genuinely want good governance, and we must restore the relationship between students and teachers," he added.

Regarding resuming activities in universities, the adviser said, "We will try to reopen the universities as soon as possible. We will appoint the right people to the highest positions there. We want to hear from the students about their needs and expectations."

"They do not want a partisan administration; they want real governance. Those who assume these positions must have high educational standards and should not be heavily affiliated with any political party," he added.

Speaking on the recent cancellation of HSC and equivalent exams, Wahiduddin Mahmud said there was room for further consideration without cancelling the remaining exams.

He said, "The protesting students expressed that they were mentally distressed. After such an uprising, sitting for an exam would be a mental burden. We later considered that the situation was such, as we haven't been able to restore peace and order yet."

The government on Tuesday cancelled the previously postponed Higher Secondary Certificate and equivalent examinations after several hundred students staged protests at the secretariat.

The process of preparing the results would be decided later, according to the education ministry.

Meanwhile, a meeting of examination controllers of the education boards was held yesterday to decide how to publish the results after the cancellation of the postponed HSC and equivalent exams.

According to sources at the meeting, the education boards are primarily preparing to publish the results, aligning with the students' JSC and SSC exam results, similar to the approach used during the pandemic.

Due to the pandemic, HSC exams were not held in 2020. At that time, the results were published based on an average evaluation of their SSC, JSC, and equivalent exam results.

Contractors

FROM PAGE 3

RHD documents show 41 out of 44 contractors secured 40,231 contracts amounting to Tk 83,178.5 crore during the last 13 years (fiscal years 2011-12 to 2023-24).

On Sunday, the memorandum submitted by the Coordination Committee was signed by nine contractors.

Contacted, RHD Chief Engineer Syed Moinul Hasan said they have asked the contractors to settle the debarment issue with the court.

However, meeting sources said RHD officials expressed discontent over the language of the memorandum submitted by the contractors.

RHD will scrutinise the demands and see if they are logical. Then the points will be taken to the ministry, said one participant, requesting anonymity.

The Daily Star could not contact any of the signatories to the memorandum.

BNP declares 5-day

FROM PAGE 3

Additionally, a cultural event will be held at the Shaheed Minar on September 1 to commemorate the party's anniversary.

During the briefing, Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said around 198 members of BNP and its affiliated organizations have been killed during various movements over the years. These facts need to be publicised, he added.

Fakhrul further emphasised, "If anyone tries to engage in terrorism, extortion, or any other harmful activities, our political leaders must stand up and resist them."

1 dies, several hurt

FROM PAGE 5

Local BNP men said Babul was supposed to hold two road meetings in Nagarkanda yesterday.

Shama Obaid's supporters broke two arches made to welcome Babul around 2:00am on Wednesday, and chased away his supporters.

Tension prevailed since then as sporadic chases and counter chases followed between the rival groups, eventually ensuing the clash. Some shops of Babul's supporters were vandalised and looted.

Contacted, Babul alleged that Awami League activists have infiltrated BNP to create chaos within the party.

Shama Obaid did not receive her phone.

Confirming the matter, Aminur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Nagarkanda Police Station, said the situation was later brought under control.

Somoy TV broadcast

FROM PAGE 5

Earlier in the day, Ahmed Jobaer, a director of Somoy Media Ltd, submitted the petition to the Appellate Division seeking a stay on the HC order.

The HC, on August 19, also issued a rule asking the respondents to explain in seven days why they should not be directed to allow Somoy Media Ltd and its managing director to broadcast and transmit news impartially and fairly through Somoy TV without any threat and coercion.

Secretary to the ministry of information and broadcasting, chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, chairman of Bangladesh Satellite Company Limited, and Ahmed Jobaer, who holds 17.75 percent share of Somoy Media Ltd, were made respondents to the rule.

Lawyers AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon and Saqeb Mahbub appeared for Ahmed Jobaer while lawyer Ashsanul Karim argued for Shampa Rahman during hearing yesterday.

2 AL leaders

FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, in Narayanganj, a murder case was filed on Tuesday night against AL leader Shamim Osman and 122 others on charge of killing Manir Hossain, 56, during the recent protests.

Manir's younger brother filed the case with Siddhirganj Police Station.

Manir had suffered bullet injuries during a clash in the Mizmizi area of Narayanganj on July 20 and died two days later.

Moreover, in Habiganj, a murder case was filed on Tuesday night against 261 AL men, including former Habiganj-3 lawmaker Md Abu Zahir, on charge of killing a youth named Mostak Ahmed.

Mostak's brother filed the case with Habiganj Model Police Station. Of the accused, 111 were named.

In Lalmonirhat, at least 200 AL men, including the district unit AL general secretary Matiar Rahman, were sued over vandalising and torching BNP office on July 5. A local BNP leader filed the case with court yesterday.

[Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report.]

3 top police

FROM PAGE 3

roles and were influential during the Awami League (AL) led governments.

After the fall of the AL government on August 5 amid mass student protests, these officials are now being transferred to others, while some top officials are sent on forced retirement.

Sources said that steps will be taken to transfer the 54 other district SPs in phases soon.

Farzana Rupa

FROM PAGE 3

Immigration authorities detained the duo and handed them over to the DB when they arrived at the airport to go abroad, the notification reads.

The case was filed under Sections 302, 114 and 109 of the Penal Code against 39 names including former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

Police sources said the duo's names were not listed in the FIR, but they were arrested as two of the unnamed accused.

Ekattor Television had dismissed Shakil and Farzana Rupa on August 8. A copy of the order was circulated on social media days later.

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The company invites reputable firms to express their interest in providing comprehensive warehouse solutions, including storage equipment, material handling systems, packaging & shipping tools, and warehouse automation services. Interested companies are requested to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) along with a company profile highlighting their expertise and experience in this field by September 22, 2024, in the following address:

MJL Bangladesh PLC.
Mobil House, CWS (A) 13/A, Gulshan Avenue
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

Contact: Engr. Salah Uddin Ahmed
Mobile: +880-1711-726275

Only shortlisted companies will receive the Request for Quotation (RFQ), and MJL Bangladesh PLC. reserves the right to select the company.

MJL Bangladesh PLC.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District : Munshiganj
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo.no.46.02.5900.000.07.001.24- 1732 Date : 21/08/2024

e-Tender Notice No: 04 /2024-25 Procurement of Works (NCT)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works:

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of Works	Tender ID No	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time	Procurement Method
1.	GDP-3/MU-115	Improvement of Sirajdikhan GC Bypass Road by BC From Ch.00-325m Under Upazila: Sirajdikhan, District: Munshiganj (Road ID:359744052)	1009398	Upto 12:00 08-Sep-2024	At 14:00 08-Sep-2024	LTM
2.	GDP-3/MU-114	Improvement of Kumarbhogh UP Office-Chanderbari Bazar-Dogachi Bazar Via Kazirpagla Bazar Road by BC From Ch.4720-6135m Under Upazila: Lauhajong, District: Munshiganj (Road ID:359443001) (Salvage Material Cost: BDT:51,05,934.00)	1009389	Upto 12:00 12-Sep-2024	At 14:00 12-Sep-2024	OTM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal (http:/www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from the e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Md. Wahiduzzaman)
Executive Engineer
LGED, Munshiganj
Phone: 02-997731038
e-mail: xen.munshiganj@lged.gov.bd

GD- 229

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
বন্যপ্রাণী ব্যবস্থাপনা ও প্রকৃতি সংরক্ষণ বিভাগ,ঢাকা
বন ভবন, মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১২১২।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং- ০৩/২০২৪-২৫ তারিখঃ- ২০/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রি.

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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(আহম্মদ নিয়ামুর রহমান)
পরিচিতি নং- ১৩২৩৮
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তা
বন্যপ্রাণী ব্যবস্থাপনা ও প্রকৃতি সংরক্ষণ বিভাগ
বন ভবন, মহাখালী, ঢাকা।
Emil-wildlifedhaka01@gmil.com
মোবাইল নং-০১৯৯৯০০০৩৩৫

GD- 233

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Chief Electric Inspector
Power Division
25 New Eskaton, Dhaka
www.ocei.gov.bd

Memo. No. 27.01.0000.001.07.538.24-1487 Date- 20-08-2024

e-Tender Notice No: 02/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the following Tender:

Tender Id	Name of the Tender	Tender Document last selling Date and Time	Tender Closing Date and Time
1009988	Supply and Installation of Desktop Computers, UPS, Printers and Scanners for the Office of the Chief Electric Inspector (OCEI).	Date: 08 September, 2024 Time: 05:00 PM	Date: 09 September, 2024 Time: 12:30 PM

- This is an online tender, where only e- Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted.
- To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (https:/www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
- The fees for downloading the e-tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to 05.00 pm 08.09.2024 for Tender ID-1009988.
- Further Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

20.08.24
Abul Khair Md Akkas Ali
Chief Electric Inspector
Phone: +88-02-58315211
E-mail: eadvisor@pd.gov.bd

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Jail Superintendent
District jail Moulvibazar
www.prison. moulvibazar.gov.bd

Memo No. 58.04.5800.160.04.003.2024-1444 Date-20.08.2024

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP portal:

SL No	Tender ID No.	Name of Work	Publishing Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
1	1009856	Goods, Supply of Unnatamaner Mashur Dal (soru) to Moulvibazar District Jail for the period of October/2024 to March/2025.	20 Aug-2024 11:40:00,	03 Sep-2024 12:00:00,
2	1009857	Goods, Supply of Unnatamaner Mashur Dal (Mota) to Moulvibazar District Jail for the period of October/2024 to March/2025.	20 Aug-2024 11:40:00,	03 Sep-2024 12:00:00,
3	1009858	Goods, Supply of Unnatamaner Cholar Dal to Moulvibazar District Jail for the period of October/2024 to March/2025.	20 Aug-2024 11:40:00,	03 Sep-2024 12:00:00,

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal **(http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)** is required. The fees for downloading the e-tender Documents From the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to 11**:00 AM on 03th Sep 2024.**

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk **(helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).**

(MD. Mozibur Rahman Mozumder)
Bj Number-02689900203
Jail Super
Moulvibazar district jail
☎02996683393 (Office)
Email-jailsylhet@gmail.com

GD- 226

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বগুড়া

স্মারক নং-পুঃঅঃ বগুড়া/রেশন স্টোর/৭০৮২/ই তারিখঃ ২০/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ

দরপত্র ও নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টারের (অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪) মাস পর্যন্ত, মশুর ডাল, সয়াবিন তেল, জ্বালানী কাঠ, পোলাওর চাল, চিনি ক্রয়, গম পেষাই/ভাঙ্গানো, পরিবহন, কুলি কাজ এবং জুলাই/২০২৪ হতে সেপ্টেম্বর/২০২৪ মাস পর্যন্ত মজুদকৃত পুরাতন খালি চটের/প্লাস্টিকের বস্তা নিলামে বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্ত দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা/২০০৮ অনুসারে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।
২	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	পুলিশ সুপার, বগুড়া।
৪	কি কারণে দরপত্র আহবান	বগুড়া জেলা পুলিশ, এনএসআই, দুদক ও যুদ্ধাহত বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা ও অবসর প্রাপ্ত পুলিশ সদস্যদের রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয়, গম পেষাই/ভাঙ্গানো, নিলাম সামগ্রী (বস্তা) এবং অন্যান্য সেবা কাজ।
৫	দরপত্র সূত্র নং	রেশন-০২/২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছর।
কাজের বিবরণঃ		
৬	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
অর্থের উৎসঃ		
৭	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	রাজস্ব খাত।
তথ্যাদিঃ		
৮	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	২২/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ এর মধ্যে।
৯	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	১২/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত)।
১০	দরপত্র গ্রহণের স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বগুড়া। তারিখঃ ১৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ সময় দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১১	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান তারিখ ও সময়	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বগুড়া। তারিখঃ ১৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ সময় দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানাঃ		
১২	দরপত্র ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী অফিস	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বগুড়া এবং পুলিশ রেশন স্টোর, বগুড়া।
	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী/অফিস	পুলিশ সুপার, বগুড়া এর কার্যালয়।
	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বগুড়া।
১৩	প্রি টেন্ডার সভা স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বগুড়া। তারিখঃ ০৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ। সময় দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
দরপত্র সম্পর্কিত তথ্যঃ		
১৪	দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা	১। হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স ২। আয়কর সনদপত্র ৩। ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদপত্র ৪। ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী সনদপত্র ৫। অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা যা টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল(PG-2/PG-3) এ উল্লেখ আছে।
১৫	মালামালের বিবরণঃ	

ক্রম নং	আইটেম	পরিমাণ (কেজি/লিটার)	দরপত্রের মূল্য (টাকা) (অফেরতযোগ্য)	নিরাপত্তা জামানত (টাকা)	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময়
১.	মশুর ডাল (উন্নতমানের)	৬৫০০০ (পঁয়ষট্টি হাজার) কেজি	১,০০০.০০	২,০০,০০০.০০	কার্য সম্পাদন চুক্তিতে উল্লিখিত তারিখ ও সময় অনুযায়ী।
২.	সয়াবিন তেল (উন্নতব্রান্ডের)	৬৫০০০ (পঁয়ষট্টি হাজার) লিটার	১,০০০.০০	২,০০,০০০.০০	
৩.	গম পেষাই/ভাঙ্গানো	২৭০০০০ (দুই লক্ষ সত্তর হাজার) কেজি কম বেশি হতে পারে	১,০০০.০০	১,০০,০০০.০০	
৪.	চিনি (উন্নতমানের)	৪৫০০০ (পঁয়তাল্লিশ হাজার) কেজি	১,০০০.০০	২,০০,০০০.০০	
৫.	পোলাওর চাল (উন্নতমানের)	৩৪০০ (তিন হাজার চারশত) কেজি	৪০০.০০	২০,০০০.০০	
৫.	জ্বালানী কাঠ (আমখড়ি শুকনা)	৮০০০ (আট হাজার) কেজি কম বেশি হতে পারে	৪০০.০০	৫,০০০.০০	
৬.	পরিবহন (চাল ও গম)	৬০০০ (ছয় হাজার) কুইন্টাল কম বেশি হতে পারে	৪০০.০০	২০,০০০.০০	
৭.	কুলি কাজ (চাল ও গম)	৬০০০ (ছয় হাজার) কুইন্টাল কম বেশি হতে পারে	৪০০.০০	২০,০০০.০০	
৮.	নিলাম সামগ্রী (পুরাতন চটের ও প্লাস্টিকের খালি বস্তা) বিক্রয়	জুলাই/২৪ হতে সেপ্টেম্বর/২৪ মাসের মজুদ অনুযায়ী	৪০০.০০	৩০,০০০.০০	

দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর বিবরণঃ		
১৬	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	জাকির হাসান, পিপিএম
১৭	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	পুলিশ সুপার
১৮	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, বগুড়া।
১৯	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	০২৫৮৯৯০০১২১।
২০	বিশেষ শর্তাবলী	
	(ক) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।	
	(খ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	
	(গ) দরপত্রে উল্লিখিত যে কোন আইটেমের পরিমান বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে।	
	(ঘ) দরপত্র পিপিআর/২০০৬ ও পিপিআর/২০০৮ মোতাবেক সকল শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে।	

২০.০৮.২৪
জাকির হাসান, পিপিএম
বিপি-৭৪০৬১১৩৯৬৪
পুলিশ সুপার, বগুড়া
ফোনঃ ০২৫৮৯৯০০১২১, ফ্যাক্সঃ ০২৫৮৯৯০০১২৬
ই-মেইলঃ spbogra@police.gov.bd

GD- 223

KILLINGS DURING UPRISING

UN reiterates call for accountability

US stresses human rights, ties with Bangladesh

UNB, *Dhaka*

The United Nations has reiterated its call for accountability for the recent violence, loss of life, and human rights violations in Bangladesh.

"We've been speaking about accountability since the beginning of this particular crisis," said Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General Stéphane Dujarric at a regular briefing in New York on August 20.

"There will need to be accountability for the violence, for the loss of life, and for all violations of human and political rights," he said.

Meanwhile, the United States has stated that they look forward to working together to support their shared values and interests, such as a free and open Indo-Pacific.

"We do have a defense relationship with Bangladesh," Pentagon Press Secretary Maj Gen Pat Ryder said while responding to a question during a press briefing recently. "As it relates to the Bangladesh government, of course, you know, we would expect human rights to be observed and there to be an avoidance of any type of violence," Ryder said.

A gust of wind turns the umbrella inside out as this family of four enjoys a rainy afternoon in the city. The photo was taken in the Panthapath area yesterday.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

AB Party gets EC registration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amar Bangladesh Party (AB Party), founded by some former leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami, yesterday got its registration with the Election Commission, with "eagle" as its electoral symbol.

The EC issued a gazette notification in this regard as per the Representation of the People Order, 1972, following a High Court order.

AB Party was among a total of 80 political parties that had applied for registration with the EC since October 2022.

Earlier on August 19, the HC bench of Justice Naima Hayder and Justice Kazi Zinat Haque ordered the commission to register it as a political party as per the Representation of People's Order, 1972 and Rules of Registration of Political Parties, 2008.

After the EC earlier rejected the party's application for registration on July 24, 2023, the party submitted the writ petition on August 23 of the same year upon instruction of its convener AFM Sulaiman Chowdhury.

Later, on August 2023, a divisional bench of HC consisting of Justice KM Qamrul Qader and Justice Md Shaukat Ali Chowdhury issued an interim rule, which was made absolute by the HC bench on August 19 this year.

Somoy TV broadcast to remain suspended

SC chamber judge passes order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Broadcasting of Somoy TV, a private channel, will remain suspended till further notice, according to an order passed by the Supreme Court's chamber judge yesterday.

The order came in response to a petition seeking a stay on a High Court order on August 19 that asked the authorities concerned to stop the channel's transmission for seven days following a writ petition filed by Shampa Rahman, managing director of Somoy Media Ltd.

The broadcasting of the channel remained suspended since that night.

Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, chamber judge of the SC's Appellate Division, passed the order after hearing arguments from the counsels for both the parties of the case, and sent the petition to the full bench for hearing on August 25.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

IRREGULARITIES IN TEACHER RECRUITMENT

Politicisation of edn instts to blame: adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Many teachers across the country have been dismissed or forcibly removed for political or trivial reasons, which is both inappropriate and tragic, said Education Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud yesterday.

He made the remarks during a press briefing at the Secretariat in the afternoon.

Wahiduddin said the politicisation of private colleges and other educational institutions has led to widespread irregularities in teacher recruitment.

"We are aware that people across the country are angry about this matter. We will address these injustices. But how these dismissals occurred is highly unjust. I have received thousands of complaints about this. These issues cannot be resolved without principled decisions," he said.

"However, the important thing is that we must maintain decorum in educational institutions. No one should use force or humiliate individuals personally. Regardless of the seriousness of the wrongdoing, it should be resolved peacefully, systematically, and from a neutral position," Wahiduddin emphasised.

"Authorities have started addressing these issues at the highest levels of administration, and this is also happening in schools and colleges, but change will not occur overnight. However, it is unacceptable to use force in any

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

1 dies, several hurt in BNP factional clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Faridpur*

A man was killed and several others were injured in a clash between two factions of BNP in Nagarkanda upazila of Faridpur yesterday.

The incident took place at Nagarkanda Bazar area around 11:30am when supporters of Shahidul Islam Babul, general secretary of Krishak Dal's central committee, clashed with supporters of Shama Obaid, BNP's central organising secretary (Faridpur division).

The deceased -- Kabir Bhuiyan, 50, of Chagaldi area of Nagarkanda municipality -- was a supporter of Babul.

Enayet Hossain Sakhawat, ward master of Faridpur Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital, confirmed the death, adding that the injured were also being treated at the hospital.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

> **No one should use force or humiliate individuals personally. Regardless of the seriousness of the wrongdoing, it should be resolved peacefully, systematically, and from a neutral position.**
>
> **WAHIDUDDIN MAHMUD**, Education Adviser

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
National Institute of Neuro-sciences and Hospital
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 02-48120079, E-mail: nins@hospi.dghs.gov.bd

Ref:-56(9)/NINS&H/Tender Document/2024-25/282 Date: 18/08/2024

Invitation for Tender (OTM)

01	Ministry/Division	**Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**
02	Agency	Director General of Health Service
03	Procuring entity name	Director, National Institute of Neuro-Sciences & Hospital
04	Procuring entity code	1270208111110
05	Procuring entity district	Dhaka-1207
06	Invitation for	i. Supply of MSR Linen, ii. Supply of MSR Gauze, Bandage & Cotton,
07	Invitation Reference No.	56 (9)/NINS&H/Tender Document/2024-25/282
08	Date	18/08/2024
KEY INFORMATION		
09	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10	Budget & source of fund	Revenue Budget (GoB)
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
11	Office code	1270208111110
12	Office name	National Institute of Neuro-Sciences & Hospital
13	Tender Package No.	GR-02, GR-03, GR-04, GR-05
14	Tender package name	i. Supply of MSR Linen, ii. Supply of MSR Gauze, Bandage & Cotton,
15	Tender publication date	22/08/2024
16	Tender last selling date	02/09/2024 (Office hour)
17	Tender closing date & time	05/09/2024, Time:12:00pm
18	Tender opening date & time	05/09/2024, Time:12:15pm
19	Name & Address of the office	
	Selling tender document	Accounts Section, National Institute of Neuro-Sciences & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
	Receiving tender document	1) Room No-306, National Institute of Neuro-Sciences & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
	Opening tender document	Room No-306, National Institute of Neuro-Sciences & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
20	Place/date /time of pre-tender meetiing	Room No-311, National Institute of Neuro-Sciences & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207; Date 25-08-2024 at 11.00am
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
21	Eligibility of tenderer	Tenderer shall have the following legal documents /capacity to enter into the contract- a) Valid up-to date trade license b) TIN certificate with up-to-date tax return/ tax deposit slip c) VAT registration certificate d) Bank solvency certificate, e) Other details conditions including in the schedule.
22	Brief description of goods	Supply of Linen (Group-A & B), Supply of Gauze, Bandage & Cotton, Supply of Micropore & Others
23	Price of tender document	Tk. 2000.00 (Per Lot)

24

PK No.	Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security amount (Tk)	Completion time in work
02	01	Supply of Linen (Group-A)	NINS&H, Dhaka.	2% of offered price	60 days after work order.
03	01	Supply of Linen (Group-B)			
04	01	Supply of Gauze, Bandage & Cotton			
05	01	Supply of Micropore & Others			

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
25	Name of official inviting tender	Prof. Dr. Quazi Deen Mohammad.
26	Designation of official inviting tender	Director
27	Address of official inviting tender	National Institute of Neuro-Sciences & Hospital, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
28	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tel : +88-02-48120079; Fax: +88-02-48120568, E-mail: nins@hospi.dghs.gov.bd
29	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatever.	

Prof. Dr. Quazi Deen Mohammad
Director
National Institute of Neuro-Sciences and Hospital
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

GD- 228

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট
বাড়ি নং-৩৫, সোহরাওয়ার্দী এভিনিউ, ব্লক-কে, বারিধারা, ঢাকা-১২১২
www.atu.police.gov.bd

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

স্মারক নং-৪৪.০১.০০০০.৯৮৫.০৬.০৪৫.২৪-১৪৯ তারিখ-২১/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।

"The Public Procurement Act-2006" & "The Public Procurement Regulations-2008" এবং এর তদীয় সংশোধিত বিধি মোতাবেক এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকায় ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থ সালের ২য় কোয়ার্টার (অক্টোবর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত) এর জন্য রেশন সামগ্রীর ০৮ টি আইটেম ক্রয়/সরবরাহ প্রাপ্তি এবং রেশন স্টোরের পুরাতন চট বস্তা নিলামে বিক্রয়ের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশি প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী ফার্ম/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে পৃথক পৃথক আইটেম ভিত্তিক সীলমোহরকৃত খামে উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ
২.	এজেন্সি	এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা
৩.	সংগ্রাহক সত্তার নাম	পুলিশ সুপার (লজিস্টিকস্ এন্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট), পক্ষে-অ্যাডিশনাল আইজি, এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট, ঢাকা
৪.	দরপত্রের বিষয় (কাজের নাম)	১৬ নং ক্রমিকে বর্ণিত
৫.	দরপত্র আহ্বানের সূত্র	৪৪.০১.০০০০.৯৮৫.০৬.০৪৫.২৪-১৪৯ তারিখ- ২১/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ
৬.	দরপত্র আহ্বানের তারিখ	২১/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ
৭.	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি
৮.	বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স হতে পিএলএ খাতে বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ
৯.	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	২১/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ
১০.	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ হতে ০৯/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত প্রতিটি কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়।
১১.	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	১০/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
১২.	টিওসি কর্তৃক দরপত্র বাক্স খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১০/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা
১৩.	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট কার্যালয়, বারিধারা, ঢাকা ।
১৪.	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট কার্যালয়, বারিধারা, ঢাকা
১৫.	ঠিকাদারের যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিলযোগ্য কাগজপত্রের বিবরণ	দরদাতাকে নিম্নোক্ত কাগজপত্রাদি'র ছায়ালিপি ১ম শ্রেণীর কর্মকর্তা দ্বারা সত্যায়িত করে দাখিল করতে হবেঃ- ক) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, খ) নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র, গ) হালনাগাদ আয়কর ও ভ্যাট সনদপত্র, ঘ) ব্যাংক কর্তৃক প্রদেয় আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতা সনদ (লেনদেন বিবরণীসহ), ঙ) ফার্ম/ প্রতিষ্ঠানের মালিকানা সনদপত্র, চ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সনদপত্র। এছাড়া অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী সিডিউলে উল্লেখ আছে।

১৬.

লট নং	কাজের নাম/আইটেম	সরবরাহের পরিমাণ	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানত (ফেরতযোগ্য)	কাজের সময়সীমা
১।	মশুর ডাল সরবরাহ	সিডিউল মোতাবেক	১,০০০/-	৩৫,০০০/-	২য় কোয়ার্টার ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থ সাল
২।	ভোজ্য সয়াবিন তেল সরবরাহ	ঐ	১,০০০/-	৪০,০০০/-	
৩।	জ্বালানী কাঠ সরবরাহ	ঐ	৫০০/-	২,০০০/-	
৪।	পোলাও'র চাউল	ঐ	৫০০/-	৭,০০০/-	
৫।	গম পিষাই	ঐ	১,০০০/-	২০,০০০/-	
৬।	কুলি কাজ (লোড ও আনলোড)	ঐ	৫০০/-	২,০০০/-	
৭।	চিনি ক্রয়	ঐ	১,০০০/-	২০,০০০/-	
৮।	সাধারণ পরিবহন (চাল, গম পরিবহন)	ঐ	৫০০/-	২,০০০/-	
৯।	রেশন স্টোরের পুরাতন চট ও প্লাস্টিকের বস্তা নিলামে বিক্রয়	ঐ	৫০০/-	৩,০০০/-	

১৭.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	আবু আশ্রাফ
১৮.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	পুলিশ সুপার (লজিস্টিকস্ এন্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট), পক্ষে- অ্যাডিশনাল আইজি, এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট, ঢাকা
১৯.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	বাড়ি নং-৩৫, সোহরাওয়ার্দী এভিনিউ, ব্লক-কে, বারিধারা, ঢাকা-১২১২
২০.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী ফোন নং	০২-৪১০৮১৩৫৭
২১.	বিশেষ শর্তাবলীঃ ক) দরপত্রের সকল কার্যক্রম "The Public Procurement Act-2006" & "The Public Procurement Regulations-2008" এবং এর তদীয় সংশোধিত বিধি মোতাবেক পরিচালিত হবে। খ) দরপত্র দাখিলের নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পরে আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না। গ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী যৌক্তিক কারণে যে কোন দরপত্র আংশিক গ্রহণ অথবা সম্পূর্ণ বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	

২১/০৮/২৪
আবু আশ্রাফ
বিপি-৮১০৬১১৮৩৭০
পুলিশ সুপার (লজিস্টিকস্ এন্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট)
পক্ষে-অ্যাডিশনাল আইজি, এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা।
ফোন: ০২-৪১০৮১৩৫৭
E-mail: atu.spdev@police.gov.bd

GD-227

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

I HAD TO GO INTO HIDING IN 2018: MOUSUMI HAMID

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Renowned actress Mousumi Hamid recently returned to Dhaka after completing the shoot of a new film in Bandarban and Cox's Bazar. Directed by Tasnova Tabassum Atoshi, the film's title is yet to be finalised. This marks her return to work after a tumultuous month, which saw the rise of the anti-discrimination student movement and the collapse of the previous government.

However, the actress' activities haven't been confined to the entertainment industry. Mousumi was a prominent voice in the recently concluded movement. She took to the streets and voiced her support for the students on social media. "I joined the protests for four to five days. I stood with the students because I believe in their cause," she said.

Recalling a specific incident, Mousumi described how, like many others, she changed her social media profile picture to red in solidarity with the movement. Not long after, she received a phone call during the then ongoing curfew, with someone repeatedly inquiring about her whereabouts. Fearful for her safety, she and her husband fled their home. "We returned 12 hours later, only to receive another call the next day, warning me not to post anything else. But I didn't stop. I spoke out against injustice, and I wasn't afraid."

When asked about the state of our freedom of speech before August 5, Mousumi candidly stated, "There wasn't much freedom of speech, and I am living proof of that. Everyone was afraid to speak up. But after the downfall of the former government, that fear is gone. Now, we can speak freely."

Mousumi also revisited her experience during the 2018 protests when actress Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed was arrested, "Back then, I posted several things on Facebook in support of Nawshaba, which led to me receiving threatening phone calls. I couldn't speak out then, but now, with the new sense of freedom, I feel like I can finally share my experiences."

Taking the advice of friends, Mousumi deleted some of her posts and turned off her phone out of fear after the arrest of Nawshaba. "I went underground for 13 days, being completely out of contact with everyone. I remember the fear I felt as I travelled from Cox's Bazar to Sreemangal, not knowing what would happen next."

At that time, actor Sazu Khadem *bhai* was of great help. He called many people and told them, "Mousumi never gets involved with politics, so make sure she isn't harmed." After that, I continued shooting, but I kept thinking that I could be arrested at any moment."

The actress also disclosed that during this period, a director warned her that a case had been filed against her and advised her to stay hidden. "That was the life I led back then," she recounted.

Reflecting on the current situation, Mousumi expressed relief. "Now, I feel free. We can all express our opinions openly. Life is much better for everyone now."

Mousumi shared the shooting experience of her upcoming musical, saying, "We shot in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban. The story is beautiful, and it felt great to work amid the serenity of nature. After going through an uncertain and restless month, being able to shoot by the sea and in the hills has done wonders for my mood, especially being near the mountains."

In addition to this project, Mousumi expressed excitement about another of her upcoming films ***Noya Manush***, which is set to release later this year.

Mousumi has also been active on OTT platforms, with a new web-film set to begin shooting soon. She also mentioned another upcoming project with the popular streaming platform Hoichoi.

PHOTOS: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL/ABRAR

Sarajevo Film Festival celebrates Meg Ryan's film impact

Renowned Hollywood actress, director, and producer Meg Ryan was recently recognised by the Sarajevo Film Festival, receiving the Honorary Heart of Sarajevo on Tuesday night for her valuable impact on the film industry.

Ryan was among four distinguished film creators honoured with this award, joining US and Palestinian directors Alexander Payne and Elia Suleiman, as well as US actor and producer John Turturro.

Festival Director Jovan Marjanović praised Ryan's exceptional talent while presenting her with the silver heart-shaped award.

Ryan symbolically hosted a special screening of her 1998 romantic comedy hit, ***You've Got Mail***, at an open-air cinema, the very location where it was first shown during the festival in 1999.

Jennifer Lopez files for divorce from Ben Affleck

Jennifer Lopez has officially filed for divorce from Ben Affleck, marking the end of their two-year-long marriage. The couple, once famously known as "Bennifer," first captured headlines in the early 2000s before splitting in 2004.

Lopez went on to marry Marc Anthony, while Affleck wed Jennifer Garner, with both marriages eventually ending in divorce.

After reuniting in 2021, Lopez described their initial breakup as her "biggest heartbreak."

Their divorce filing in Los Angeles County Superior Court comes exactly two years after their Georgia wedding celebration. Representatives for both stars have not commented on the split.

NEWS

Pacers shine but Pakistan recover

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh the first breakthrough when he dismissed opener Abdullah Shafique for two in the fourth over, courtesy of Zakir Hasan taking a spectacular flying catch at the fifth slip.

Mahmud and Shoriful continued to put pressure on the Pakistani batters, and it took little time for left-arm seamer Shoriful to remove skipper Shan Masood.

Although the on-field umpire did not initially give Masood out, a review showed that the ball had touched the bat before it reached the wicketkeeper Liton Das. Masood was unhappy with the change in decision and exchanged some heated words with the umpires, as he seemed to believe that the ball had only hit his pads.

Before the series started, Shoriful had stated in the media that Pakistani batting maestro Babar Azam was his "dream wicket". It took only two balls for him to make that dream a reality, dismissing the right-hander for a duck, reducing Pakistan to 16 for three.

Shoriful can credit part of his success against Babar to Liton, who took a superb diving one-handed catch to his left, silencing the home fans.

Since Babar's dismissal, Bangladeshi bowlers were unable to sustain the pressure, allowing Pakistani opener Ayub and Shakeel to adopt an aggressive approach.

The hosts reached the 100-run mark after the Tea break, and as the partnership looked increasingly dangerous for Bangladesh, Hasan returned to remove Ayub -- who had earlier completed his maiden Test fifty -- at the slip cordon where Mehidy Hasan Miraz took a sharp catch, ending a 98-run stand for the fourth wicket.

Later, Shakeel also completed his seventh Test fifty and shared an unbroken stand of 44 runs with Mohammad Rizwan (24 not out) to see out the remaining overs of the day before bad light forced the umpires to call off proceedings.

BNP's ties

FROM PAGE 12

part in the meeting with a four-member delegation from China.

"We want to make it clear that the BNP has always believed in the 'One China Policy' and we want to reaffirm this stance with even greater firmness," Fakhrul said.

He told the media that China believes the relationship between the Communist Party of China and the BNP will continue to strengthen. "We believe that China's investment for the development of Bangladesh will increase further."

Fakhrul added, "We, the BNP, are delighted to hold the meeting with the Chinese ambassador after a long time. We consider this visit, after the mass protest, as a highly significant meeting.

"China has reiterated its commitment to the people of Bangladesh, clearly stating that they don't believe in supremacy. In the geopolitical context of Bangladesh, China has always stood by the people of this country, and they continue to do so today."

The BNP secretary general praised China's global role, saying, "We applaud the significant role that China is playing on the global stage today. We have sincerely thanked and expressed our gratitude for China's assistance to both developed and developing countries."

After the meeting, Ambassador Yao Wen told media, "We discussed the current situation in Bangladesh. We hope that under the leadership of the interim government, Bangladesh will achieve stability and normalisation. We fully support this interim government."

"China will not interfere in the internal affairs of Bangladesh. The people of Bangladesh look forward to our continued support, and we are committed to that.

"We are working together for a better relationship between Bangladesh and China."

Govt should ensure

FROM PAGE 12

their legitimate rights to freedom and independence, especially in the light of Israeli occupation's criminal aggression and genocidal war continuing for more than 10 months in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Jerusalem.

He said Bangladesh and Palestine and their peoples are united by strong historical relations based on brotherhood and support.

"We and our Palestinian people will continue to have gratitude and appreciation to Bangladesh for permanently and continuously standing by our people, and its absolute solidarity and support since its independence in 1971," the letter said.

Abbas expressed his support to the interim government and the people of Bangladesh, and wished good luck and success to Yunus in performing the lofty tasks entrusted to him.

Meanwhile, Pentagon on Tuesday said it will look forward to working with Bangladesh to support the shared values and interests such as a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Pentagon Press Secretary Maj Gen Pat Ryder made the comment in a briefing in Washington when he was asked how Pentagon views the role of the Bangladesh Army in supporting peace and stability under the interim government led by Nobel laureate Prof Yunus.

Pat Ryder said, "Well, as you know, we do have a defense relationship with Bangladesh. We will look forward to working to support our shared values and interests, such as a free and open Indo-Pacific. I don't have anything to read out right now in terms of any types of contact.

"As it relates to the Bangladesh government, we would also expect human rights to be observed and there to be an avoidance of any type of violence," he added.

In a briefing yesterday, UN secretary-general's Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said UN hopes the interim government, led by Dr Yunus, will take an inclusive approach, including by considering the voices of young people as well as women, and minority and indigenous communities.

He said the UN also counts on the interim government to ensure the full protection of all citizens, particularly the minorities.

Students force DU dean to quit

FROM PAGE 12

and signed it in front of the students.

However, the agitators then insisted that Mahbub must sign the resignation letter they had prepared.

The dean then wrote another resignation letter, similar to the one prepared by the students, but refused to submit it to the office in-person.

The dean of another faculty of the university, wishing to be unnamed, told The Daily Star that he has his resignation letter ready after seeing what happened to Prof Mahbub.

In another development, a group of students from the Mathematics department padlocked the office of Prof Chandra Nath Podder, demanding his permanent removal as teacher.

The agitators started demonstrating in front of the department around noon alleging that he opposed the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

Emerging from a meeting around 1:00pm, Chandra met the protesters and heard their demand.

Following a five-hour negotiation between the teacher and students, the students left the department saying they would announce their next course of action soon.

Another group of students of the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science yesterday demanded permanent removal of two teachers and apology from the rest of the teachers.

Meanwhile, a group of students of the university's Sociology department yesterday sent a letter to the department demanding resignation of Chairman Prof Zeenat Huda.

They also demanded Prof AKM Jamal Uddin, Prof Sadeka Halim, and Prof Moshiur Rahman be relieved of all academic and administrative duties.

The agitating students also issued a 48-hour ultimatum to the authorities to meet their demands and warned that they would lay siege to the department if their demands were not met.

Also, a group of students of the Economics department wrote to the department chairperson yesterday demanding removal of Prof Shahadat Hossain Siddique and Syed Naimul Wadood.

Prof Zeenat in her letter to the law affairs adviser alleged that those groups of students [protesters] were creating a scary situation on campus, and that the teachers were feeling insecure.

"I would like to inform you that a good number of teachers of Dhaka University are in vulnerable condition. They are being threatened and attacked so that they resign as chairman, director, and dean," reads the letter.

Constitutional changes required

FROM PAGE 12

After the Liberation War, the proclamations were not incorporated in the 1972 constitution, he said.

"The constitution should not dictate the people. It should be written again to incorporate the people's will. But we need to figure out how it will be done -- through the constituent assembly or by other ways."

All the colonial era legal framework and administrative structures have to reformed, he added.

Meghmallar Bosu of Dhaka University said it is necessary to change or amend the constitution. But it will require political unity so that the next government does not nullify the changes.

He recommended proportional representation in parliament, which was echoed by DU's coordinator Mozammel Haque.

Proportional representation is an electoral system in which the distribution of seats corresponds closely with the proportion of the total votes cast for each party.

About banning religion-based politics, he said, "We did not find anything good in such types of decisions earlier. When you oppress a party, they become victims and get public sympathy. The same will happen if the state bans a political party by law. It should be done through socio and political unity."

Umama Fatema, a coordinator of the movement and a DU student, said such parties always use religion as a tool for oppression, but they never use it as a tool for freedom.

"It will not be wise to ban student politics on campuses when the administrators are politically affiliated. They will only favour their party's student wings, banned or not," she said, adding that the elections to students' unions in campuses are vital.

Arif Sohel also spoke for students' union-based politics on campuses. "The student union-based politics will naturally fill the vacuum that the political-party based students' politics will leave behind and a new kind of students' politics will arise."

Terming the 2014 polls "voterless election", 2018 election "night vote", and this year's polls "dummy independent" election, Mustafiz Rahman of Jagannath University said the country's current state is the result of those so-called elections.

Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam also joined the discussion moderated by The Daily Star journalist Shuchismita Tithi.

Mahfuz said our inability to accept different views and to live with differing opinions is a huge disease.

"Now, your future vision is for a democratic Bangladesh. To achieve that, we need to bring a culture of tolerance towards different opinions. You have set so many examples and I hope you can set this example as well."

Help us get back laundered money

FROM PAGE 2

Kiminori hoped that Bangladesh will be rebuilt under the leadership of Prof Yunus.

The Nobel laureate expressed his gratitude for Japan's continuous support and expressed his desire to take Japan-Bangladesh relations to its "peak". Both sides concurred that they would closely work together to make it happen.

The envoy conveyed Japan's intention to continue supporting Bangladesh's development and prosperity under the "Strategic Partnership" enshrined between the two countries.

Kiminori stressed the importance of establishing peace and stability in the country and the region, including sustainable response to Rohingya refugees, advancing economic and business cooperation, and boosting people-to-people exchange.

He expressed Japan's readiness to work together in these areas.

Protests grow in India over abuse of two minors

Schools, internet shut in a town near Mumbai

REUTERS, *Mumbai*

Internet services were cut off and schools were closed for a second straight day in a town near India's financial capital Mumbai yesterday, as protests over the alleged sexual abuse of two, four-year old girls intensified, media said.

The protests in Badlapur, about 50 km from Mumbai, come amid nationwide demonstrations over the rape and murder of 31-year-old doctor in Kolkata.

A janitor was arrested for allegedly sexually abusing the students in a school in Badlapur on the weekend.

Angry protesters blocked railway tracks for hours on Tuesday, demanding justice for the children, echoing similar protests across the country by doctors and women's groups.

Tanker adrift after multiple attacks in Red Sea: agency

REUTERS, *Dubai*

A Greek-flagged oil tanker was adrift in the Red Sea yesterday after repeated attacks that started a fire on the vessel and caused the ship to lose power, the UK maritime agency said.

The Sounion was first attacked by two small boats and hit by multiple projectiles about 77 nautical miles west of Yemen's port city of Hodeidah on Wednesday morning, the Greek shipping ministry and the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said.

There was a brief exchange of small arms fire during the incident, the UKMTO said, adding in a later update that the ship had reported a renewed attack. That caused the fire and led the vessel to lose engine power and its ability to manoeuvre.

IN MY COUNTRY ITS EASIER TO GET KIDNAPED THAN GET A JOB
ARE WOMEN SAFE IN INDIA ??
No Safety No Duty
She is a Woman Mother Wife Daughter Sister RESPECT FEMALE
WHO'll SPEAK FOR HER, IF U DON
WE WANT JUSTICE
STOP T VIOLENC AGAINST D
NO SAFET NO DUTY
OFFICE)
ANTAR ROAD

Medical professionals and students holding placards shout slogans during a protest against the rape and murder of a doctor in India's West Bengal state, in New Delhi, India yesterday.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Death 'only certainty' for people in Gaza

Says UN official as Israeli strikes continue in enclave

AFP, *Jerusalem*

In Gaza, death appears to be the "only certainty" for 2.4 million Palestinians with no way to escape Israel's relentless bombardment, a UN official said Tuesday, recounting the growing desperation across the territory.

"It does feel like people are waiting for death. Death seems to be the only certainty in this situation," Louise Wateridge, a spokeswoman for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, also known as UNRWA, told AFP from Gaza.

For the past two weeks, Wateridge has been in the Gaza Strip, witnessing the humanitarian crisis, fear of death and spread of disease as the offensive rages on.

"Nowhere in the Gaza Strip is safe, absolutely nowhere is safe. It's absolutely devastating," Wateridge said from the Nuseirat area of central Gaza -- a regular target of Israel's aerial assaults.

Since fighting broke out in October, Israeli forces have pounded the besieged territory from the air, land and sea, reducing much of it to rubble.

Now in its eleventh month, the offensive has created an acute humanitarian crisis, with hundreds of thousands of people, most of whom have been displaced several times, running out of basic food and clean drinking water.

"We are facing unprecedented challenges when it comes to the spread of disease, when it comes to hygiene. Part of this is because of the Israeli imposed siege on the Gaza Strip," Wateridge said.

Israel's military campaign has killed at least 40,223 people, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory. Most of the dead in Gaza are women and children, according to the UN human rights office.

Tens of thousands of people have taken refuge in schools across the Gaza Strip, an increasingly regular target of Israeli missiles. Israel's military says these schools have been used as command and control centres by Hamas, a charge the group denies.

Over Tk 1cr found

FROM PAGE 12

510 Turkish lira, 200 British pounds, a pistol, two magazines and 50 bullets were recovered during the raid," Anisur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Banani Police Station, told The Daily Star.

The staffers alleged that the raid was conducted when no staffers were present there.

However, police said the staffers did not cooperate, forcing them to seek assistance from the fire service to break open the vaults.

Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan, Additional District Magistrate of Dhaka AKM Hedaitul Islam, coordinator of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement Sarjis Alam, another coordinator Hasnat Abdullah, and Gono Odhikar Parishad President Nurul Haque Nur were present during the drive.

On Tuesday, Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) ordered the freezing of bank accounts of several individuals, including Nasrul and former Dhaka Metropolitan Police joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarkar.

Meanwhile, the BFIU yesterday asked banks to freeze the accounts of former lawmaker Shamim Osman, his brother and former lawmaker AKM Salim Osman and their family members.

The banks were also instructed to suspend the locker facilities for the members of the families for the next 30 days.

Besides, the banks were asked to suspend the transactions through their privately owned institutional accounts. The BFIU sought an update on the accounts in the next five working days.

3 more cases filed with ICT against Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

Besides Hasina, 76 others were accused including AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader and several ministers.

Asaduzzaman, also an SC lawyer, filed a complaint on behalf of Abdul Matin, father of Sheikh Shahriar Bin Matin, who, according to the complaint, was fatally shot by police in the capital's Mirpur on July 18.

He was an HSC examinee of Ishwardi Ideal College in Mirpur.

Hasina and 49 others, including top leaders of the parties in the AL-led alliance, former ministers, police officers and leaders and activists of AL, were accused in the complaint.

The same lawyer filed another complaint on behalf of MA Razzaque, father of Asif Iqbal, a small trader from Sreepur Upazila of Magura.

As per the complaint, Asif was "shot dead by police" at the capital's Mirpur-10 intersection on July 19.

Hasina and 71 others, including top leaders of the parties under the AL-led alliance, former ministers, police officers, and AL leaders and activists, were accused.

10 MORE CASES

Two murder cases were filed with Badda Police Station against Hasina and 189 others over the killing of Sumon Sikder and Abdul Jabbar on July 19.

Sumon's mother Masuma filed the case against Hasina and 178 others, including former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan and Bashundhara Group Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir.

Jabbar's mother Nazma Begum filed the other case against Hasina and eight others.

Sharmin Ahkter, widow of Russel Miah, filed a complaint with a Dhaka court, accusing Hasina and 27 others of killing her husband during protests in Rampura on July 19.

The court ordered the officer-in-charge of Rampura Police Station to register the complaint as a case.

The former prime minister and 38 others were sued in a case filed with Uttara East Police Station over the killing of Fazlul Haque on August 5. The victim's brother Anwar Hossain filed the case.

Hasina and 47 were sued for the killing of Tauhidul Islam, a student of Kabi Nazrul Government College on August 4.

The victim's elder brother Tariqul Islam filed the complaint with another Dhaka court that asked the Tejgaon Police Station OC to register it as an FIR.

Hasina, former chief justice ABM Khairul Haque and three others were sued over the killing of Firoz Talukder who was shot from a helicopter on July 19.

Firoz's wife Reshma Sultana filed the case with a Dhaka court that asked Mirpur Police Station OC to register it as an FIR.

A murder case was filed against Hasina and 44 others over the killing of Roman Mia, 17, in Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila on August 5.

Roman's aunt Rina filed the case with Rupganj Police Station.

In Gazipur, a murder case was filed last night against 139 people including Hasina over the death of Noor Alam, 22.

Another murder case was filed against Hasina and 79 others yesterday with Fatuallah Police Station over the killing of a bus driver.

Sahida Begum, mother of deceased Abul Hossain Mizi, who was shot dead at Signboard area on July 19, filed the case, said Fatullah OC Nure Azam.

In Sylhet, Chhatra Dal leader Juber Ahmed filed a case against Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana and 85 others for an attack on a BNP procession.

Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Changes
Bangladesh Forests Department
Social Forest Division Rajshahi.
Enviroment Protection Through Social Foresrty in the Rajshahi Barind Tract Region Project

Memo No. 22.01.0000.245.29.011.24.২৭১২

e-Tender Notice

Date: 20/08/2024

e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of goods as stated below:

SL No	Tender ID, Package No & Name of Packages	Publishining date and time	Last Selling date and time	Closing & Opening Date and Time
1	Tender ID: 1007558 WD-01/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Construction of 2 m wide & 2150m length C.C Road at Altadhighi.	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
2	Tender ID: 1009463 WD-02/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Bill Board with RCC Foundation and MS Angle 5 nos, Construction of Altadighi Ghat 02 nos, HBB at Car Parking Area, Main Gate with toilet, ticket counter and rest room & RCC Seating 30 nos.	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
3	Tender ID: 1009469 WD-03/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Construction of Dustbin (2mX2mx2m) 6nos, Over Head Tank (OHWT), Gol Ghor (5nos), RCC Umbrella for 8 nos & Supplying and fitting of Steel Cradle (Dolna) 4 nos.	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
4	Tender ID: 1009473 WD-04/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Construction of 2 m wide & 1100m length HBB Road at Sonadighi only & Protection work and Land development work at Sonadighi.	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
5	Tender ID: 1009476 WD-05/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Electrification & Lighting at Altadighi.	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
6	Tender ID: 1009369 GD-04/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Supply of Computer Equipment & Accessories, LED Monitor, 8GB RAM, Core i-7 Processor, Laser jet Printer, Modem, UPS, Audio Set, Scanner).	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
7	Tender ID: 1009438 GD-05/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Supply of IPS, Purchase & Installation of Generator, Air Conditioner	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
8	Tender ID: 1009457 GD-07/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Furniture (Office Building, Restroom) (Cots, Secretariat Tables, Half Secretariat Tables, Arm Chairs, Armless Chairs, Tables, Wooden Racks, Steel Cupboards, Steel File Cabinets, Wooden Tools, Wooden Benches, etc.)	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
9	Tender ID: 1009458 GD-08/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Other tools and equipments (Nursery equipments- fountains, spades, buckets, spades, scissors, rakes, shovels, rakes, spray machines, scissors etc.; purchase of crockery, door and window screens and other equipments, jeep car (4 dows) CSG conversion expenses etc.)	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00
10	Tender ID: 1009460 GD-09/SFD/RAJ/ 2024-25 Supply of Various Materials for Free delivery, purchase of polypropylene bags for filling voids in strip, palm and other gardens, purchase of soil, dung, chemical fertilizers and other equipment for maintenance of strip gardens.	20-Aug-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Sep-2024 Time: 16.00	04-Sep-2024 Time: 12:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

20.08.2024
Md.Rafiquzzaman Shah
Project Director
Environment Protection Through Social Forestry in the
Rajshahi Barind Tract Region (Ist Revised) Project
and
Divisional Forest Officer
Social Forest Division Rajshahi.

GD- 225

ADMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT
Master of Development Economics (MDE) Programme
Admission Open for 3rd Batch (Session: 2023-24)

BIDS Graduate School of Economics (BGSE)
Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)

A Fully Funded Exceptional Master's Programme

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Master of Development Economics is a one-year programme. It consists of 10 taught courses and a dissertation for a total of 36 credit hours over a 12-month duration. The medium of instruction is English. It is a quantitatively-oriented programme, and classes are held four days a week. This programme is affiliated with the University of Dhaka, and the degree will be conferred by the university.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Admission is open to individuals who have at least a 4-year bachelor's degree in any branch of economics, development studies, statistics, mathematics, finance, business administration, sociology, engineering or any other subject with some background of economics from any reputed university. Candidates already having one master's degree are also eligible to apply. Candidates with a CGPA below 3.00 at the bachelor's are **NOT** eligible to apply. Women, qualified government officials, and professionals from NGOs and the private sector are encouraged to apply.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- The application form can be downloaded from the BIDS website (www.bids.org.bd) and submitted through email to **bgseadmission@gmail.com** by **11/09/2024.**
- Qualified applicants will be notified through email for a written test to be held on **14/09/2024**.
- The admission test will evaluate the candidate's quantitative aptitude, language skills, and analytical ability.

FEES

- No tuition fees will be charged. However, a nominal amount of Taka 15,000.00 (fifteen thousand) needs to be paid at the time admission to cover incidental expenses.

CONTACT PERSON:
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Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
E-17 Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka 1207.
E-mail: bgseadmission@gmail.com
Phone: 880-02-58160430 (Extn. 445), 01679869725

The BIDS Graduate School of Economics (BGSE) is an academic institution within Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) with the affiliation of the University of Dhaka. BIDS has a long tradition of excellence in research and is the country's premier research and policy institute. Over nearly seven decades, it has been the spawning ground of some of the country's leading economists and scholars. BIDS's reputation for scholarship in development economics and policy research is not only nationally, but also globally acknowledged. The Institute is thus uniquely positioned to offer its advanced master's programme through the newly established Graduate School of Economics (BGSE).

GD- 232

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

We can't have same old politics on campus

Reforming the culture of student politics is crucial

A recent *Prothom Alo* survey—where 93 percent of respondents, or over 326,000 people, supported banning student politics—reflects widespread frustration and disillusionment with the current culture of student politics in Bangladesh. This overwhelming sentiment cannot be dismissed lightly. For far too long, student wings of political parties have exercised unchecked control over university campuses, often resorting to violence, intimidation, and coercion to maintain their dominance. In particular, the crimes and abuses committed by Chhatra League over the last 15 years have understandably led many to conclude that banning student politics altogether is the only solution.

However, the manner in which such surveys are framed misses the critical point that it's not student politics per se—but rather party-based student politics—that is problematic. Unfortunately, much of the discussion and reaction revolving around this issue seems to stem from this faulty premise. The decision of the 19 public educational institutions including 11 universities and six medical colleges that have recently prohibited student politics, with 13 of them simultaneously banning politics for teachers and staff, is also based on this premise. "Ban student politics" has become a rallying cry since the fall of the Awami regime on August 5.

However, we must also recognise the vital role that student politics, when properly structured and purpose-driven, can play in representing student interests and addressing legitimate grievances within our educational institutions. The very uprising that ousted the Awami League government owes to the leadership of largely nonpartisan but politically conscious students. Among them were also students tied to rival political parties, many of whom sacrificed their lives. But they left behind their political identity when they joined hands with other students for a cause that unified the whole nation.

The history of student politics in Bangladesh is replete with such glorious moments transcending party lines. Students being exploited by political parties to do their bidding form the other stream of this history, and it is this stream that needs to be rectified. Interestingly, we don't even need a new law or ordinance for that. The Representation of the People Order (RPO) already prohibits political parties from having any affiliated student or teacher organisations. However, we have seen how political parties bypassed this law on technicalities, with Awami League calling Chhatra League a "brotherly organisation", and BNP calling Chhatra Dal an "associate organisation" with its own constitution. Preventing such manipulations can put an end to the culture of party-based politics on campuses, and this is where we should focus.

The rights of students or teachers to engage in political activities are inalienable, but they can do so on their own time and outside the campus. But pursuing their political rights or agenda at the expense of general students and teachers is unacceptable. Clearly, there is a fine line to balance here. So instead of banning student politics altogether, university administrations should ban party-based politics, activate and empower student unions to better protect their interests, and ensure academic and intellectual freedoms so that our students can grow to be the leaders we need. Political influences in teacher recruitment, dormitory seat distribution, and other relevant areas also must stop. No party should be given the chance to exploit our universities again.

Health sector needs urgent healing

Govt must focus on purging partisan influences

A *Prothom Alo* report on the politicisation of the public health sector portrays a grim picture of how far the rot has spread. The report details how partisanship has pervaded the sector—from medical academia to healthcare services to projects under the health ministry—ensuring absolute dominance of the erstwhile ruling party. But Awami League was not the only one to have spread its tentacles; BNP also did the same while in power, and it seems the party is trying to do it again after the fall of the former.

Reportedly, after forming government in 2009, Awami League and its affiliates placed loyal officials in various health-related institutions. One example is the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), where five consecutive vice-chancellors appointed since 2009 have either been a member of pro-AL Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad (Swachip) or directly involved with AL politics. The same goes for pro-VCs, proctors and others in top positions. Political recruitments were also seen at 37 other public medical colleges. Elsewhere, at the 495 upazila health complexes, only officials loyal to AL were appointed as upazila health officers. Thus, loyalists were favoured in leadership positions at every level of the public healthcare sector—from the grassroots to the top—whether they were qualified or not. In the process, AL deprived anyone with suspected links to BNP and even deserving nonpartisan candidates.

During BNP's rule in 2001-2006, it was the pro-BNP Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) that dominated public-sector recruitments, choosing party loyalists in important positions, and thus depriving those even remotely affiliated with AL and its politics. During the times of both regimes, those who were not affiliated with either party or their politics have suffered, and the lack of competent leadership eventually plunged the sector into an unprecedented crisis.

In the aftermath of Sheikh Hasina's fall, it seems BNP is focused on repeating the same cycle. As many as 173 doctors who were recruited in BNP's time, and deprived of promotions throughout the AL rule, were all promoted in one day—on August 8. The *Prothom Alo* report suggests that the spate of promotions is still going on. Frustrated DAB members are cornering relevant authorities, staging protests in various medical institutions, and in some cases even vandalising public hospitals.

We understand the frustration of pro-BNP doctors and medical professionals, but their attempt to forcefully claim what they think they deserve cannot be acceptable. Political partisanship is one of the root causes behind the ailing public health sector, and it's time to do away with it. Otherwise, much-needed reforms in the sector will continue to elude us. To restore discipline in this vital sector, we urge the interim government to be strict and judicious about all appointments and promotions. Only those who are qualified and deserving should get preference.

What the interim government needs to do urgently

Anu Muhammad
is former professor of economics of Jahangirnagar University.

ANU MUHAMMAD

After 15 years of autocratic rule and authoritarian economic policymaking, the time has come for significant societal reform through conscious youth leadership and public participation. Such a possibility was created once in 1972 and again in 1990. We could not realise either of those two opportunities because of the betrayal and hypocrisy of the big political parties. Instead, we saw them consolidate their wealth and create a new political class.

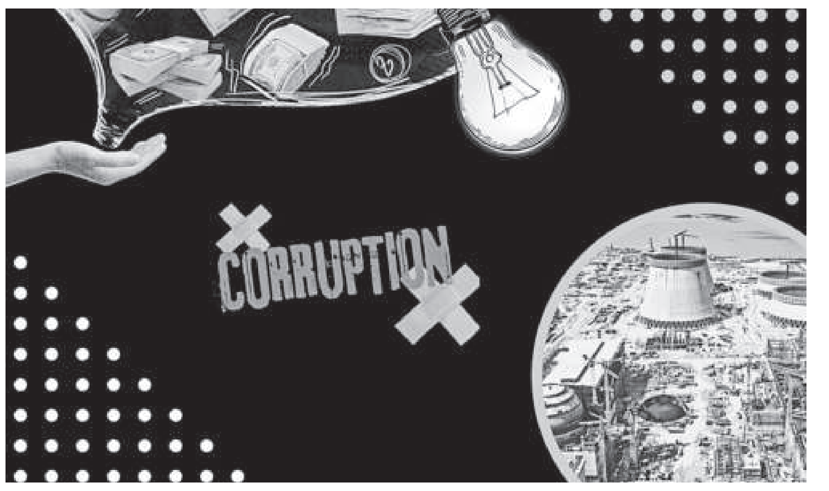
It is important that we remember the failings of the past, so that we do not replicate them moving forward. Now, there is an interim government—we know its limitations but we must also keep in mind its primary responsibilities. This government came to power through a mass uprising, so it has public support and responsibility to initiate some major reforms that other governments did not. Let's consider some of the things this government can do in the next one or two months.

First and foremost, inquiry committees should be formed to investigate the unprecedented number of killings and acts of repression that we have witnessed. The responsible persons, organisations, and policies that enabled these actions should be brought to justice and amended through a special tribunal. An example must be set so that this sort of mass killing can never happen again in Bangladesh.

Massive corruption, bad deals, bank robberies, loan defaults, and over-expenditures in megaprojects have been commonplace in the last 15 years. The government should publish a white paper and make public all the deals, contracts and excesses of the previous regime. The next duty would be to analyse the large amount of loans incurred—Bangladesh has never had such high levels of foreign loans. The people of Bangladesh are yet to fully realise the steep amount they will need to repay as a result of these incredibly expensive contracts, since the deals were never made public. Moving forward, we must demand full disclosure of each loan or contract signed by our government, as the burden for paying them will fall on us.

Then there are the megaprojects, which have been touted as the achievements of the government; yet many of them are actually disastrous, unreliable, and risk-prone, threatening the security of the country. It is essential for this government to review these megaprojects. One of the most prominent ones is the Rampal project which has the potential to destroy the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world that also acts as a protective barrier against natural disasters. Enough national and international research has been conducted by experts clearly highlighting the dangerous impact of these projects. Moreover, there has been a decade-long people's movement against this project with support being attained from every section of society.

There is also the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, which poses an existential threat. It is unusual to find a nuclear power plant in such a densely populated place filled with forests and rivers. If the risk of such a nuclear plant were ever to become a reality, the lives of tens of millions of people would be endangered. Even the nuclear waste management system of a project like this would put the country at risk.



The energy sector has become an area of large-scale corruption in Bangladesh.

VISUAL: **STAR**

The decision is clear: projects like Rampal, Rooppur, and Bashkhali must be cancelled. The interim government can initiate the process of doing so. Now, a question may arise: Since we have already taken loans for these projects and spent such an exorbitant amount of money, won't this be a massive financial loss to not continue? My answer is this: if a government, without the consent of its people, takes a loan that is against their well-being, it is not the people's responsibility to repay that loan. It is a case of odious debt, a legal doctrine explaining this very phenomenon. However, should we not receive that exemption and have to repay the loan, I would still argue that cancelling such projects would be more beneficial than going ahead with them in the long run.

The energy sector has become an area of large-scale corruption in Bangladesh. In the name of capacity charges, some companies receive hundred thousand crores of taka. Previously, the prime minister was in charge of this ministry, along with the state minister, aided by some local and international private companies. The companies that benefitted from unethical arrangements included well-known names such as Summit, Beximco, Bashundhara, United and many others in Bangladesh; in India, it consisted of NTPC, Adani, and Ambani; in Russia, it was Rosatom and Gazprom; in the US, the organisations were Chevron, ConocoPhillips; and in China it was China Power etc.

The entire power and energy policy needs to be revised. The Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act must be repealed immediately. Right now, we are running on a master plan made entirely by foreign consultants. We have to reject this and cancel all the environmentally disastrous, import-oriented, foreign-funded projects and opt for environmentally-friendly, safe, non-corrupt projects. This will not only reduce the price of gas and electricity, but eliminate the threat posed to the environment. We can achieve this by developing Bangladesh's capacity in natural gas exploration and by pushing for renewable energy. The interim government must initiate this journey.

Next, we have to prioritise the major but neglected sectors crucial for public well-being which include public education, public healthcare, and public transportation. For far too long, we've seen low budget allocation and high irregularities in these sectors. Meanwhile, public transportation remains under the auspices of corrupt business owners. Should the spirit of the 2018 Road Safety movement be revived, and the demands made then be fulfilled now, the public transport sector can be greatly rectified. After independence, great emphasis had been placed on education and health; yet we have backtracked completely. Every government has failed in this regard. If the current government focuses on fixing these sectors, their credibility will increase, and based on this, stronger institutions may be developed.

> **The entire power and energy policy needs to be revised. The Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act must be repealed immediately. Right now, we are running on a master plan made entirely by foreign consultants. We have to reject this and cancel all the environmentally disastrous, import-oriented, foreign-funded projects and opt for environmentally friendly, safe, non-corrupt projects.**

The conversation of reforming the constitution should also start. We need to figure out how the constitution has become exceedingly discriminatory, autocratic, and anti-people. How was power taken from the people? Why does the prime minister hold so much power in one hand? The constitution includes clauses for gender, class, ethnic and religious inclusion and also includes clauses against all sorts of discrimination. Yet, these promises have not been fulfilled due to opposite clauses in the same constitution.

Finally, along with institutional reforms for sustainable democracy, the VIP culture must be eradicated. Public offices should transform to serve the public without hassle. There must be accountability and transparency for all actions taken by government offices.

Understanding the auto-pass trap

Maisha Islam Monamee
is a student of Institute of Business Administration (IBA) at the University of Dhaka and a contributor at The Daily Star.

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

When the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exams were cancelled in the face of intense student protests, it seemed like a swift and empathetic solution to an urgent crisis. After all, the protests were marked by significant trauma and loss, and many students were left physically and emotionally scarred. On the surface, offering an automatic pass might appear to be a compassionate acknowledgement of their struggles. Moreover, the decision aligns with the desire to avoid exacerbating the students' stress and discomfort. However, as someone who experienced the "auto-pass" phenomenon first-hand during the pandemic, I can attest that such decisions are rarely as simple as they seem. The "auto-pass" trap—though it may provide immediate relief—carries hidden costs and long-term consequences.

To begin with, a major drawback of the auto-pass system is its potential to undermine the academic integrity of the examination process. HSC exams are designed to assess students' knowledge and preparedness at a critical juncture of their academic journey. By cancelling these exams and relying on past results or alternate assessments, we risk diluting the standards that make the HSC a meaningful benchmark. Another critical concern is the issue of fairness. Using SSC results as a stand-in for HSC exams feels like being measured by a ruler that is too short for the task. The HSC exams are meant to challenge students at a higher level, reflecting their progression and readiness for higher education. By bypassing these exams, we risk creating an inequitable situation where some students are unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged based on their past performance.

> **Quick fixes rarely lead to lasting solutions, especially when it comes to education. The auto-pass decision sets a concerning precedent for how crises are managed in our education system. While student voices are crucial and must be heard, decisions impacting large numbers of individuals should be made based on comprehensive consideration and long-term implications, rather than immediate pressure.**

There must be students who have prepared diligently for their exams, especially those who previously struggled and hoped to improve their grades. The auto-pass system overlooks their hard work and sacrifices. This not only impacts their academic journey, but also their sense of achievement and self-worth. I have many friends from the 2020 HSC batch who were unable to apply for admission tests due to average grades. Some of them had to take a gap year before applying abroad, while my English-medium peers opted for the next session of A Levels.

The "auto-pass" label can also have a lingering impact on students' futures. The tag sticks for longer than one would think—through university applications, job interviews, and even casual conversations. It might imply to others that these students did not earn their qualifications through traditional means, potentially leading to doubts about their capabilities. The social and psychological impact of this stigma can be significant, affecting their self-esteem and how they are perceived by peers and potential employers.

Moreover, we need to acknowledge the fact that the protests leading up to the cancellation of the exams were far from orderly, and the decision to cancel the exams under the pressure of a mob-like protest raises serious questions about administrative decision-making. It suggests that significant policy changes can be achieved through long marches and mass mobilisation, rather than through thoughtful analysis and consideration. Effective crisis management requires a balance of empathy and fairness, along with decisions that uphold the integrity of systems while addressing immediate needs. This is a classic case of how the immediate demands of a vocal group can sometimes overshadow a more balanced and considered approach. Decisions like these should be made through representative discourse and after consideration of all sides.

Instead of opting for a blanket auto-pass policy, several alternative approaches could have been taken to balance compassion with fairness. For instance, providing special provisions for students who were directly affected by the protests—those who were injured or deeply traumatised—could have been one solution. These students could have been given the option to take their exams later when they were ready to perform at their best. Alternatively, implementing modified assessment methods could have provided flexibility for students facing exceptional circumstances. For example, offering project-based evaluations or oral exams could have allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge in a different format. The authorities could have also prioritised mental health support and counselling for the affected students to help them cope with their trauma and stress.

Quick fixes rarely lead to lasting solutions, especially when it comes to education. The auto-pass decision sets a concerning precedent for how crises are managed in our education system. While student voices are crucial and must be heard, decisions impacting large numbers of individuals should be made based on comprehensive consideration and long-term implications, rather than immediate pressure. As students, we deserve a system that values our hard work and gives us the chance to prove ourselves in a level playing field. Anything less is a disservice to us all.

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Bangladesh can learn from Tunisia's experience

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KALLOL MUSTAFA

The overthrow of dictator Sheikh Hasina in the recent mass uprising has given rise to new optimism in Bangladesh's long struggle for democratic transition. Learning from the failure of democratic transition after the 90's mass uprising, public opinion has been formed in favour of various institutional reforms including the country's constitution. In this context, lessons need to be learned from the failure and success of institutional reforms in other countries of the world.

The pragmatic and consensus-based politics exhibited by Tunisian political leaders and civil society groups in their struggle for democratic transition can be a good case study, as mentioned in *The Tunisian Revolution and Democratic Transition (2022)* by Mohammad Dawood Sofi. From Tunisia's experiences of success and failure, we can understand what to do and what not to do in the path of democratic transition.

Tunisian dictator Ben Ali was ousted from power in a mass uprising in January 2011. After that, to break free from the old authoritarian rule and initiate a democratic transition, a decision was made to elect a National Constituent Assembly (NCA) to draft a new constitution. A commission named High Authority for the Achievement of the Revolution Objectives (HAARO), simply known as the Ben Achour Commission, was formed to frame new electoral laws and procedures for the smooth conduct of elections for NCA. The commission with 155 members had a broad representation of legal experts, scholars, civil society organisations, and political parties. Following a free and fair election, a 217-member NCA was elected in October 2011 with representatives of various political parties.

Under the leadership of this elected constituent assembly, several specialised committees were formed to draft the various parts of the constitution, including the preamble, general principles, fundamental rights, government structure, judiciary etc. The committees prepared the drafts by taking advice from many local and foreign legal and constitutional experts. Different social groups including labour unions, women's and human rights organisations also participated in this work providing advice and playing a role in resolving disagreements among political parties on different sections of the constitution. In this way, the draft constitution was finalised based on the active participation and opinions of people from all walks of life and was adopted as the constitution of Tunisia in January 2014 by a two-thirds majority vote in the NCA.

Unlike in Egypt, where two constitutions were quickly drafted by appointed committees with little public debate or input within two years after the Arab Spring, the elected NCA in Tunisia drafted the constitution based on two years of arguments and compromises. This constitution was termed as the most progressive one in the Arab world, in which freedom of expression, religious freedom, and equality of men and women were guaranteed. The 2014 constitution tried to balance the powers of the president and the prime minister. According to the constitution, the ministries of defence and foreign affairs would be in the hands of the president and the remaining ministries would be controlled by the prime minister. The parliamentary election would be based on the proportional representation system. The president would be elected by general, free and direct elections, who would appoint the prime minister consulting with the parliament. The constitution legally mandated the Independent High Authority for Elections (ISIE) which was formed by the NCA in January 2014 by secret ballot and with a two-thirds majority of the NCA. ISIE has been provided with its own budget, and a provision prohibits the removal of members without specific reasons prescribed by law. ISIE held a series of fair and impartial elections—both parliamentary and presidential—in 2014 and 2019 which furthered Tunisia's democratic transition.

The elected NCA in Tunisia drafted the constitution based on two years of arguments and compromises. This constitution was termed as the most progressive one in the Arab world, in which freedom of expression, religious freedom, and equality of men and women were guaranteed. The 2014 constitution tried to balance the powers of the president and the prime minister.

However, the political parties that came to power through these elections could not solve Tunisia's economic, social and security issues. Problems such as unemployment, inflation, corruption and inequality again fuelled public discontent. Added to that were the terrorist attacks of various Jihadi groups. Demonstrations intensified in January 2021 to protest the failure to deal with the Covid pandemic, the economic crisis and police brutalities. Exploiting this public discontent, President Kais Saeed, a retired law professor, who won the 2019 election by a landslide, suspended the parliament and dismissed the prime minister in July 2021. And in doing so, he used Article 80 of Tunisia's 2014 constitution, which empowers the president to take "extraordinary measures" for a specified period of time on matters of national security and sovereignty. But first suspending and then dissolving parliament under Article 80 was unconstitutional as the article mandated that the prime minister and the parliamentary speaker be consulted and that the parliament remain functional during such exceptional measures. Unfortunately, the one body that could adjudicate whether Article 80 was appropriately applied was the constitutional court, which still did not exist due to the inability of the parliament to agree on the court's membership.

Exploiting this situation, President Kais Said drafted a new constitution in June 2022 that would reverse Tunisia's democratic transition. Then in July 2022, in a controversial referendum held in the face of strong objections and boycotts by opposition parties where voter turnout was only 30.5 percent, the new constitution was adopted, effectively transforming the Tunisian government into a presidential autocracy.

Notable among the reasons for this reversal of Tunisia's democratic transition within a decade of the fall of the dictator are: extreme political polarisation, especially between secular and Islamist parties; failure to address economic problems such as inequality, unemployment and inflation; terrorist attacks by various jihadist groups that sway public opinion in favour of authoritarian action; various weaknesses of the constitution including ambiguities regarding the distribution of powers between the prime minister and the president, lack of protection mechanism to prevent misuse of Article 80 of the constitution, weak judiciary, inadequate mechanism for resolution of differences between the president, prime minister and parliament etc. Besides, the 2014 constitution did not give due importance to ensuring various social and economic rights of the people, which acted as a catalyst behind the erosion of the constitution's popularity.

The positive aspect of Tunisia's constitutional reform was the democratic process of drafting the constitution through an elected National Constituent Assembly based on the opinions of people of various ideologies. For this reason, Tunisia was exceptional while many other countries in the Arab world that were freed from autocracy in the contemporary period quickly fell into military rule or civil war. On the other hand, the democratic transition of Tunisia faces major obstacles due to the political divisiveness based on identity and the inability of the political classes to solve the long-standing economic problems such as inequality, unemployment and inflation by utilising the political freedom enshrined in the new constitution.

It is important to learn from this experience of Tunisia as Bangladesh embarks on a democratic transformation journey.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki holds a copy of the country's new constitution after signing it in Tunis on January 27, 2014.

How will Bangladesh-China relations shape up?

Farid Erkizia Bakht
is a political analyst.

FARID ERKIZIA BAKHT

If Bangladesh is suspended within the geopolitical tripod of India, China and the United States, where are we positioning now? The current discourse suggests that priorities are set where the near-neighbour with the largest GDP on the planet only gets bronze, not silver, and certainly not gold.

Beijing keeps its customary quiet demeanour, scrupulously keeping to its decades-long policy of not publicly interfering in internal matters. They are, however, quite interested in the events of the Bengal delta. The *Global Times* on August 12 noted that Donald Lu's visit in May was seen by some as "part of a strategy to pressure Hasina into acting against China." Liu Zongzi, director of the Center of South Asia Studies at the Shanghai Institute for International Studies, guessed that the reason for the US "seeking to overthrow her [Hasina]" was "(her non-compliance) with the US on many issues."

Myanmar and St Martin's Island

Let's chat about St Martin's Island, a tiny, three square-kilometre coral outpost, as referred to in Chinese media. I visited the island—also known as *Narikel Jinjira*—in 2001, staying there for a night—a time when it was still not on the tourist trail. It took mere minutes to walk from one end to the other. Could this fragile place really be the location for a US base, to add to their 800-plus others around the globe? Eight kilometres off the coast of Arakan, some suggest it could be a listening post and a forward deployment point. In the age of drones, could one intervene in Arakan and the rest of Myanmar? It reminds us how Bangladesh and Myanmar security forces faced off each other in 2018.

Whether it is St Martin's or Teknaf is not the issue. Beijing is naturally alarmed by the civil war in Myanmar, with which it shares a long porous border. Instability in this resource-rich place directly affects Yunnan. Given that the US is confronting China in the Taiwan Straits, it is plausible that a "second front" might appear on the Irrawaddy (Ayeyarwady). If Dhaka shifts from Delhi to Washington's orbit with this new administration (or possibly a BNP one), Beijing will naturally look at the security implications across the Naf River and beyond.

More than a million Rohingya remain trapped in an open air confinement in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar. Imploring China to assist with their repatriation begs the question: why are they going to spend enormous amounts of political capital in dealing with the brutal Tatmadaw or the Arakan Army? Dhaka needs to formulate a much broader policy on Myanmar, which takes into consideration Beijing's anxieties and seeks common ground between the two. That would be a first. Besides the Rohingya, how often have our political elites ever evinced an interest in Myanmar—and thus China?

VISUAL: **ANWAR SOHEL**

There was one time. In 2012, there were talks of Chinese willingness to build a direct road from Kunming via Mandalay to Teknaf, which was shelved. India leaned on Yangon to block that lifeline. Later, Delhi also put an end to the longer route from Kunming to Kolkata, via Dhaka, which had been rebranded as BCIM (Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor).

Treating China like a cash cow?

This is where we come to the nub of the problem. We see China as just a giant foreign aid ATM. They are ready to lend and build as part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but they also seek a deeper partnership.

Even though I had my fears, I wrote a piece in this daily in July, titled "Mission to China." I was shocked how disastrous the trip to Beijing turned out to be. Last year, in discussions in Dhaka, I was led to believe that the Awami League government would shift dramatically to Beijing after securing its victory in the January 7 (s)election. But would Delhi allow such a thing? This year, Sheikh Hasina made not one, but two, visits to Delhi. The second one looked like a dressing down by the South Block. Chinese offers to invest over a billion dollars in saving the little water that came from the Teesta River were to be rejected. So were any major breakthroughs. So, the former foreign minister, Hasan Mahmud, and associates bandied about the sum of money they would ask out of China. $5 billion worth of yuan, which became $2 billion. More infrastructure—easy to syphon commissions from, perhaps.

This was capped off by a severe breach of diplomatic protocol. Hasina and her courtiers tore up the schedule and returned one night earlier. Mahmud claimed it was because she was terribly ill. Even if it was because they got wind of the seriousness of the student revolt, the then foreign minister and colleagues could have remained. But no, they returned—all smiles. Criticisms were batted away with a prime ministerial diagnosis that our heads had to be examined.

The interim government must talk about jobs, industrialisation and the partnership with China. Last month, the issue, at its ultimate core, was not only the unfair distribution of bureaucratic posts; it was also the profound lack of decent employment in the private sector. To solve that, one needs a policy, a strategy and shedloads of capital.

As a gift, China upgraded the relationship to that of a Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership. Has anyone noticed much of any dialogue or observations about this?

That was then, this is now

Over the last decade, we have been unable to work with China to build a new industrial export sector to wean us away from our dangerous dependency on the RMG sector. Jagaran Chakma's report in this daily last month detailed the painful odyssey of the Chinese Economic and Industrial Zone. The 784-acre site in Chattogram was allocated for Chinese industry. Intended to create as many as 200,000 jobs, it is still inoperative for eight long years.

The interim government must talk about jobs, industrialisation and the partnership with China. Last month, the issue, at its ultimate core, was not only the unfair distribution of bureaucratic posts; it was also the profound lack of decent employment in the private sector. To solve that, one needs a policy, a strategy and shedloads of capital. Right now, only China offers that quantity of capital and expertise to invest in new industries. Supply chains, component-producing factories, industrial clusters are all exporting to earn dollars and yuan. This should form the basis of the developmental discourse, and it should be steered towards modern industry and associated technology.

In 2024, the unipolar world of yesteryear has disappeared. China is the manufacturing core of the world. It is the largest consumer market, too. It is just that we have little to sell to them, hence the urgent necessity to set up newer production lines to create higher skilled jobs.

Can Md Touhid Hossain convince us that Bangladesh has not moved merely from the Indian leg of the tripod directly to a distant Western power? I would like to hear more about how Bangladesh will work with China, to genuinely further mutual interests. This is still a least developed country. Tens of millions of young Bangladeshis are rightly impatient. Time is short.

ESSAY

Manufacturing praise

How honest are book reviews in Bangladesh?

ILLUSTRATION: **MAISHA SYEDA**

The harsh truth is that without solicitation, very few books will be written about. These days, published authors end up doing significant legwork, from supplying media contacts to their publishers, to requesting and emailing scores of academics, journalists, and writers for blurbs, endorsements, and reviews.

SHAHRIAR SHAAMS

Sometime ago, a writer reached out to me with a request. His debut novel was being published later in the year and he was wondering if I would be open to reviewing it. I was aware of the book, having read it when it was still only a draft. The author was not someone I only knew, either, but a mentor who had supported my writing in many ways, even through monetary means. Refusing him, then, felt tantamount to betrayal. But I had to in the end, and though he understood, I still came out of the exchange feeling guilty of being unhelpful or, worse, ungrateful.

Much has been written about the machinations that go behind the scenes of book criticism. *The Economist*, of all places, last year mourned the death of the "hatchet-job" in a piece called "Critics are getting less cruel. Alas", saying that the book review reads often like "a smug inside job". Indeed, a cursory review of book criticism in newspapers in Bangladesh lays bare the fact that it is very much the case here as well. Book reviews written by a student or well-wisher of the author is unsurprisingly common. When an unfortunate staff-writer is assigned a book, they are often nudged into writing a glowing review or, if that is not possible, a tempered, "balanced" review. The latter is a phenomenon I had to personally deal with during my time working as a staff writer for literary supplements. Far from being "balanced", the term is used to refer to reviews where the meagre amount of positives of the book is amplified throughout the piece, after which the writer is free to add in a token few lines on what held the book back. I am of course to be blamed for this as well, as I too had "adjusted" a few times, caving into the pressures of producing a "balanced" review.

Mir Arif, a Bangladeshi writer based in the US, with whom I had the pleasure of working alongside as a staff-writer, says of his experience reviewing books in Bangladesh: "A major challenge was learning about the writers' backgrounds and their literary associations, which was somehow important in the existing review culture...In editorial meetings, the editors often discussed their views on the writer even before I read the book. As bad as it sounds, editors' views often influenced my reviews, sometimes even after I had submitted my drafts. On top of it, there was a general tendency to overpraise Bangladeshi literature..."

Bangladeshi writing in English is consistently assessed in this way. Their purported excellence is taken for granted. In an interesting piece by Usraat Fahmidah, "Why don't Bangladeshi books reach international award shelves?" (*The Daily Star*, 2022), the blame on why our writers never seem to win Bookers or the DSC prize is put on literary racism, uneven output, or even a lack of interest in pursuing literature in the language, but curiously there is not one mention on the literary qualities of the books in question by any of the luminaries who had been interviewed. I do not intend to downplay the obviously real factors that the essay talks about, nor am I of the opinion that *all* of Bangladeshi-literature in English is second-rate, but to completely omit any discussion on whether these books deserved to win on *literary* grounds comes from an understanding that any such critique would disservice a fellow countryman and a burgeoning literary scene.

Those hankering over how we must present (via review) "our" writers positively to a "western" audience, because otherwise Bangladeshi literature in English would not get international recognition and respect, must explain how supporting "our" writers only ends up meaning that one has to unconditionally stump for these books and put them up on a pedestal they may not deserve. Does it not, then, achieve the exact opposite of what they want? Do we not end up looking shallow and tribal? And do we ever wonder where this talk of protecting "our" writers seems to come from? Perhaps from the very class of writers who would want that adulation? Perhaps, one must begin to think that it is contention and not celebration that really strengthens literature.

Ikhtisad Ahmed, author of *Yours, Etcetera* (Bengal Lights Books, 2015), concurs that "Our reviewing culture... is rife with sycophancy, intellectual dishonesty, and protection of class interests..."

Ahmed, who had been no stranger to the backlash of critical reviews here, adds that, "We have eschewed intellectual debates and discussions for a celebration of works that fail to even be mediocre...This not only prevents us from taking the writing of Bangladeshis seriously enough to read and engage with our own widely, but holds us back on the world stage too."

I asked Sarah Anjum Bari, former literary editor at *The Daily Star*, how she dealt with conflicts of interest. She wrote back: "I don't believe in publishing a review just to bash on a book or author, so when we did run a negative review it would be one that still engaged critically with the text and had something valuable to say about it. I sometimes got in touch with the author in advance and gave them a heads up if a negative review of their work were about to come out. I also tried to push back on reviews that simply described and summarised the text—which is usually a sign of the reviewer not wanting to share their honest opinions on the text—so we would always send the draft back asking for more analysis. Ideally, we tried not to have a text reviewed by an author's friend (though this is honestly difficult to maintain in a place like Bangladesh where the community is so close knit)..."

It is not shocking to learn that there is an unhealthy overlap of friend and critic in book reviews here and an evangelical need to promote one's own for the collective cause is present among us. I am always distrustful of the praise I see, for instances of a friend of the author masquerading as a generous, conscious critic are numerous. The book review cannot be an advertisement. It is unfair to be a marketer to an unsuspecting reader.

The harsh truth is that without solicitation, very few books will be written about. These days, published authors end up doing significant legwork, from supplying media contacts to their publishers, to requesting and emailing scores of academics, journalists, and writers for blurbs, endorsements, and reviews. How successful this solicitation is also depends on factors such as class. Well-off and well-connected authors tend to do better. How likely is it then to envision a critical appraisal of these well-connected authors in newspaper pages with personal connections, if one can be frank? Even when their works deserve praise, it is praise that comes out as suspect. Is this the environment through which we are to make literary waves?

Reviewers, in turn, have increasingly become grifters. Far from suffering through the nauseating experience of writing something they may not mean, they enthusiastically heap praise in a bid to be agreeable, or perhaps in hopes of similar treatment when their time arrives, or even for a recommendation letter for an MFA. If nothing, a friendship can be on the table. In a piece in *Esquire* by Isle McElroy, "The Rise of Literary Friendships", the writer asks, "Are writers clinging to each other for support because, as publishing houses consolidate and advances decline, other writers are all we really have for support? Have the crabs in the barrel begun to hold claws?"

From the perspective of South Asia, this has been the case for a lot longer with the absence of needed institutions and opportunities. I believe this very sensibility has significantly contributed to writers receiving undeserving praise in the name of support.

Support is necessary in any case, but book critics must understand they should be servants to the text. When the Master is kind and original, they must capitulate to the magic, and when it is derivative and cruel, one must start planning a beheading. In the course of reviewing books in so many years (the first review I had written for this paper had been over a decade ago as a teenager), there were times I had gone on to worship a writer's books and times when I wished for their early demise. Never did I have the urge to be their friend.

Shahriar Shaams *has written for* Dhaka Tribune, The Business Standard, *and* The Daily Star. *Find him on instagram: @shahriar.shaams.*

THE SHELF

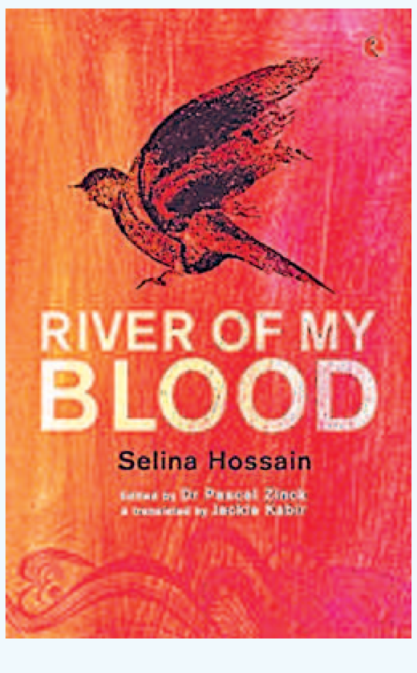
4 books to read in celebration of Women in Translation month

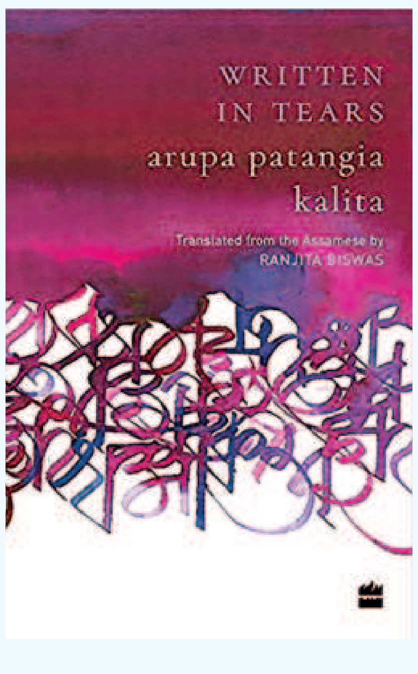
There was a wide array of options from European to South American works, as well as an encouraging emergence of Southeast Asian literature.

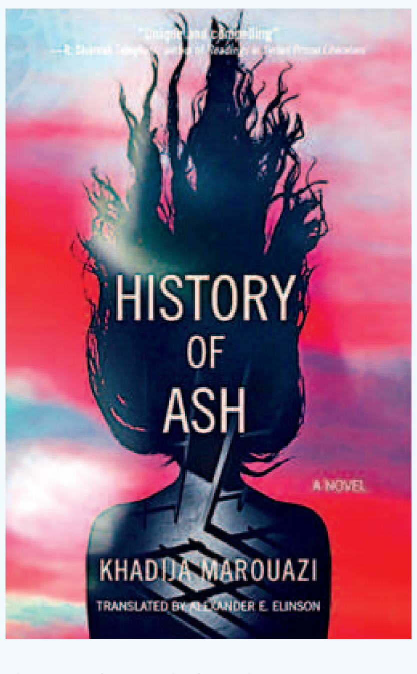
NUR-E-JANNAT ALIF

Women in Translation Month is an annual celebration that toasts to women authors from around the globe who write in languages other than English. With the growing interest in translated fiction, it is refreshing to note that curating this year's list was relatively easier than last year's. There was a wide array of options from European to South American works, as well as an encouraging emergence of Southeast Asian literature. However, it is worth noting that the selection of titles by Bangladeshi female authors (or South Asian authors, in general) translated into English remains limited.

JAWBONE
NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST
MÓNICA OJEDA
TRANSLATED BY SARAH BOOKER







JAWBONE
Mónica Ojeda, Sarah Booker (Translator)
Coffee House Press, 2022

Students of the Delta Bilingual Academy, Fernanda and Annelise are more sisters than friends, impossible to separate, one and the same. Every day after school, Fernanda, Annelise, and their friends assemble to embark on a sinister adventure, one that is simultaneously thrilling and increasingly perilous. They have their own conception of God—albeit introduced by Annelise—and their rituals are eerily anomalous. However, this is not the only secret Fernanda and Annelise share.

RIVER OF MY BLOOD
Selina Hossain, Jackie Kabir (Translator)
Rupa Publications India, 2016

A powerful and heart-rending narrative of love and loss, *River of My Blood* follows Boori, a spirited and resilient young girl, as she navigates the complexities of adulthood. After marrying an older relative, Boori struggles with the stigma of infertility and later confronts the challenges of raising a son who is born deaf and mute. With the Muktijuddho engulfing the coast of her village, Haldi, the now-widowed Boori must face the most life-altering decision she has ever had to make. Not only is this book a gripping portrayal of the Liberation War, but it also advocates for women's rights and stands firm against patriarchy, leaving an indelible impact on readers long after they finish the last page.

WRITTEN IN TEARS
Arupa Patangia Kalita, Ranjita Biswas (Translator)
HarperPerennial, 2015

Written In Tears is an emotive collection of eight short stories that delve into the decades-long violence in Assam, exploring its profound impact on women. Originally written in Assamese, these stories portray strong female characters who, despite enduring unimaginable suffering, manage to rise above their hardships. In one story, a woman witnesses her husband's family grappling with the absence of her insurgent brother-in-law. In another, a girl's life is forever altered after a brutal rape. Kalita's writing vividly captures the hollow vein of violence, the oppression of women, and the often senseless nature of patriarchy. Through her personal experiences, she transports readers to an Assam caught amid violent uprisings, where ideologies clash, innocent lives are destroyed, and women suffer both physical and emotional violations—all in the name of freedom.

HISTORY OF ASH: A NOVEL
Khadija Marouazi, Alexander E. Elinson (Translator)
Hoopoe, 2023

Prisoners during the "Lead Years" of Morocco, a man and a woman, wrestle against systematic oppression for the sake of emancipation. Shifting between past and present, Mouline and Leila recount their experiences both inside the prison cell and beyond it, navigating the torture chamber, the judicial operation, and the challenges they confronted after their exemption. Narrated in vivid detail, their strategies for survival and resistance offer clear and often intense reflections. Harrowing yet resilient, this is the book about fortitude, power and the sheer will to freedom.

This is an excerpt. Find the full list on *The Daily Star* and DS Books' websites.

Nur-E-Jannat Alif *is a gender studies major and part-time writer who dreams of authoring a book someday. Find her at @literatureinsolitude on Instagram or send her your book/movie/television recommendations at nurejannatalif@gmail.com.*

Star
SPORT
DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 22, 2024, BHADRA 7, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS AND GTV
Pakistan vs Bangladesh
1st Test, Day 2
Live from 10:45 pm

SONY SPORTS 5
England vs Sri Lanka
1st Test, Day 2
Live from 4:00 pm

BCB'S LEADERSHIP CHANGE

On Tuesday morning, it was reported that a meeting of the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) directors would occur the next day at the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Directors Iftekhar Ahmed Mithu and Khaled Mahmud Sujon confirmed this to The Daily Star, but CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury remained unreachable.

Veteran organiser Ahmed Sajjadul Alam Bobby, meanwhile, claimed he had not received any notice, despite still being a board director. He had been asked to resign by the National Sports Council, but unlike Jalal Yunus, another NSC-nominated director who stepped down, he refused.

Around midnight, BCB confirmed the emergency board meeting's location (Ministry of Youth and Sports' conference room) and time (Wednesday 11:00 am) -- and that it had requested a secure venue due to the country's current situation -- further informing that there would be no media access, only recorded clips, images, and a media release afterward.

Eight board directors and former skipper Faruque Ahmed, who replaced Yunus as an NSC-nominated director, alongside CEO Nizamuddin attended the meeting, where a minute's silence was observed for the lives lost in the historic student-led anti-discrimination movement.

The meeting began by approving the previous board discussions. Faruque officially joined as a director, and Nazmul Abedeen Fahim was approved as a councillor, later joining the meeting as a new NSC-nominated director.

The discussion then turned to the ICC Women's T20 World Cup, which had been relocated to the UAE. Lastly, the board addressed Nazmul Hassan Papon, who had notified them via email the previous night of his resignation as board president.

Afterwards, the discussion turned to who will be Papon's successor. Iftekhar proposed Faruque, supported by Akram. With no other proposals, Faruque was declared the new president, concluding the hour-long meeting.

PHOTO : FIROZ AHMED

Faruque sheds light on his way of operation

SPORTS REPORTER

*Former national team captain and selector **Faruque Ahmed** became the first-ever cricketer to become the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president on Wednesday. Following his appointment, Faruque talked to the media on various issues, providing an idea about his way of operation in the coming days, during a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur. The excerpts of the press brief are as follows:*

On being BCB president

I am very proud that I have been given a very important responsibility. If I consider my playing career too, it has been more than 42 years that I have served in various roles as a player, and captain and during my two terms in the selection committee.

On changing system

We could improve more in particular sectors, something that didn't happen. Our responsibility is to rebuild the system. There are times when you aren't able to do everything as outside pressure remains. I hope to enact a good system this time.

We have to focus on the constitution by which directors and presidents are elected. Next year there is an election and before that, we have to work on the constitution so that those who love cricket truly and want to do something are prioritised. The criterion for the stakeholders whom we want to onboard would be cricket's development. If someone says that the corruption in the board can't be completely ousted, I will not believe that person.

On media's role

Do not blow things out of proportion. And, regarding criticism, points must be raised that are most important for our cricket.

On his level of interference

I had once resigned complaining about the system (in 2016 from the post of chief selector). Since I did that, I can assure that there is no possibility of that (unwanted interference). The cricket board is the policy maker, so do not mix it up with selection. For instance, the board will have policies regarding certain players and that instruction will be given to the selection panel. It will be a policy matter, and there won't be any instructions like 'don't take Shakib [Al Hasan], Tamim [Iqbal] or take them'.

On appointment of vice-president and conflict of interest among directors

We will try to implement things according to the constitution as early as possible. A vice-president will be there, and those are in the board will work on avoiding any conflict of interest.

On player-cum politician Shakib

We will discuss Shakib's situation and whether he can continue under the current circumstances. We are also considering adding rules regarding player conduct during tours, including restrictions on endorsements.

On head coach Chandika Hathurusingha

I am not sure about the details of the contract with Chandika Hathurusingha. I still maintain the same stance. I haven't deviated from what I said (not willing to keep Hathurusingha if elected as BCB president). I need to formally review some things. I will see how things should be done, whether we can find someone better or at least someone who can perform well, and then I will talk.

On Tamim Iqbal

It's good if he can play and if he can't play and decides to join the board, I will still be very happy. He has leadership qualities and if guys like him come [to the board], we can do something good.

On corruption

I am aware that there have been many irregularities. It's not possible to fix everything in a day. Over the past 12 years, it has become like Frankenstein. It can't be resolved overnight. However, I assure you that there will be a focus on preventing irregularities that directly impact cricket.

On whether an investigation commission to look into past corruption will be formed

If an investigation commission is formed, its reports will definitely be made public. Regarding an independent commission to look into corruption, we have to seek help from experts as I don't know everything.

BCB PRESIDENTS LIST

Name	Tenue
Faruque Ahmed	21 August 2024 – Till date
Nazmul Hassan Papon	17 October 2012 – 21 August 2024
AHM Mustafa Kamal	23 September 2009 - 17 October 2012
Lt General Sina Ibn Jamali	29 July 2007 - 23 September 2009
M Abdul Aziz	14 November 2006 - 29 July 2007
Mohammad Ali Asghar	26 November 2001 - 14 November 2006
M Akmal Hossain	19 August 2001 - 26 November 2001
Saber Hossain Chowdhury	04 July 1996 - 19 August 2001
A. S. M. Mostafizur Rahman	01 September 1991 - 04 July 1996
Kazi Bahauddin Ahmed	27 December 1990 - 01 September 1991
Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmood	18 February 1987 - 27 December 1990
K. Z. Islam	30 January 1983 - 18 February 1987
Commodore Mujibur Rahman	28 September 1981 - 30 January 1983
S. S. Huda	14 August 1976 - 28 September 1981
Professor Mohammad Yousuf Ali	1972 - 14 August 1976

'Awesome' fielding highlight of Day 1

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh pacer Hasan Mahmud praised his side's fielding, particularly behind the wicket, which remained as the key highlight of day one of the Rawalpindi Test against Pakistan yesterday.

After putting the hosts into bat, Bangladesh bowlers made early inroads and caused jitters, reducing Shan Masood's side to three down for 16 in a rain-delayed first session before Saim Ayub (56) and Saud Shakeel (57 not out) hit fifties to propel Pakistan to 158 for four at stumps.

Bangladesh's first session sizzle could be largely credited to the fielders as Zakir Hasan and wicketkeeper Liton Das took excellent catches.

Zakir, who was stationed at gully, dove acrobatically to the right to take hold of a sharp chance to remove Pakistan opener Abdullah Shafique while Liton lunged down the leg side to take a one-handed screamer to dismiss premier batter Babar Azam.

"It's very important to get help from the fielders. I think the boys were really good in the field. Some of the catches were wonderful today. It really feels great. They were awesome," Hasan told reporters after the day's play.

On a rare day where Tigers practically grabbed everything that came their way, Liton took a regulation catch to send back Pakistan skipper Shan Masood, while Mehedi Hasan Miraz remained alert late in the day, taking another catch to get rid of Saim Ayub.

As expected by the green tinge on the surface, pacers were able to get purchase off the wicket. Hasan and his pace partner Shoriful Islam scalped two wickets each, three with the new ball, and looked far more threatening than the six overs of spin bowled by Miraz and Shakib Al Hasan. Hasan, however, said that the wicket did not entirely behave as expected.

"We've been practising here. The wicket was very green and I thought there was going to be pace and bounce but after the rain came it got a bit tacky and slow," Hasan said.

All sports associations dissolved

SPORTS REPORTER

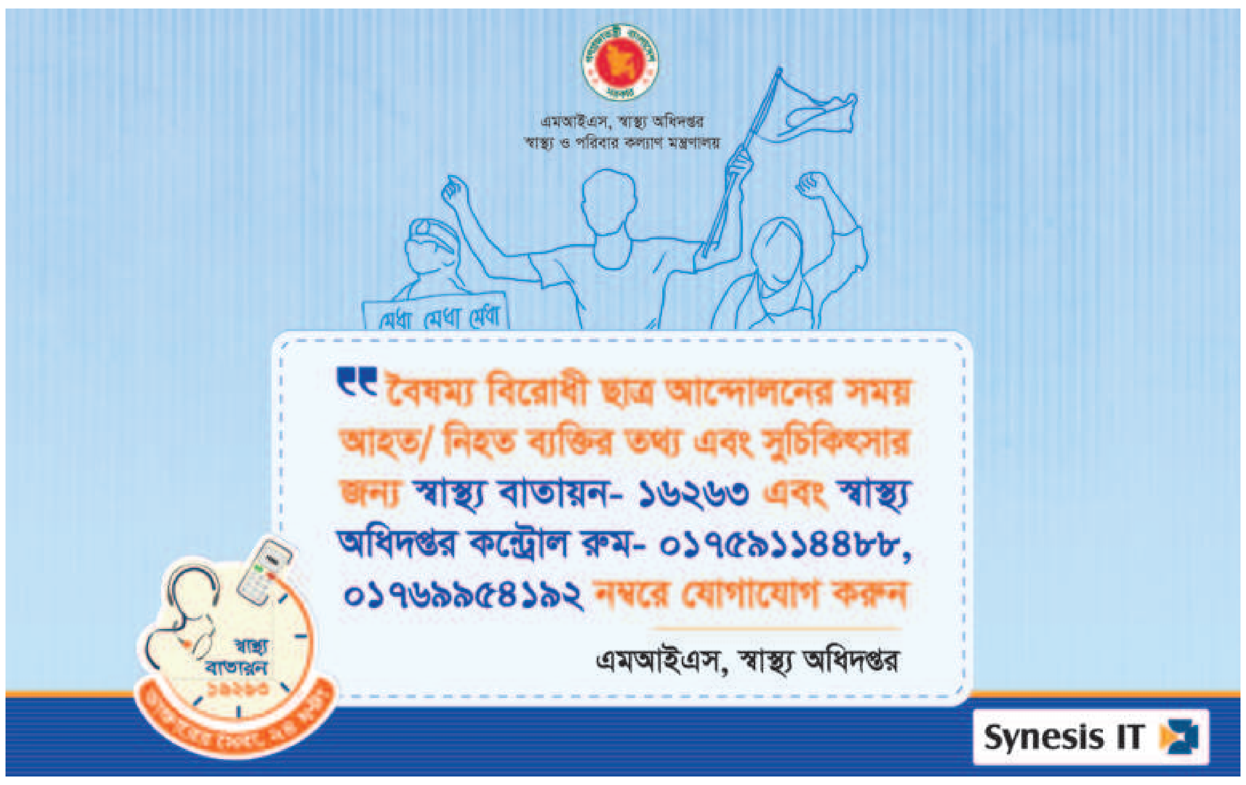
The Youth and Sports Ministry yesterday dissolved all executive committees of divisional, district and upazila sports associations as well as divisional, district and upazila women's sports associations.

"In a bid to keeping activities of all sports associations fair, active, and seamless, all divisional sports associations, divisional women's sports associations, district sports associations, district women's sports associations, upazila sports associations and upazila women's sports associations have been dissolved under the existing law of the government's delegated power," read a circular from the youth and sports ministry.

The authorities concerned [divisional commissioners, district collectors and upazila nirbahi officers] have been asked to form ad-hoc committees comprising of respectable and acceptable sports-loving and sports-related people and send the list of those committees to the National Sports Council for final approval.

England pacer Chris Woakes celebrates taking the wicket of Sri Lanka's Angelo Mathews as the hosts assumed control on the opening day of the first Test in Manchester yesterday. Woakes claimed three wickets, helping England reduce Sri Lanka to 178 for eight at tea.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**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স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়

বৈষম্য বিরোধী ছাত্র আন্দোলনের সময় আহত/ নিহত ব্যক্তির তথ্য এবং সুচিকিৎসার জন্য স্বাস্থ্য বাতায়ন- ১৬২৬৩ এবং স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর কন্ট্রোল রুম- ০১৭৫৯১১৪৪৮৮, ০১৭৬৯৯৫৪১৯২ নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন

এমআইএস, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর

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Students force DU dean to quit

DUTA writes to law adviser describing 'scary situation'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more dean of Dhaka University was forced to resign yesterday in the wake of a student protest.

Different groups of students have been pressing for removal of several other teachers from their administrative and academic roles alleging that they sided with the ousted Awami League government, and failed to provide security to the students during the recent quota reform protest.

Prof AKM Mahbub Hasan, dean of the Faculty of Biological Sciences, resigned yesterday.

Zeenat Huda, general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA), yesterday wrote to the Law Affairs Adviser Asif Nazrul expressing concern over such incidents.

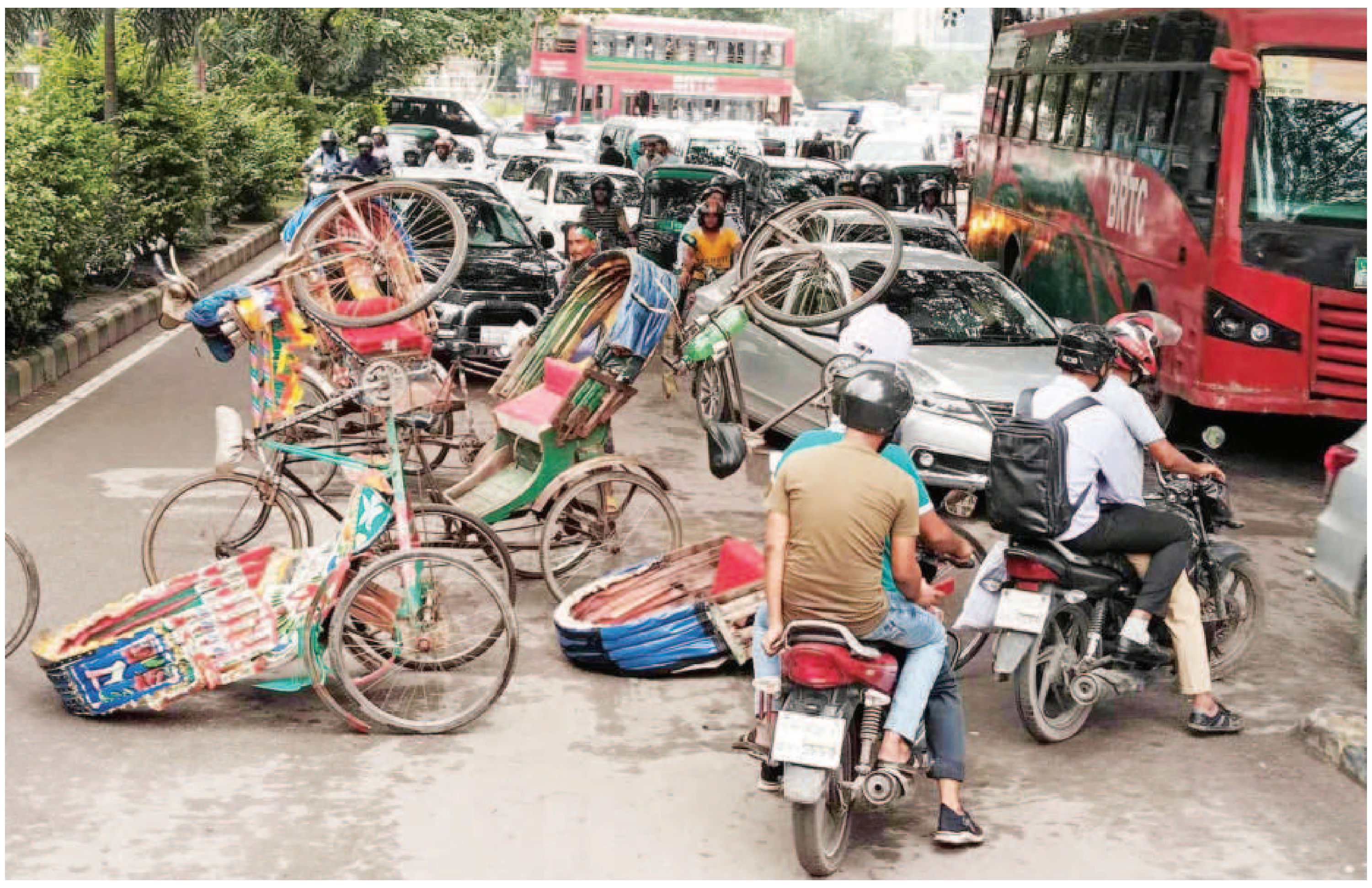
According to witnesses, around 60 students of the Faculty of Biological Sciences gathered in front of the faculty building around 11:00am demanding Mahbub's resignation.

Around 12:30pm, they moved to the Teacher's Quarter building in Fuller Road area where Mahbub resides.

The protesters went inside the apartment complex. A few of them went to Mahbub's apartment and pushed and banged the door. The teacher was not in his apartment at that time.

After learning about the protest, Mahbub got an office staffer to print a resignation letter from the faculty office

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Rickshaw pullers block a part of the road with their vehicles in the capital's Kakrail area yesterday during a demonstration demanding battery-run rickshaws be barred from operating on the city's main thoroughfares. They said they were losing significant income since August 6 when the battery-run rickshaws started plying the streets. PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

BNP's ties with China to deepen further

Says Fakhrul after talks with Chinese ambassador

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the party's relationship with China would deepen further in the coming days.

"Our relationship with China will grow stronger, and it will advance in the future based on mutual assurance, trust, and confidence," he said after a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen at the BNP Chairperson's office in Gulshan.

The meeting between BNP leaders and Chinese representatives was held for the first time in nearly 10 years, according to the sources at BNP.

Fakhrul along with four other BNP leaders took

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Govt should ensure national reconciliation

Macron writes to Yunus; Abbas seeks Dhaka's continuous support for Palestinians

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

French President Emmanuel Macron has said the interim government led by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has an important task of preparing the ground for democratic elections and return to calm and national reconciliation.

"As Bangladesh now enters a period of transition, the interim government you lead will have the important task of preparing the ground for democratic elections and ensuring that a return to calm and national reconciliation can be achieved," he said in a letter to Yunus on Monday.

Macron

Abbas

The French president said he particularly hopes that the joint work of Bangladesh and France aiming at continuously strengthening the bilateral relationship can continue, on essential subjects such as respect for human rights and minorities, adaptation to climate change, and the fight against poverty.

Greeting Yunus, he said he looks forward to working with the chief adviser in meeting the challenges ahead.

In another letter to Prof Yunus, Palestine President Mahmoud Abbas sought the interim government's continued support for the Palestinians until they achieve

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Over Tk 1cr found in raid on office of Hamid Group

Ex-state minister Nasrul's family owns the business

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nasrul Hamid

Members of law enforcement agencies and army raided the office of Hamid Group in Banani early yesterday and recovered Tk 1.05 crore and a pistol.

The drive began at the office in the 13-storey Priyo Prangan Tower on Road-17 around 2:00am ended around noon, police said.

Staffers said four floors of the building are used as the office of Hamid Real Estate Construction Ltd.

The business and the building is owned by the family of former state minister for power, energy, and mineral resources Nasrul Hamid, sources said, adding that one of his brothers look after the business.

"A total of Tk 1.05 crore,

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

Constitutional changes required to prevent return of autocracy

Say student protest organisers at Star roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Changes in political culture and the constitution are obligatory for building an inclusive and better Bangladesh, said students, who led the mass upsurge.

Nine organisers of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement of different campuses also emphasised equal rights for all citizens, and the need for ensuring political parties are more tolerant and that they practice democratic norms within the party.

They joined a roundtable discussion titled "Vision of the Youth" organised by The Daily Star at its office yesterday.

Most of them want an end to the culture of sycophant students' and teachers' politics but were for students' union elections.

Masud Rana, an organiser from Rajshahi University, said the Awami League government's main fault was suppression of dissenting voices. "If the opposition is strong in a state, the government can also be strong. It is necessary for ensuring transparency and checks and balances," he said.

He said the AL had become family-centric.

"It should not be the culture of any other party. All parties should practice democratic norms," he added.

Nazifa Jannat of East West University said the opposition parties were not able to engage people in their earlier movements.

She said the opposition parties never tried to raise public issues, including the protection of their rights. Rather, the parties only tried to obtain power.

"They are only the other side of the coin. We did not oust one regime to replace it with another," she said.

- Silencing dissent main reason behind AL regime's fall
- Opposition parties failed to address public issues
- Proportional representation is parliament proposed
- Parties must practice democratic norms themselves

Arif Sohel, one of the coordinators and a student of Jahangirnagar University, said, "We made our slogans for the movement based on the proclamation of our independence -- equality, human dignity, and social justice. We hope to build the country based on these values."

PHOTO ON PAGE 3

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

3 more cases filed with ICT against Hasina

She also faces 10 fresh cases over killings during protests

STAR REPORT

Three more complaints were filed with the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday accusing former prime minister Sheikh Hasina of committing crimes against humanity and genocide between July 15 and August 5.

Besides, 10 more cases including nine for murders were filed against Hasina.

The former PM now faces 44 cases, including 35 for murders, seven for crimes against humanity and genocide, one for abduction and one for an attack on a BNP procession.

Two lawyers filed three complaints with the ICT on behalf of the fathers of three students killed during the student protests that led a mass uprising which ousted the Awami League-led government on August 5.

"We registered the complaints, and thus the investigation of all cases have started," Ataur Rahman, deputy director (admin) of the investigation agency, told The Daily Star.

Supreme Court lawyer Hujjatul Islam Khan filed a complaint on behalf of Zakir Hossain, father of Foisal Ahmed Shanta, who was killed on July 16 in the Muradpur area of Panchlaish, Chattogram.

The complaint said the killers acted on the directive of the accused.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Pacers shine but Pakistan recover

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pacers Shoriful Islam and Hasan Mahmud gave Bangladesh a bright start on the opening day of the first Test against Pakistan before the hosts recovered from an early batting collapse at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Undoubtedly, Shoriful and Mahmud stole the limelight, picking up two wickets apiece. However, fifties from Saim Ayub (56) and Saud Shakeel (57 not out) enabled Pakistan to reach 158 for four in 41 overs at stumps.

The day's proceedings saw a delayed start due to overnight rain and a wet outfield, leading to the toss taking place at 2:00 pm local time. After Najmul Hossain Shanto elected to field first with a three-pronged pace attack, the decision paid dividends, aided by some fantastic fielding efforts.

Mahmud gave

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

BLUE WORLD CITY
BLUE WORLD CITY
Bank Alfalah
Bank Alfalah

Bangladesh pacer Shoriful Islam celebrates after having key Pakistan batter Babar Azam nick one back to the wicketkeeper as the Tigers took charge of the first session with three quick wickets on the rain-interrupted opening day of the first Test in Rawalpindi yesterday. Pakistan, however, recovered through a 98-run stand between Saim Ayub and Saud Shakeel before the former departed late on the day with the hosts reaching 158 for four at stumps. PHOTO: **AFP**

Blinken leaves ME without Gaza truce

Warns Israel, Hamas 'time is of essence'; 50 Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes

AGENCIES

Top US diplomat Antony Blinken headed home yesterday after failing to secure a Gaza ceasefire, warning both Israel and Hamas his plan may be the last chance to avert a broader war.

The US secretary of state appealed to Hamas to urgently accept a US-backed truce proposal, while also entering into a public spat with Israel over its future presence in the Gaza Strip.

"Time is of the essence," Blinken said after stops in key Arab mediators Qatar and Egypt as well as Israel on his ninth tour of the region aiming to halt the more than 10-month offensive.

"With every passing day, more bad things can happen to more good people who don't deserve it," he said before flying out of Doha.

"This needs to get done, and it needs to get done in the days ahead, and we will do everything possible to get it across the finish line," he said of the truce proposal.

The United States has presented ideas to bridge gaps and, through Qatar and Egypt, pressed Hamas to return to talks this week in Cairo.

But a day after Blinken said US ally Israel was on board, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quoted by Israeli media as disagreeing on a key sticking point.

Netanyahu insisted Israel maintain control of the Philadelphi Corridor, the border between Gaza and Egypt that Israeli forces seized from Hamas, whom Israel says relies on secret tunnels to bring in weapons.

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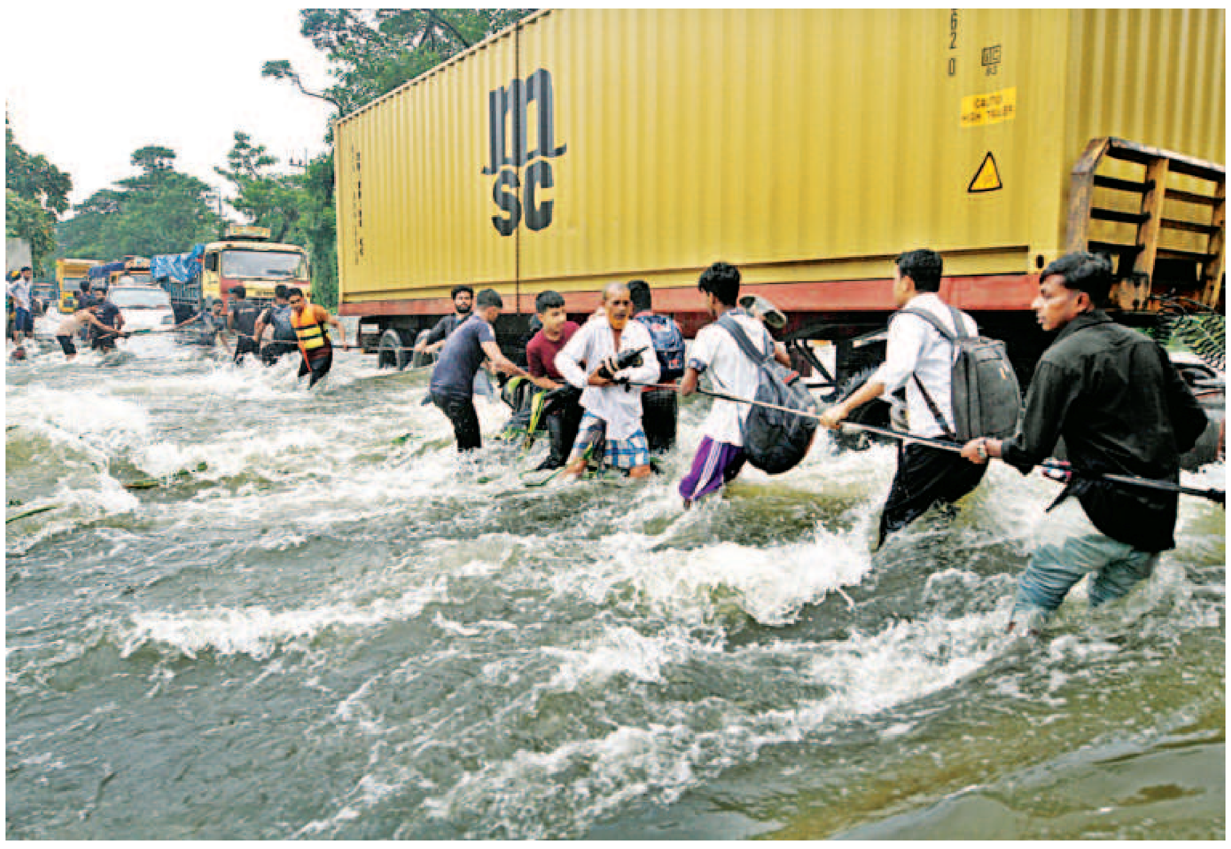
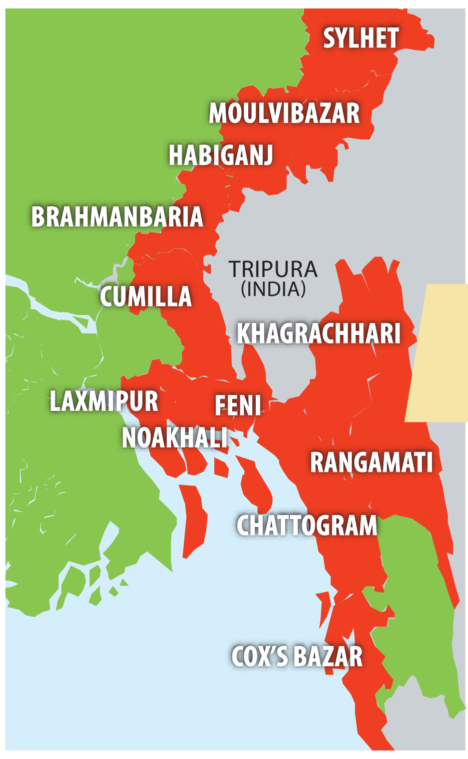


Pedestrians use a rope to stay on course as floodwater rushes across the Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Feni's Lalpool area yesterday. Vehicles heading for Chattogram are seen crawling their way through. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Flash floods wreak havoc in 12 dists

Five killed, 10 go missing as vast areas inundated in Sylhet, Chattogram divisions



FAMILIES affected 5.86 lakh | PEOPLE affected 37 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Flash floods induced by heavy rains and rush of water from upstream have caught millions of people off guard, giving them no time to evacuate their homes across Chattogram and Sylhet divisions over the last two days.

At least five people drowned and 10 others went missing as rivers burst their banks submerging vast swathes of land.

Railway communications in the two divisions were suspended yesterday and the authorities cancelled 26 trains.

The situation in Cumilla, Noakhali and Feni was particularly worrying as the Muhuri and Feni rivers kept swelling throughout yesterday.

All the major rivers in the northeastern and eastern regions were overflowing.

The other affected districts are Laxmipur, Brahmanbaria, Chattogram, Rangamati, Khagrachhari, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sylhet, and Cox's Bazar.

It is likely that there will be less rain today and the level of water will begin to fall tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, according to Sarkar Udoy Raihan, executive engineer at the flood forecasting centre.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

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বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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GD-234

'Opening of dam gates sans notice inhuman'

Adviser Nahid blames India for flash floods here

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opening the gates of a dam by India without any prior notice is "inhuman", Information and Broadcasting Adviser Nahid Islam said yesterday.

He asked the neighbouring country to stop its "anti-people policy" towards Bangladesh, saying that India should change its approach so that the two countries can build fairer relations.

"We can see the upstream water coming in and causing a flood situation. India has

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Jt initiative needed to deal with floods

Chief adviser tells Indian envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday proposed a high-level collaboration between Bangladesh and India to manage floods and emergencies.

He put forward the proposal when Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma paid a courtesy call on him at the State Guesthouse Jamuna in the capital.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam briefed the media at the Foreign Service Academy after the meeting.

Yunus said Bangladesh and India share many rivers and high-level collaboration between the two countries would help dissemination of information fast and prompt decision-making.

The Nobel laureate also emphasised the need for the two countries working

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

NBR seeks bank details of 5 business tycoons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue yesterday asked banks to provide account details of the chiefs of five business giants who benefitted much during the Awami League rule of 15 years to scrutinise their tax compliance.

The revenue authority's Central Intelligence Cell (CIC) sought the details of Salman F Rahman, vice-chairman of Beximco; Nazrul Islam Mazumder, chairman of Nassa Group; Mohammed Aziz Khan, chairman of Summit Group; Ahmed Akbar Khan, chairman of Bashundhara Group; and Mohammad Obaidul Karim, chairman of Orion Group.

The NBR sought information on term deposits, savings accounts, current accounts, loan accounts, foreign currency accounts, credit cards, lockers and vaults owned by the tycoons are their family members beginning July 1, 2015.

In a notice, the tax administration said its CIC has started a special inquiry into the allegation of tax evasion by the persons who made a lot of wealth.

As such, the cell has prepared a list of tax dodgers based on specific information and by analysing media reports.

The move comes days after NBR's two field offices asked banks to provide account details of Chattogram-based businessman Mohammed Saiful Alam, the chairman of S Alam Group, and his family members, and the VAT Commissionerate Chattogram formed four teams to audit the VAT compliance of 18 concerns of S Alam Group.

The NBR said it would detect tax evasion through its special investigation into those who made huge wealth under the Income Tax Act 2023 and the Money Laundering Prevention Act 2012.

The tax detectives also requested the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Savings Directorate and the other related offices to provide information.

The CIC said its special investigations to hunt tax dodgers will continue.

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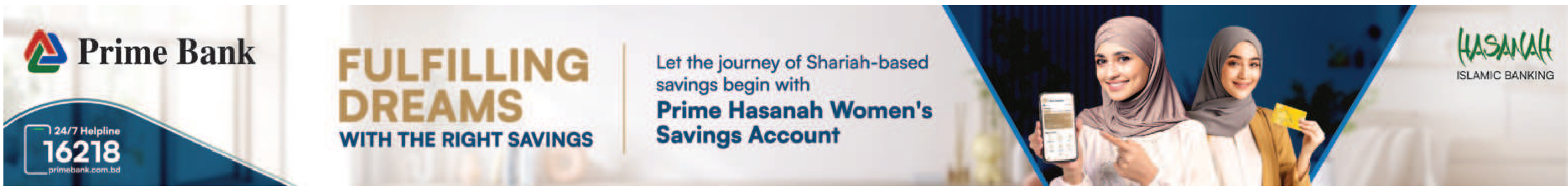
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No bar to publishing Tarique's statements

Says HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared the way for print, electronic and social media to publish and broadcast BNP's acting chairman Tarique Rahman's statements.

The HC bench of Justice Md Khasruzzaman and Justice Md Khairul Alam passed the order, scrapping its previous orders that banned publishing and broadcasting Tarique Rahman's statements in the media, and also lifted a rule issued in 2015 to this effect.

The HC bench's order came a day after writ petitioner and Supreme Court lawyer Nashreen

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Prof Golam Murshid passes away

BSS, *Dhaka*

Prof Golam Murshid, an eminent essayist and researcher, passed away in London yesterday, aged 84.

The Ekushey Padak recipient left behind his wife, a son, a daughter, and many relatives and well-wishers.

Prof Swarachish Sarker from the Institute of Bangladesh Studies at Rajshahi University confirmed the news of his death, citing Golam Murshid's wife, Eliza Murshid.

Born on April 8, 1940, in Barishal, Golam Murshid earned his master's degree in Bangla language and literature from Dhaka University.

He began his career at Bangladesh Agricultural University in Mymensingh before joining the Bangla department at Rajshahi University.

From January 1984 to 2003, he worked for the BBC Bangla Service. He also engaged in teaching and research at various universities, including Melbourne University in London, starting in 1991.

Golam Murshid was awarded the Ekushey Padak in 2021 for his contribution to Bangla language and literature. He had earlier received the Bangla Academy Sahitya Puraskar in 1982. His notable works include Bangla Ganer Itihash, Biddhrohi

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Over 500 patients, all of whom were injured during the recent mass uprising, are currently receiving treatment in government and private hospitals according to DGHS. Some are students, others blue-collar workers many of whom have lost their eyesight and even their limbs. The photo was taken at DMCH recently. PHOTO: **STAR**

Shot during protests, they now stare at a bleak future

Medical bills burden families of the injured

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* **AHMED DEEPTO**

Asif Mahmud, a first-year electrical engineering student at Faridpur Polytechnic Institute, will probably never see the world through his own eyes again.

The 19-year-old's eyes were injured by shotgun pellets on July 18, during the anti-discrimination student movement in Narsingdi. On that day, his right eye was fully damaged, while the left one was in a critical condition.

Desperate to restore his eyesight, his family took him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, National Institute of Opthalmology & Hospital (NIOH), and Bangladesh Eye Hospital.

They spent around Tk 1.5 lakh, but in vain, with doctors still unable to tell whether Asif would ever be able to see again.

Just two days back, on Wednesday, he was released from Bangladesh Eye Hospital and returned home. Now, his family wants to take him to India for better treatment, but bearing the cost has become an immense challenge for them.

Like Asif, family members of numerous others who were injured during recent protests are concerned about bearing treatment costs.

The Daily Star visited three hospitals -- DMCH, NIOH, and National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor) -- in the capital in the last three days and spoke to 27 such families.

While many are struggling to cover the costs of treatment, others are taking loans to bear expenses.

Although treatment and medication at these three hospitals are free, they had to spend a significant amount of money on ambulances and other miscellaneous expenses.

According to Directorate General of Health Services, over 500 patients are currently receiving treatment in government and private hospitals.

Almost all the admitted patients are from low-income families. Some are students, others are from blue-collar working backgrounds, and some are the sole breadwinners from their families.

The interim government on Saturday decided to provide free treatment to those who were injured during the recent protests.

However, while hospital authorities provide certain medicines for free, many other medicines have to be bought from outside, said several family members of the injured.

Doctors also said that many patients need long-term treatment, as they were injured severely.

For instance, take the case of auto-rickshaw driver Shajib Khan. The 28-year-old who is the sole breadwinner of a four-member family, was shot in the right arm on July 19 in Badda. He also suffered wounds from shotgun pellets. Currently, he is admitted to Nitor.

Shajib had to undergo three surgeries, which have left his family with a huge financial burden.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Students protest blaming India for flash floods

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students from several public universities yesterday staged demonstrations, rallies, and torch processions blaming India for the current flash floods in Bangladesh.

They also demanded fair water-sharing agreements with India.

They said the opening of the Dumbur dam upstream of the Gumti river in Tripura is the reason behind the sudden floods.

The universities include Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, Islamic University, Barisal University, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Begum Rokeya University, Jashore University of Science and Technology, and Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology, among others.

Meanwhile, India yesterday refuted claims of causing floods in Bangladesh.

The flood situation in eastern Bangladesh has not been caused by the release of waters from an Indian dam on the Gumti river in Tripura, said India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

In DU, students of several educational institutions held a torch procession from the TSC around 7:00pm and marched through various roads on the campus.

During the procession, the students chanted slogans directed at India, including "Bharatiya agrashon rukhe darqao jonogon (People, stand against Indian aggression)", alongside other slogans.

In JU, a few hundred students, alongside some teachers, organised a torch procession under the banner of Anti-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Farzana Rupa, Shakil on four-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Shakil Ahmed, former head of news at Ekattor Television, and its principal correspondent Farzana Rupa on a four-day remand for interrogation in a murder case.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Ahmed Humayun Kabir granted the remand after investigation officer Mohaiminur Rahman, a sub-inspector of Uttara East Police Station, requested a 10-day remand, according to Md Abu Nowsher, a court sub-inspector.

Earlier, a defence lawyer sought bail and opposed the remand prayer.

Witnesses reported that some lawyers verbally abused Shakil and Rupa in the courtroom.

Additionally, a lawyer allegedly struck Rupa on the head as she was being escorted to the lockup by police after the hearing.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

UN rep stresses journos' safety

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The safety and wellbeing of journalists anywhere in the world is of critical importance, especially for any country like Bangladesh that is going through a transition, said UN Secretary-General's Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric yesterday.

"It is important that journalists be allowed to do their work and that those who commit violence against journalists be held to account," he said in a briefing in New York.

Dujarric's comment came while he was responding to a query on the attacks on East West Media Group, owned by the Bashundhara Group, in Dhaka.

The journalist asked Dujarric's for comment, mentioning that journalists are suffering from insecurity since newspaper offices of East West Media Group were attacked and vandalised on Monday afternoon, because the criminals involved

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

DMP appoints new OCs to 13 police stations

STAR REPORT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has appointed new officers-in-charge at 13 police stations in the capital.

DMP Commissioner Md Mainul Hasan made the appointments in two separate orders on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The police stations are Dakshinkhan, Pallabi, Gulshan, Vatara, Khilkhet, Ramna, Paltan, Badda, Airport, Mirpur Model, Tejgaon, Dhanmondi, and Uttara West.

On Tuesday, Muhammad Azharul Islam was appointed as OC of Shahbagh Police Station in an order, but the appointment was later cancelled on Wednesday.

Earlier, on August 12, the Police Headquarters in an order transferred 18 OCs of DMP to different police units outside Dhaka. Then again on August 18, PHQ in another order transferred 32 OCs of DMP to different police units outside Dhaka.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

LATHITILA RESERVE FOREST

Govt to reassess controversial safari park project

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

Despite serious concerns from experts and activists over endangering the pristine biodiversity of Lathitila Reserve Forest in Moulvibazar, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council in November last year approved a project to build a safari park there.

The project was named 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari Park, Moulvibazar (1st Phase)'.

However, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under the interim government has decided to scrutinise the plan to build the safari park and formed a four-member committee on Wednesday to assess the impact of the project on the reserve forest's biodiversity.

The committee, headed by former chief conservator of forests Istiaq Uddin Ahmed, will submit its recommendations after assessment.

Other members of the committee are: Dr Mohammed Mostafa Feeroz, professor of Zoology of Jahangirnagar University; Farid Uddin Ahmed, former executive director of Arannayk Foundation; and Imran Ahmed, conservator of forests of the Wildlife and Nature Conservation Circle of the Forest Department.

Lathitila is a 5,141-acre, mostly hilly forest beat of Juri Forest Range under Patharia Hill Reserve. The transboundary forest is linked to the vast forestland of India and has been a reserved forest since 1920 under the Forest Act.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

সরকার কর্তৃক পরিচালিত ওএমএস

Amid ongoing inflation, a large crowd gathers in front of this open market sale to purchase essential commodities at reduced prices. Each person is allowed to buy only five kilogrammes of rice and flour each at a time. The photo was taken on the Abdul Gani road in the capital yesterday. PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

ODHIKAR

Refusal to renew reg illegal: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ruled in favour of human rights organisation "Odhikar," allowing it to seek renewal of its registration and receive foreign donations.

The court declared the government's previous decision not to renew its registration as illegal.

Odhikar, established in 1994, has been instrumental in documenting cases of enforced disappearances and supporting victims' families. It had applied multiple times since 2014 to the NGO Affairs Bureau for registration renewal but was repeatedly denied.

Odhikar filed a writ petition with the HC in 2022, challenging the Bureau's inaction.

The bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Sashanka Shekhar Sarkar delivered the verdict, removing legal barriers for Odhikar's registration and fundraising efforts.

In a related case, the HC yesterday overturned a lower court's verdict that sentenced Odhikar's former Secretary, Adilur Rahman Khan, and current Director, ASM Nasir Uddin Elan, to two years' imprisonment under the ICT Act. The charges stemmed from allegations of publishing a "distorted report and doctored images" about a 2013 police crackdown on a Hefajat-e-Islam rally.

The HC bench of Justice Abdur Rob accepted their appeal, clearing both individuals of all charges.

Prof Golam

FROM PAGE 3

Ranaklanto: Nazrul Jiboni, Adhunikotar Abhighate Bangaramni, Muktijuddho o Tarpor, Bangla Bhashar Udbhab o Annyanno, Hazar Bochorer Bangalee Sangskriti, and Ashar Cholone Bhuli.

Govt to reassess controversial Safari Park

FROM PAGE 3

It is home to 209 species of unique fauna and 603 species of flora, including the northern pig-tailed macaque, hoolock gibbon, otters, Chinese pangolin, Asiatic elephant, fishing cat, and Indian leopard.

In 2020, the project's feasibility study and masterplan were initiated under the vested interest of Shahab Uddin, former minister of environment, forest and climate change, and also lawmaker of Moulvibazar-1 constituency.

The Daily Star on July 3, 2021 published a report titled 'Greens worried as new safari park planned' on the concerns raised for the reserve forest.

The Transparency International, Bangladesh on August 7, 2021, urged the government to revoke the plan. On August 26, a delegation of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association inspected the forest and commented that over 10,000 trees would have to be felled to implement the project.

However, on October 25, 2021, the ministry concerned went on to approve the plan.

Criticising the move, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon at a roundtable urged the government not to advance with the plan.

On October 18 last year, eminent citizens and activists Sultana Kamal, Shamsul Huda, Khushi Kabir, Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Alamgir Kabir and Mokaram Hossain wrote a letter to the government not to approve the project.

Farzana Rupa, Shakil on four-day remand

FROM PAGE 3

The two journalists were arrested at Dhaka airport on Wednesday and later shown arrested in the murder case filed with the police station.

Anowar Hossain Aynal, a decorator, filed the case under Sections 302, 114, and 109 of the Penal Code, accusing 39 named and unnamed individuals, including former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, over the death of his brother Fazlul Karim during anti-government protests in Uttara on August 5.

The case documents show that the duo's names were not listed in the FIR; they were arrested as unnamed suspects.

Ekattor Television terminated Shakil and Farzana on August 8.

Meanwhile, the Bangladeshi Journalists in International Media (BJIM) called on authorities to ensure the protection of Shakil and Farzana, emphasising their right to a fair trial and protection from judicial or police harassment.

"We urge the interim government to affirm its commitment to press freedom, ensuring that all journalists and media outlets can operate without fear of retribution or targeted campaigns stemming from their journalistic pursuits," it said in a statement.

In addition, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) yesterday expressed deep concern over the arrest of the journalist couple.

In a letter to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, RSF Director General Thibaut Bruttin urged the interim government to release them immediately and ensure their safety.

Students protest

FROM PAGE 3

Descrimination Student Movement around 7:30pm. Later, they held a rally at the university Shaheed Minar.

During the procession, students were seen chanting similar slogans as heard in DU.

In RU, several hundred students, alongside teachers from different departments, under the same banner, brought out a procession and staged a rally at the university's main gate at 1:00pm.

Golam Kibria Chowdhury Mishu, coordinator of anti-discrimination student movement, said, "For the past 53 years, Indian government has been torturing Bangladesh in different ways."

Students from Islamic University in Kushtia and Barisal University held processions from their campuses and staged rallies in nearby areas.

JnU students also staged a demonstration early yesterday at the university's main gate.

Students of SUST, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Patuakhali Science and Technology University, Bangladesh University of Textiles, and Dhaka College also brought out protest programmes with similar demands in the last two days.

Besides, a seven-member delegation representing a faction of Gono Odhikar Parishad yesterday submitted a six-point message to the Indian High Commission.

The demands include immediate closure of all dams opened towards Bangladesh within 24 hours.

Mohakhali ramp

FROM PAGE 5

which operates the expressway, told The Daily Star.

He said a very low number of vehicles usually use the ramp. So, one toll both will be enough for the operations.

However, he could not say when the exit ramp at the FDC gate (Karwan Bazar) would be opened as one of the pillars there was torched.

Unidentified arsonists torched the Banani toll booth on July 18 and the Mohakhali toll booth the following day amid the countrywide unrest, causing the suspension of services.

The authorities resumed operations of the expressway, except for the three ramps, from August 11. They resumed manual and limited operations of Banani ramp from August 15.

No bar to publishing

FROM PAGE 3

Siddiqua Lina submitted an application before it saying that she would no longer run the petition upon which the HC issued the rule and ad-interim orders at different times.

"All the ad-interim orders passed in connection with the writ petition are hereby recalled (withdrawn) and vacated and the rule is discharged," the bench said.

Barrister Kayser Kamal appeared for Tarique Rahman during the court's proceedings yesterday.

Contacted, Advocate Nashreen Siddiqua Lina refused to make any comment about her decision for not running her petition.

Earlier on January 7, 2017, following the same writ petition, another HC bench ordered the government to immediately take steps to stop publishing and broadcasting Tarique Rahman's statements in media as long as he remains a fugitive.

The bench also issued a rule asking the authorities and the media to explain why publishing Tarique's statements should not be declared illegal.

During hearing of the rule on August 28 last year, the HC bench of Justice Md Khairuzzaman and Justice Md Khairul Alam ordered Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to immediately "remove or strike down" Tarique Rahman's statements from social media.

Shot during protests

FROM PAGE 3

"I have had no income for the last month. We have already spent Tk 45,000 for my treatment, of which we borrowed Tk 30,000. The surgery cost almost nothing, and the hospital is providing medicine. But still, some medicines and injections have to be bought from outside," said Shajib.

"Doctors said I will require another surgery, and another month to recover," he added.

A total of 142 injured protesters, including 47 students, are currently undergoing treatment at Nitor.

Officials at Nitor said 13 people who were shot lost their legs. One person also lost an arm. A total of 642 people were treated at Nitor from July 12 to August 14. So far, five people have died at the hospital after arriving with gunshot injuries.

Mozaffar Hossain, joint director of Nitor, told The Daily Star, "We've formed a committee to identify what kind of support is needed for the injured. Those injured in the anti-discrimination movement, including students, will receive support."

He said the medicines purchased from outside will be adjusted if the bills are submitted to the hospital.

Another patient at the facility, Mohammad Akash, 19, lost his left leg, as doctors had to amputate it.

While talking to The Daily Star, his father Dulal Miah said he was taken to five hospitals after he suffered bullet wounds in Narayanganj.

"Akash worked at a sweet shop. We borrowed Tk 3.5 lakh to send him to Saudi Arabia for work, but now most of that money has already been spent on his treatment. My son has lost his job and his leg, and now the whole family has become financially crippled," said Dulal.

Meanwhile, NIOH data shows that 740 patients received treatment at the hospital from July 17 to July 26 and August 4 to August 16. Of them, 610 were admitted to the hospital.

A total of 495 operations were completed at the hospital. Moreover, 366 people lost their vision in one eye, while 17 lost vision from both eyes.

Currently, 55 people are undergoing treatment at NIOH.

Monirul Islam, a farmer from Magura, suffered pellet wounds in his eye and other parts of his body on August 4 while protesting. He lost his left eye following a surgery at NIOH.

"The surgery and most medicines cost me nothing. But some expensive medicines are not in stock and have to be bought from outside," he said.

"However, I had to bear ambulance costs. Also, my relatives who are looking after me have certain expenses, and the longer I stay, the more they will have to deal with those costs. Doctors said they don't know how long I have to stay," he said.

Selina Khatun, mother of 16-year-old Selim who was shot at Gazipur intersection on August 5, was seen crying at NIOH.

"There is no improvement in my son's eye condition. My son and I are both construction workers. For his treatment, I borrowed Tk 25,000. But still, he hasn't gotten well. Where will I get the money for better treatment?" asked Selina.

She requested the government to send her son abroad for better treatment.

DMP appoints

FROM PAGE 3

All these OCs earlier remained posted to different police stations in Dhaka for years.

Meanwhile, all the metropolitan commissioners, range deputy inspector generals, major posts in PHQ and different police stations, and superintendents of police in 10 districts have already been transferred. Also, on last Sunday, 63 police officers were promoted to the rank of supernumerary DIG, 10 got regular promotions as DIG, and 30 to the rank of SP.

The major reshuffle in the police force came following the ouster of the Awami League government on August 5.

UN rep stresses journos

FROM PAGE 3

in the incident have not been arrested yet.

Meanwhile, local journalists in Bagerhat held a protest rally and human chain in front of the district press club around 11:00am yesterday, condemning the recent attacks and vandalism targeting the East-West Media Group and other media houses.

The event was presided over by Bishnu Prasad Chakraborty, vice-president of Bagerhat Press Club and Bagerhat correspondent for the daily Kaler Kantho. Several noted journalists in the district also addressed the event.

Speakers at the event stressed the vital role of media in exposing societal issues and contributing to national development.

They also said the media is not an enemy of the people, rather it serves as a mirror to reflect the flaws in the society.

They called for strict legal action against those responsible for the attacks.

On August 19, miscreants launched an attack on the East West Media Group Complex in Dhaka, which houses Kaler Kantho, Bangladesh Pratidin, Daily Sun, Banglanews24.com, News24 TV, T Sports TV, and Radio Capital.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 23

	Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-30	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

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কাজী ফার্মস এর একটি VOLVO Jeep (D-M-GHA-13-2055) সম্পূর্ণ চালু অবস্থায় ইং ০২-০৯-২৪ (সোমবার) বাড়ী নং- ৩৫, রোড নং- ২, ধানমন্ডি ১২০৫ এ নিলামে বিক্রি হবে।

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TENDER NOTICE

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar hereby announces the launch of the following tenders:

TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTION
ITB/HCR/CXB/2024/011	FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRAME AGREEMENTS FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BORAK AND MULI BAMBOO

Interested and bona fide vendors are invited to participate in this INVITATION TO BID (ITB) by accessing and downloading the tender documents at the following web link:
https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/242315

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:
We would appreciate you informing us of the receipt of this ITB by sending an e-mail to **TAREKM@UNHCR.ORG** with a copy to SUVEGES@UNHCR.ORG as to:
- Your confirmation of receipt of this Invitation To Bid
- Whether or not you will be submitting a Bid

Bid to be submitted:
Bids should be submitted as per the guidance in section 2.6 of the ITB document via the URL below:
http://etenderbox.unhcr.org

Bid submission deadline: Thursday, 29 August 2024 – 14:00 hrs BST. Bangladesh time.

Please Note: As per the applicable Admin Instructions on procurement during COVID, please note that hard copy submissions are no longer accepted, only soft copies are accepted.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges
Road Transport and Highways Division
Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Authority (DTCA)
DTCA Building, Love Road, Tejgaon I/A, Dhaka-1208.
www.dtca.gov.bd

Corrigendum

Memo No: 35.02.0000.008.14.030.24- 076 Date: 22.08.2024

Tender Package No: DTCA/CH/RP/01	**Name of the Tender:** Procurement of 3 Lac Rapid Pass (FeliCa IC) Card and related service
Invitation Ref No: 35.02.0000.008.14.030.24-073	**Issued on:** 20/08/2024

Sl No	Description	Published as	Amended as
20	Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	**(d)** The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e working capital or credit line(s) of the Tenderer shall be **21** Lac Taka.	**(d)** The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e working capital or credit line(s) of the Tenderer shall be Tk. **7 (Seven) Crore.**

22/08/2024
Md. Motasim Billah
Additional Executive Director (P&P) (Additional Secretary)
Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority
DTCA Bhaban, Love Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
Tel: +88 02-226603702

GD-242

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Western Economic Corridor & Regional Enhancement Program
(WeCARE), Phase-I: (RCMLIIP)
LGED-RDEC Bhaban, Level-03,
Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
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Memo No: 46.02.0000.981.14.011.21-824 Date: 22 August 2024

e-Tender Notice No. 01/2024-25

One e-Tender is invited to the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of Works	On-line Tender Publication Date	On-line Tender Closing Date
1008980	WeCARE/ LGED/ CW-03	Improvement of One Growth Centre Market and 21.6 km Adjacent Roads at Seordah of Jhikargacha Upazila under Jashore District (World Bank Funded WeCARE Phase-I: LGED)	22-August-2024 at 15:00 AM	23-September-2024 at 14:00 PM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is mandatory.

The fees for the e-Tender Document Price have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's Branches up to 5:00 PM of one day before the Closing Date.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(Momin Mozibul Haque Shamaji)
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GD- 237

পল্লী কর্ম-সহায়ক ফাউন্ডেশন

PALLI KARMA-SAHAYAK FOUNDATION (PKSF)
PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 88-02-222218331-33, 02-222218335-39; Website: https://www.pksf.org.bd

Vacancy Announcement

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), an apex development organization, was established by the Government of Bangladesh in 1990 for sustainable poverty reduction through employment generation. Since its inception, PKSF has been implementing various poverty-alleviating and employment-generating programs and projects through its Partner Organizations (POs) all over the country.

PKSF has been implementing a 5-year-long project titled 'Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation (SMART)' jointly financed by the World Bank and PKSF since August 2023. The objective of the project is to increase resource-efficient and resilient green growth of the microenterprises (MEs).

PKSF hereby invites online applications from the eligible candidates for the following post under the SMART project:

Name of the Post	No. of the Post	Consolidated Monthly Salary (BDT)
Senior Program Manager (Enterprise Development-Footwear and Leather)	01	1,80,000/-

The employee will be recruited initially for one year with the opportunity for annual performance-based renewal during the project period. Interested candidates who fulfill the requirements may submit online applications by **06 September 2024**. Please visit the PKSF Website (**www.pksf.org.bd**) for detailed job descriptions and instructions to apply.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. PKSF is an equal-opportunity employer. Any kind of persuasion will be treated as disqualification of the candidate. PKSF reserves the right to cancel this recruitment process without assigning any reason whatsoever.

****Women are highly encouraged to apply.**

Deputy Managing Director

Six shot dead in Narsingdi clash

STAR REPORT

A clash between two rival groups left six people shot dead and at least 30 others injured in Raipura upazila of Narsingdi yesterday.

The deceased were identified as: Amir Hossain, 65; Badal Mia, 45; Junayed, 16; Firoza Begum, 35; Anis Mia, 30; and Siddiq Mia, 26.

Nuruddin Jahangir, in-charge of Raipura Upazila Health Complex, said the deceased were brought dead to the hospital at around 10:00am.

He also said several injured persons were referred to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital for better treatment.

Locals said the clash ensued between two groups -- 'Alir Bari', led by Abdul Halim Master, and 'Baluchar Bari', led by Saheb Ali -- in Saidabad village of Srinagar union under the upazila at around 3:00pm on Wednesday and then again yesterday morning.

Tension between the groups have been escalating over the past six months for establishing dominance in the area, with frequent attacks and counter-attacks.

Police were yet to visit the scene till last reported.

Contacted, Safayet Hossain Palash, officer-in-charge of Raipura Police Station, said, "We are waiting for the army. We will only visit the spot with their support due to security concerns."

ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY

Mohakhali ramp opens after a month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway opened the entrance ramp at Mohakhali yesterday, over a month after the toll booth was torched during mass protests.

"We have made all necessary arrangement to open one of the five tollbooths at the ramp at 12:00pm today [yesterday]. We will collect toll manually," Captain (retd) Hasib Hasan Khan, manager (operations and maintenance) of First Dhaka Elevated Expressway Company Ltd (FDEE),

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

MURDER, VIOLENCE

Quader among 2,598 sued in 4 districts

STAR REPORT

Cases were filed against 2,598 people, including Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, over the last two days in four districts in relation to charges of murder and violence.

Of the them, 390 are named and the remaining are unnamed individuals, according to police.

In Faridpur, a murder case was filed against around 400 AL men, including Obaidul Quader, on charges of killing Shamsu Mollah, 62, a bus driver.

The victim's wife Meghla Begum filed the case with Faridpur's Kotwali Police Station on Wednesday night. Obaidul Quader is the sole named accused in the case, said police.

Hours after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled from the country on August 5, a group of people attacked the Kotwali Police Station. In retaliation, police opened fire on the attackers. At that time, Shamsu was shot dead.

In Sylhet, a total of six cases were filed in the last two days against around 2,000 people on charges of attacking protesters during the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement between July 23 and August 4.

Of the cases, one was filed with Bishwanath Police Station on Wednesday night, while the five remaining cases were filed yesterday with a court.

A total of 382 people were named accused in the cases, said police.

The named accused include -- former foreign minister AK Abdul Momen, state minister for expatriates' welfare and overseas employment Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury; lawmakers Shafiul Alam Chowdhury Nadel and Ranjit Chandra Sarker; Sylhet city mayor Anwaruzzaman Chowdhury and SMP commissioner Md Zakir Hossain Khan.

Named accused: 390
Unnamed accused: 2,208

HIGH PROFILE ACCUSED

Obaidul Quader
Charge: Murder of bus driver

AK Abdul Momen
Charge: Attacking protesters

In Jashore, two cases were filed yesterday against 48 people, including six police officers, on charges of extrajudicial killing of a village doctor named Bajlur Rahman and BNP activist Anisul Islam.

Bazlur's wife Reshma Begum and Anisur's brother Munsur Ali separately filed the cases with the court, said police.

Jashore's former superintendent of police Anisur Rahman, Monirampur Police Station officer-in-charge Mollah Kabir Ahmed, sub-inspectors Tasmeem and Shaheen, among others, were made accused in the case.

Bazlur, a village doctor of Jaipur Bazar under Manirampur upazila, was picked up by police on February 17, 2015, and was shot dead allegedly by police on the same night, according to the case statement.

On the other hand, the same SP, another former OC of the same police station Ali Azam, sub-inspector Heron and former chairman of Monirampur Upazila Parishad Amzad Hossain, among others, were accused in the Anisul Islam murder case.

Anisul was shot dead on March 22, 2013, allegedly by police, according to the case statement.

In Savar, two separate cases have been filed against over 150 unidentified people in connection with the murder of three policemen at Ashulia on August 5.

Wives of two deceased policemen filed the cases with Ashulia Police Station.

In Pirojpur, six people, including former OC of Bhandaria Police Station Ashiquzzaman, were sued over extortion charges.

A local BNP leader filed the case on Wednesday afternoon.

[Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report]

OVERCHARGING

Train passengers protest in Gazipur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of passengers staged a protest on the railway tracks at Gazipur's Joydebpur Junction yesetrday morning after being charged extra for train tickets, leading to a halt in train movement on the Dhaka-Mymensingh route.

Joydebpur Junction Station Master Hanif Ali said, "Due to irregularities at the ticket counter, an excited crowd gathered on the railway line and began protesting around 6:00am."

Protesters claimed that each ticket was overcharged by Tk 5 to Tk 10. The situation escalated when one passenger was overcharged, prompting other passengers to become agitated. This led to a collective protest by all passengers at the junction.

"Efforts are being made to bring the situation under control, but there is still a high level of tension at Joydebpur Junction," Hanif Ali told The Daily Star around 10:00am.

GRAFT, MONEY LAUNDERING

Mosharraf acquitted, Falu secures bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday acquitted former Health Minister and BNP Standing Committee member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain in a case related to laundering over Tk 9.53 crore to the United Kingdom.

Judge Md Abul Kashem of the Special Judge Court-1 of Dhaka delivered the verdict, stating that the prosecution failed to prove the charges against Mosharraf.

Meanwhile, former BNP lawmaker Mosaddek Ali Falu secured bail yesterday in four separate cases, including a money laundering case, after surrendering before three different courts in Dhaka.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Procurement Division
Directorate
Ministry of Food
16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka
Website: www.dgfood.gov.bd

No. 13.01.0000.091.47.002.2024.1023 Dated: 22/08/2024

e-Tender Notice (Phase-01)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure. gov.bd) for the Procurement of following goods:

Sl No.	Tender ID	Name of Tender	Schedule Selling and Tender Opening Date
1.	**1009224** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 5,00,000 (Five lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest. **(CHATTOGRAM SILO, CHATTOGRAM-5,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
2.	**1009225** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 5,00,000 (Five lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(NARAYANGANJ SILO, NARAYANGANJ-5,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
3.	**1009227** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 5,00,000 (Five lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest (**MONGLA SILO, BAGERHAT-5,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
4.	**1009228** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 5,00,000 (Five lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(ASHUGANJ SILO, B-BARIA-5,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
5.	**1009229** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 5,00,000 (Five lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(NARAYANGANJ CSD, NARAYANGANJ-5,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
6.	**1009230** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 4,00,000 (Four lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 **(HALISHAHAR CSD, CHATTOGRAM-3,00,000 & CHANPURGHAT LSD, BASKHALI, CHATTOGRAM-1,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
7.	**1009231** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 4,00,000 (Four lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(DEWANHAT CSD, CHATTOGRAM-4,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
8.	**1009232** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 3,00,000 (Three lakh lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(KHULNA CSD, KHULNA-3,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
9.	**1009233** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 3,00,000 (Three lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(MAHESHWARPASA CSD, KHULNA-3,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
10.	**1009234** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 3,00,000 (Three lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(MIRCADIM LSD, MUNSHIGANJ-3,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
11.	**1009235** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(SAVAR LSD, DHAKA-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
12.	**1009236** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(DHAMRAI LSD, DHAKA-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
13.	**1009237** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(SONARGAON LSD, NARAYANGANJ-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
14.	**1009238** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(BHAIRAB LSD, KISHOREGANJ-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
15.	**1009239** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(DINAJPUR CSD, DINAJPUR -2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
16.	**1009240** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(NILPHAMARI SADAR LSD, NILPHAMARI-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
17.	**1009241** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(B-BARIA SADAR LSD, B-BARIA-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
18.	**1009242** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two e lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(DHARMAPUR LSD, CUMILLA -2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
19.	**1009243** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(PABNA SADAR LSD, PABNA-100,000 & ISWARDI LSD, PABNA-1,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
20.	**1009244** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(BOGURA SADAR LSD, BOGURA-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
21.	**1009245** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(SHANTAHAR LSD, BAGURA-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
22.	**1009246** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(KURIGRAM SADAR LSD, KURIGRAM-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
23.	**1009247** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(THAKURGAON SADAR LSD, THAKURGAON-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
24.	**1009248** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(PIRGANJ LSD, RANGPUR-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
25.	**1009249** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(PANCHAGARH SADAR LSD, PANCHAGARH -2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
26.	**1009250** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(LALMONIRHAT SADAR LSD, LALMONIRHAT-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
27.	**1009251** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(GAIBANDHA SADAR LSD, GAIBANDHA-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
28.	**1009252** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(TANGAIL SADAR LSD, TANGAIL-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
29.	**1009253** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(MYMENSINGH CSD, MYMENSINGH-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
30.	**1009254** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **{JAMALPUR SADAR (SHINGJANI) LSD, JAMALPUR-2,00,000 Pcs}.**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
31.	**1009255** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(SHERPUR SADAR LSD, SHERPUR-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
32.	**1009256** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(NETROKONA SADAR LSD, NETROKONA-2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
33.	**1009257** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(HABIGANJ SADAR LSD, HABIGANJ-1,00,000 & SHAYESTAGANJ LSD, HABIGANJ-1,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
34.	**1009258** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(MOULOVIBAZAR SADAR LSD, MOULOVIBAZAR-1,00,000 & SHRIMANGAL LSD, MOULOVIBAZAR -1,00,0000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
35.	**1009259** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(MOLLIKPUR LSD, SUNAMGANJ-1,00,000 & SHANTIGANJ LSD, SUNAMGANJ-1,00,000 Pcs)**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
36.	**1009260** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **{KUSHTIA SADAR LSD, KUSHTIA-2,00,000 Pcs}.**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
37.	**1009261** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(JHINAIDAH SADAR LSD, JHINAIDAH -2,00,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
38.	**1009262** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(BHOLA SADAR LSD, BHOLA-1,00,000 & BARISHAL SADAR LSD, BARISHAL-100,000 Pcs)**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.
39.	**1009263** (Goods-OTM)	Procurement of 2,00,000 (Two lakh) Pieces 50 kg Capacity Cut Size B-Twill new Gunnies made in the year 2024 or latest **(JHALAKATHI SADAR LSD, JHALAKATHI-50,000, PIROJPUR SADAR LSD, PIROJPUR-50,000, PATUAKHALI SADAR LSD, PATUAKHALI-50,000 & BORGUNA SADAR LSD, BORGUNA-50,000 Pcs).**	Up to 17:00 PM/11-September 2024; Opening 9:30 AM/12-September 2024.

1. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal.
2. No offline/hard copies will be accepted;
3. To submit e-Tender, registration in the e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) will be required;
4. The fees for downloading the e-Tender ddocuments from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branch.

Further information and guidelines are available on the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Moniruzzaman
Director
Procurement Division
Phone: 41050178
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GD-239

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Struggle for a secular Bangladesh will persist: ASHFAQUE NIPUN

> **Personally, I think it's detrimental when those in power try to influence art, and artistes should resist such influence. Governments often use artistes as mouthpieces because of their widespread acceptance.**

SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK *and*
SHARIF M SHAFIQ

When it comes to speaking out against injustice and oppression, there aren't many artistes who stand out as prominently as Ashfaque Nipun. Known for his active presence both online and on the ground, Nipun has been a vocal participant in various protests. His determination was evident during the quota reform movement, which later evolved into the anti-discrimination student movement and led to the dramatic fall of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's regime.

Why is political consciousness important for an artiste, and to what extent?

I believe neither the general public nor artistes can exist outside of politics. Whether you're a creator or a writer, your work reflects the socio-political reality around you.

However, not all artistes possess political consciousness, and I don't believe in imposing it on anyone. If a person's conscience doesn't awaken after witnessing the injustices and oppression around them, no amount of education or knowledge can instill it. It depends on an individual's sensitivity.

For creators, the biggest advantage is that their movies or web-series can reach a large audience. If the work reflects political or socio-economic realities, it resonates more deeply with people, which is exciting for us as creators. That said, there's a distinction between activism and art. If cinema becomes too politically charged, it ceases to be art. Great artistes strike a balance between the two.

How do you view an artiste's political engagement, especially when politics influences art?

Let me clarify: I strongly believe in an artiste's freedom of expression. If someone wants to create propaganda-based cinema, that's their right. The audience will decide whether to accept, reject, or hold the creator accountable for it, and we must allow time to take its course.

If someone chooses to make a film against oppressive forces, they also have that freedom. However, they must be prepared to face the risks and accountability that come with it. Similarly, those who create propaganda-based cinema must accept the consequences if their work doesn't stand the test of time.

Personally, I think it's detrimental when those in power try to influence art, and artistes should resist such influence. This has happened not only during the former government's regime but also before. Governments often use artistes as mouthpieces because of their widespread acceptance.

Recent events show how the audience has discarded those who were comfortable during the previous government's tenure and who were associated with government propaganda. These artistes must now take accountability for their actions.

How do you perceive 'Mohanagar' as a viewer?

It's challenging for me to comment on ***Mohanagar*** purely as a viewer since I created the plot and characters.

This work addresses issues like police and state-sponsored oppression. As a creator, my goal was to bring these topics to light. Instead of analysing it from a viewer's perspective, I think it's more important to consider how the audience has related to it. People are interpreting ***Mohanagar*** in a certain way now, but their perceptions might change over the next 10 years. Ultimately, we must leave it to time.

We've heard about harassment related to works like 'Mohanagar'. Did any actors or artistes hesitate to join the project when you pitched the web-series?

When discussing the story, no one refused to work on it. I was able to make it with everyone I had initially thought of. The same goes for ***Mohanagar 2***. In this regard, I am very fortunate. From the actors to the producers and the entire cast and crew, everyone worked diligently on the production.

PHOTO: **SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED**

However, it wasn't just me; the actors also faced harassment for their involvement in ***Mohanagar***. Yet, none of them refused to work on the sequel. Instead, everyone worked with even greater passion. The OTT platform associated with the project also fully supported us.

The iconic character of OC Harun in 'Mohanagar' was played by Mosharraf Karim. What made you think of him for this role?

When I first conceived the story of ***Mohanagar***, I couldn't imagine anyone else for the role of OC Harun other than Mosharraf Karim. This character is not a simple one; there's a duality in him. He might say one thing but think another. OC Harun is neither rigid nor plain and boring; he has a great sense of humour. Overall, I felt no one else would be more suitable for the role.

After the student-led mass uprising, we now have a new form of Bangladesh, and state reform is underway. Do you think there might be communal pressure on art in the future?

As artistes, we have always spoken for a secular Bangladesh. The threat of communalism has been present for over 50 years. Regardless of which government comes into power, this struggle for a non-communal Bangladesh has always been there. We've seen the rise of JMB in 2001 and the attack on Chhayanaut. But we fought back, and this struggle will never end; it will always persist.

There's been discussion and criticism about artistes taking sides in movements. Some are accused of being opportunistic, speaking out in favour only after the determined fact. How do you view this?

This can be seen in two ways. First, someone might have been a beneficiary of the government before, but after witnessing the overall situation, their conscience may have awakened. Seeing the atrocities, they might no longer hold their previous position. Secondly, when they see the situation changing, they quickly jump off the boat and try to reach the shore.

People look up to the artiste community. Many are influenced and inspired by them. I would say the audience needs to understand which artistes speak for the people and which speak for power. The audience will decide this, and the youth understand it too. Where an artiste should speak for the masses but instead speak for power, the audience will reject them. This has become even clearer in this movement.

You can't fool people. The people of this country weren't waiting for an artiste's call to take to the streets. They went out on their own without waiting for a call from their favourite artiste or idol. From this, the artiste community should learn that if you stand with the people, they will stand with you; otherwise, they will cast you aside.

Translated by Mahiya Tabassum.

NEWS

Govt to form

FROM PAGE 2

the identities of its administrators, and those responsible for establishing them.

In a press release, the NHRC yesterday said that The Daily Star's August 21 report titled "Inside the Aynaghar," along with similar reports from various media outlets, has drawn its attention.

The NHRC expressed serious concerns and has taken suo moto (self-initiated) action, calling for comprehensive information about the Aynaghar.

According to the reports, these secret detention cells held victims of enforced disappearance for days, months and even years in inhuman conditions during Sheikh Hasina's 16-year regime. These facilities are notorious for their complete isolation, with detainees unable to see any light from the outside world.

The NHRC requested the senior secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs to provide details regarding the current status of the Aynaghar, its administrators, the identities and numbers of those detained, the legal grounds for their detention, and those responsible for establishing the cells, according to the press release.

The deadline for submitting the report has been set for September 25.

"In a democratic state, the physical and mental torture inflicted over the years in the 'Aynaghar' is seen by the Commission as a severe violation of both constitutional and legal norms, as well as human rights. The damage caused to detainees due to indefinite detention is irreparable, and they are entitled to compensation," the NHRC said.

The notice states that the commission can only request reports from the government concerning allegations of disappearances or abductions by law enforcement agencies, whether initiated suo moto or based on complaints.

Due to the limitations of Section 18 of the National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009, the Commission cannot conduct its own investigations and must rely on government reports, which can sometimes take years to receive, it said.

The commission believes that this legal limitation leaves it in a helpless position and requires urgent reform.

Salman F Rahman

FROM PAGE 12

Shahab Uddin

Zunaid Ahmed Palak

millions of taka by showing fake expenses in various sectors. Shahab also took bribes between Tk 80 lakh and Tk 90 lakh for transferring each forest officer, the complaint said.

He issued DoE certificates to various factories that pollute the environment with liquid waste and did not have the factories' effluent treatment plants inspected.

The documents said he took Tk 7 crore to sign a resolution of land which forced the then chairman of Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation (BFDIC) to hand over a piece of land to the Climate Change Trust.

Shaon, former lawmaker from Bhola-3, is alleged to have amassed illegal wealth by misusing his power.

According to the complaint, he misappropriated funds from various projects in Lalmohan and Tazumuddin upazilas in 2021-2022 fiscal year. He embezzled Tk 6 crore, 260.39 tonnes of wheat, and 234.33 tonnes of rice allocated for Kabikha (Food for Work) and Kabita (Money for Work) programmes.

The anti-graft body also decided to investigate corruption allegations against former state ministers Nasrul and Palak.

TRAVEL BAN

The ACC yesterday sought travel bans on Harun or Rashid, former DB chief (Dhaka Metropolitan Police), and his wife Shireen Akter. The ACC wrote to the Special Branch of police to this end.

The decision came after the anti-graft body decided to probe allegations against him of acquiring crores of taka through various irregularities.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday issued a 60-day travel ban on Taqsem A Khan, the former managing director of Dhaka Wasa, in connection with graft allegations brought against him.

ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir moved the petition.

In the application, Jahangir said Taqsem was trying to flee the country. So, a travel ban is needed to prevent him from leaving the country.

UN team arrives in Dhaka

FROM PAGE 12

affairs, and the inspector general of police, said diplomatic sources.

"The purpose of this visit is to understand their priorities for assistance in promoting human rights," said UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in a statement.

Based on the discussions, the UN will sign an agreement with the interim government on the framework for investigation, according to a UN official.

This visit, which is taking place in response to a request from the interim government, will focus on discussing the process for investigating human rights violations in light of the recent violence and unrest, the statement said.

Once the details are finalised, a separate fact-finding team will be dispatched in the coming weeks to conduct the investigation, it added.

"They will talk to the victims, review videos of rights violation, talk to the government officials, witnesses and whoever they need," the UN official said.

The mission will need six to eight weeks for the investigation and then it will submit a report, including recommendations for reforming security sector.

According to a primary UN report published on August 16, 650 people were killed in Bangladesh between July 16 and August 11 during the student-led protests and after the fall of the Awami League regime on August 5.

The reported death toll is likely an underestimation, as information collection has been hindered by restrictions on movement due to the curfew and the internet shutdown, it said.

The UN said the number of reported killings in revenge attacks since August 5 still remains to be determined. Those killed include protesters, bystanders, journalists covering the events and a number of members of the security forces.

A new reality for Hasina in India

FROM PAGE 12

to Bangladesh, choosing anonymity, told this newspaper that regardless of the law, the decision on whether or not Hasina will be extradited will ultimately be a "political call".

"The question to be answered is how strong are economic linkages between India and Bangladesh are, which will ensure that Hasina does not hang like an albatross by the neck of bilateral ties for the bigger interests of both countries," the career diplomat said.

Professor Sreeradha Dutta, a professor of international affairs at the OP Jindal Global University in India who has a long track record of research on Bangladeshi democracy, said that extradition will neither be an easy nor a quick process.

"Bangladesh can request extradition, but I believe it will become a long-drawn judicial process. Even if Bangladesh revokes her passport, that might have no implication for India. India will question the decision and its legitimacy," said Professor Dutta.

"Since a government politically opposed to Sheikh Hasina is the one prosecuting her, it might be perceived that she is fleeing political persecution and a threat to life. We have a history of looking after our friends," she added.

Another Indian diplomat who had worked in Dhaka in the 1990s said the dilemma for India is that while it needs to maintain ties with whoever holds the reins of power in Bangladesh, at the same time it should not be seen as abandoning a long-standing friend like Hasina.

There are enough linkages between the economies of Bangladesh and India to guard against any tectonic shift in the relations between the two countries, he added.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Mohammad Touhid, in an interview with Reuters on August 16, said if the country's home and law ministries decide, "we have to ask for her ... return to Bangladesh".

Responding to a question about the status of Hasina's stay in India, India's External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, told a media briefing on August 16 that her entry into India was granted on short notice.

"Extradition and other such issues are consular matters that are discussed regularly at the consular level. I will update you on any new developments regarding this matter," he said.

INDIA'S HISTORY OF GRANTING ASYLUM

Sheikh Hasina had previously sought and obtained political asylum from India in 1975 after the assassination of her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15. Hasina and Rehana escaped the bloodshed as they were in then-West Germany.

Before being granted political asylum, they had taken refuge in the home of Bangladesh's ambassador to West Germany. Hasina returned to Dhaka on May 17, 1981, from India.

India is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol.

But India has given shelter to many Pakistani refugees since 1947, while a huge number of refugees from Tibet came to India when Dalai Lama and his followers were being persecuted by Chinese authorities in 1959.

Many Bangladeshi refugees settled in Kolkata during the Liberation War in 1971, while many Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka settled in Tamil Nadu in 1980.

In 2022, Rohingya refugees from Myanmar fled to India, and India has been providing shelter to many, although without any strategy for refugees.

According to BBC Bangla reports, in 1975, Krishak Sramik Janata League President Abdul Kader Siddique took political shelter in India, while in 1959 the Indian government provided asylum to Dalai Lama and his followers.

Mohammad Najibullah Ahmadzai, former president of Afghanistan, had to resign in 1992 and sought asylum in India, which was promptly granted.

In 2013, former Maldivian president Mohamed Nasheed was granted political refuge in the Indian High Commission in Male, while the former king of Nepal, Maharaja Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah, along with his family members, took refuge status in India in 1950.

HASINA'S EXIT NOT ONE-OFF

Before thousands of people stormed her official residence, Hasina was flown to Hindon Airbase in Ghaziabad by a military aircraft on August 5.

At the time, she was no longer the prime minister of Bangladesh, as per the statements of Army Chief General Waker Uz Zaman, who announced to the nation that Hasina had resigned prior to her departure.

After landing at Hindon airbase, Hasina was transported to a safe house of paramilitary provided by the Indian government in Noida, Uttarakhand province, at an unspecified date, according to sources.

The nature of Hasina's departure was not unique; other heads of state have recently set similar precedents in neighbouring countries.

The events that transpired in Bangladesh on August 5 bore striking similarities to those that occurred in Sri Lanka in July 2022 when former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa and prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa were ousted following a mass movement.

After his fall, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, his wife, and two bodyguards fled to the Maldives by a military jet, and then he reportedly flew to Singapore.

The former Thailand prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra was ousted by a military coup in 2006 and exiled to Dubai for 15 years, dodging an eight-year prison sentence for corruption and abuse of power.

He returned to Bangkok for the first time in 15 years in August 2023 and was taken into custody and sentenced by the Supreme Court to eight years in prison. His eight-year sentence was later commuted to a year by King Maha Vajiralongkorn in September last year. Thaksin Shinawatra received a royal pardon last week after his daughter, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, 37, was elected as Thailand's prime minister.

55 govts use travel curbs on critics

Says report

AFP, *Washington*

At least 55 governments around the world are using travel restrictions as part of their repressive tactics against perceived political opponents, according to a report released yesterday.

Revoking citizenship, imposing travel bans, confiscating passports and denying consular services are among the methods used by authoritarian regimes to restrict the freedom of movement of people seen as a threat, according to Freedom House.

The report was compiled in part based on interviews with 31 people from Belarus, India, Nicaragua, Rwanda and Saudi Arabia who "experienced mobility controls firsthand."

The governments use at least one of these four methods in retribution for political activism or dissent, the US nonprofit dedicated to promoting democracy said.

Afghanistan's Taliban govt enacts 'vice and virtue' law

AFP, *Kabul*

Afghanistan's Taliban authorities have announced the codification of laws detailing rules of behaviour and lifestyle based on their strict interpretation of Islamic law.

The 35-article law published in the official gazette on July 31 establishes prohibitions already generally known in the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, but its enactment could allow for increased control of the population.

The justice ministry announced on its website on Wednesday that the law had been approved by the Taliban's supreme leader, the reclusive Hibatullah Akhundzada, who rules by decree from the southern city of Kandahar.

The white-coat wearing personnel of the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice in charge of enforcing the law have been fixtures of Afghan streets since the Taliban swept to power in 2021.

Rescuers from Tripura Disaster Management Authority evacuate flood-affected people to a safer place following heavy rains at a village on the outskirts of Agartala, India yesterday. At least 10 people were killed after heavy rainfall in Agartala led to floods due to overflowing Gomati River, with over 34,000 persons being displaced, officials said.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Second aircraft carrier arrives in Middle East

Says US military amid fears of regional conflict; China urges citizens in Lebanon to leave 'as soon as possible'

AFP, *Washington*

The USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and accompanying destroyers have arrived in the Middle East, the US military said later on Wednesday, after the country's defense secretary ordered the strike group to accelerate its speed.

The carrier's arrival brings the number in the region to two -- at least temporarily, as the Lincoln is to replace the USS Theodore Roosevelt -- at a time of heightened fears of regional conflict following high-profile assassinations claimed by, or blamed on, Israel.

"USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), equipped with F-35C and F/A-18 Block III fighters, entered the US Central Command (USCENTCOM) area of responsibility," the military command responsible for the Middle East said on social media.

"The USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), the flagship of Carrier Strike Group 3, is accompanied by Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 21 and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9," it added.

The Pentagon said on August 11 that US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin had ordered the Lincoln to "accelerate its transit" to the Middle East, after directing its deployment to the region at the beginning of the month.

Fears of a major escalation have mounted since Hezbollah and Iran vowed to respond to twin killings blamed on Israel late last month.

An Israeli strike on Beirut's southern suburbs killed a top Hezbollah commander, Fuad Shukr, shortly before an attack in Tehran blamed on Israel killed Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh.

Meanwhile, China yesterday urged its citizens in Lebanon to leave "as soon as possible", according to an embassy statement.

"Recently, the situation on the Lebanese-Israeli border has continued to be tense, and security circumstances in Lebanon are severe and complex," China's embassy in Beirut said.

Assam plans law for Muslim marriages, divorces

AFP, *Guwahati*

Indian authorities in Assam state have introduced a bill that would require Muslims to register their marriages and divorces, with the chief minister claiming the measure will help stop child marriage.

The bill is seen as a state-level step towards the government's proposed common civil code of law, which is bitterly opposed by Muslim activists as an attack on their faith.

India's 1.4 billion people are subject to a common criminal law, but personal matters such as marriage, divorce and inheritance are governed by varying rules based on traditions of different faiths.

In Assam, it is already mandatory for other religions to register marriages with civil authorities.

Assam's state government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), said the bill would be tabled during the next state assembly.

Cases against Hasina so far cross 50

FROM PAGE 2

minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former AL MPs Md Saiful Islam and Talukdar Mohammad Towhid Jung Murad, and former police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun were among the accused.

Uttara West resident Zakiullah Bahar, 56, filed another case against Hasina and 32 others over the death of 12th grader Abdullah Bin Jahid in the Airport area on August 5.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mainul Islam ordered the Airport Police Station chief to register it as an FIR.

The third case in the capital was filed by Mohammadpur resident Rabiul Khan Hillol against Hasina and 67 others over the killing of Shahriar Hossain Rokon, 23, on July 19.

Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury ordered Mohammadpur Police Station to investigate the case.

Another murder case against Hasina and 78 named accused and 450 to 500 unnamed people was filed at Mohammadpur Police Station in connection with the killing of a truck driver in the Beribadh area under Mohammadpur in the capital on July 20.

Meanwhile, a murder case against Hasina and 147 others in Dhaka yesterday was filed at Adabor Police Station. The victim, a garment factory worker, was shot on August 5 and died two days later.

In Narsingdi, a case was filed against Hasina, Quader, Asaduzzaman, Mamun and 78 others over the killing of businessman Azizul Islam during the student-led movement on July 19.

The Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court directed the local police chief to register it as an FIR after recording the statement of the plaintiff and victim's father Almach Mia.

Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana, son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, daughter Saima Wazed Putul and 76 others were sued over the abduction and killing of a union-level BNP leader named Shah Alam Sujan in Bogura's Shibganj upazila in 2018.

Advocate Abdul Wahab, also the general secretary of upazila unit BNP, filed the case with a Bogura court which directed local police to investigate it.

The other accused include Hasina's former press secretary Nayeemul Islam Khan, Ekattor TV Managing Director and Editor-in-Chief Mozammel Babu, its former principal correspondent Farzana Rupa, and ex-IGP Benazir Ahmed.

Stop teachers' harassment

FROM PAGE 12

The 66 organisations include Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Ain o Salish Kendra, Steps Towards Development, Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, BRAC, Women for Women, Care Bangladesh, Karmojibi Nari, Jatiyo Sramik Jote, Concern Worldwide, IEED, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association, Nijera Kori, Manusher Janno Foundation, Dhaka YWCA, Palli Daridro Bimochon Foundation, Oxfam GB, Action Aid Bangladesh, The Hunger Project Bangladesh, Awaj Foundation, PRIP Trust, ADD Bangladesh, World Vision, Campaign for Popular Education, Nagorik Uddyog, National Council of Disabled Women, SARI, BAWSE, fortnightly Anannya, ACD Rajshahi, Brotee, Nari Maitree, WAVE Foundation, Equity and Justice Working Group, Bangladesh Nari Sangabadik Kendra, Nari Uddug Kendra, Jatiya Nari Sramik Jote, Sammilita Samajik Andolon, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra, Jatiya Nari Jote, Shakti Foundation, BPW Club, Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, Acid Survivors' Foundation, Nari Mukti Sangsad, Sheva Nari O Shishu Kallyan Kendra, DRRA, Amrai Pari Paribarik Nirjaton Protirodh Jote (We Can), Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, Soroptimist International Club, Dhaka, BILS, ADAB, FPAB, YWCA of Bangladesh, Dalit Nari Forum, Dipto, A Foundation for Development, Aparajeo Bangla, BLAST, Turning Point Foundation, Center for Men and Masculinities Studies, Save the Children, Ovijan, Adivasi Nari Network, Disabled Welfare Society, Nari Oikko, and Pallima Mahila Parishad.

> **"India firmly believes that no issue can be solved on a battlefield. We support dialogue and diplomacy for the quick restoration of peace."**
> Says Indian Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on Ukraine conflict

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
সদর দপ্তর বর্ডার গার্ড বাংলাদেশ, লজিস্টিকস্ শাখা
কিউ এন্ড অর্ডন্যান্স পরিদপ্তর, ঢাকা

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়।				
২	সংস্থা	সদর দপ্তর বর্ডার গার্ড বাংলাদেশ।				
৩	যে কাজের জন্য দরপত্র আহবান করা হলো	অর্ডন্যান্স দ্রব্যাদি ক্রয়/সরবরাহ।				
৪	দরপত্র আহবানের সূত্র	৪৪.০২.১২০৫.০১০.০৩.২৫১.২৪/৩৪/কিউ				
৫	তারিখ	২২ আগস্ট ২০২৪।				
৬	ক্রয় পদ্ধতি	জাতীয় উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।				
৭	টেন্ডার প্যাকেজ নম্বর	U-40				
৮	দরপত্র প্রচারের তারিখ	২৩ আগস্ট ২০২৪।				
৯	দরপত্র বিক্রির শেষ তারিখ	০৪ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪।				
১০	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৫ সেপ্টেম্বর তারিখ ১১৫৫ ঘটিকা।				
১১	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৫ সেপ্টেম্বর তারিখ ১২০০ ঘটিকা।				
১২	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রি	সদর দপ্তর বর্ডার গার্ড বাংলাদেশ, কিউ এন্ড অর্ডন্যান্স পরিদপ্তর, ঢাকা।				
১৩	দরপত্রের দলিলাদি গ্রহণ ও খোলা	সদর দপ্তর বর্ডার গার্ড বাংলাদেশ, কিউ এন্ড অর্ডন্যান্স পরিদপ্তর, ঢাকা।				
১৪	প্রাক-দরপত্র সভা (ঐচ্ছিক)ঃ স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	সদর দপ্তর বর্ডার গার্ড বাংলাদেশ, কিউ এন্ড অর্ডন্যান্স পরিদপ্তর, ২৮ আগস্ট ২০২৪ইং ১৩০০ ঘটিকা (ঐচ্ছিক)।				
১৫	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	ক। হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স ও আয়কর সনদপত্র এবং ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র। খ। টেন্ডার মূল্যের সমপরিমাণ অর্থের ব্যাংক সলভ্যান্সি এবং ক্রেডিট সুবিধার সনদপত্র। গ। সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে ০২ বৎসরের ঠিকাদারীর যোগ্যতা সনদপত্র। ঘ। প্রস্তুতকারকের (Manufacturer) সনদপত্র। ঙ। জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের ছায়াকপি।				
১৬	দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য	২,০০০/- টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য ও নগদ মূল্য।				
১৭	প্যাকেজ এবং লটের পরিচিতি					
১৮	লট নম্বর	সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	পরিমাণ	দরপত্রের জামানত	অবস্থান	সরবরাহের সময়সীমা
১৯	U-40/A	সুতি মোজা কালো	৭২,০০০ জোড়া	৩,৬০,০০০/-	কিউ এন্ড অর্ডন্যান্স পরিদপ্তর	৯০ দিন
২০	২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বছরে বা তৎপূর্বে বিজিবি'তে চুক্তিকৃত দ্রব্য সরবরাহে ব্যর্থ/অসমাপ্ত থাকলে দরদাতা অযোগ্য বিবেচিত হবে।					
২১	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর পদবী ও ফোন নং	পরিচালক, কিউ এন্ড অর্ডন্যান্স পরিদপ্তর, ফোনঃ ৯৬৫০০০১-২৩৭২				
২২	সংগ্রাহক সত্তা যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।					

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সামিউল এবাদ খান
পরিচালক
মহাপরিচালকের পক্ষে
সদর দপ্তর বিজিবি

GD-240

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
1012, CDA Avenue, Sholashahar
District: Chattogram
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.1500.000.99.002.24-4128

Dated : 22/08/2024

e-Tender Notice No-06/2024-25

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following Packages from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks' branches.

Sl No	Package No	Name of Works	Tender ID	Procurement Method	Last Date & Time of Selling Documents	Last Date & Time of Submission Documents
1	LGED/Cht/ VRRP/Re-hab/ 23-24/W-168	Rehabilitation of Padua Rajarhat - Kamalachari GPS - RHD Bridge Ghata (Khurushia Abdul Hamid Road) Road from Ch. 4000m-6580m; Upazila: Rangunia, District: Chattogram. (Road ID: 415704013) (Salvage Cost: Tk 840796.24)	1006479	OTM	11/09/2024 17:00 BST	12/09/2024 13:00 BST
2	LGED/GOBM/ CTG/23-24/RW-147	Rehabilitation of Charati-Khoderhat-Moulavir Dokan-Bazalia-Bomang Hat-Noya hat Road (From RHD #129) Road from Ch. 13119m-16978m; Upazila: Satkania, District: Chattogram (Road ID: 415822010)	1008114	OTM	11/09/2024 17:00 BST	12/09/2024 13:00 BST
3	LGED/GOBM/ CTG/23-24/ RW-143	Widening of Napura Bazar to Shekherkhil UP (Darusshalam Madrasha) Road. (Elahi Box-huzur Rd.) from Ch. 00m-2705m; Upazila: Banskhali, District: Chattogram (Road ID: 415083006)	1008125	OTM	11/09/2024 17:00 BST	12/09/2024 13:00 BST
4	GCP-3/ctg/ SWM-71R	Maintenance of Time Bazar To Monkir Char Natun Bazar Road by BC at Ch: 00-4830m; Upazila: Banskhali, District: Chattogram (Road ID: 415082003)	1008338	OTM	11/09/2024 17:00 BST	12/09/2024 13:00 BST
5	e-Tender/ PEDP4 /CTG/CIT/2023-24/W17.1422	Major Maintenance of (1) SADAR GHAT BOYS GPS (2) DAKKHIN MADAR BARI GPS under PEDP4	1004899	OTM	17/09/2024 17:00 BST	18/09/2024 13:00 BST
6	LGED/Cht/VRRP/ Re-hab/24-25/W-171	Rehabilitation of Monsoria Bazar To Banskhali Eco Park Road.(Bamerchara Road) Road from Ch. 00m-3240m; Upazila: Banskhali, District: Chattogram (Road ID: 415084073) (Salvaged Materials Cost: Tk 1504048.00)	1006953	OTM	17/09/2024 17:00 BST	18/09/2024 13:00 BST
7	CDWSP/CTG/SIT A/W-04	Widening & Strengthening of Komor Ali Bazar - Kumira RHD (KY Steel Mill) Road via Brickfield, Muradpur, Mahmudabadh, Basbaria (Habib Ahmed Chowdhury Road) by BC at Ch. 0 - 6000m ; Upazila: Sitakunda, District: Chattogram (Road ID: 415862002) (Value of Recovered Material Tk=1265389.00)	988938	OTM	22/09/2024 17:00 BST	23/09/2024 13:00 BST

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GD- 243

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Flood victims need urgent support

Govt must intensity efforts to save lives, reach out to those most at risk

We're worried about the worsening flood situation in the eastern and southeastern regions of Bangladesh where vast swathes of land have been submerged over the last few days, laying bare the vulnerability of even areas previously deemed protected from large-scale flooding. The floods, submerging 357 unions across eight districts as of Thursday afternoon, left more than 4.4 lakh families stranded and a total of three million affected, as per an estimate. Moreover, at least three people died and two went missing on Thursday. These numbers are set to rise should the downpours and swelling of rivers by the onrush of water from India continue. Against this backdrop, the urgency of improved, coordinated response to ensure the safety of flood-hit communities cannot be overstated.

Among the eight districts affected, the situation in Feni, Cumilla, Noakhali, Chattogram, Khagrachari, and Moulvibazar is particularly distressing. The situation in Feni—especially in Chhagalnaiya, Phulgazi, and Parshuram upazilas—has been described as unprecedented, with nearly every house inundated. This has caused a massive humanitarian crisis. The municipal towns are unrecognisable under the deluge. Roads remain impassable, and the call for speedboats and helicopters to expedite rescue efforts has gone largely unanswered. While the interim government is doing the best it can, ongoing aid and rescue efforts have caused frustration among local residents.

In Khagrachari, the situation has been equally troubling. Continuous rain and runoff from the hills have submerged over 100 villages across the nine sub-districts of Khagrachari, making this the worst flood recorded since 1988. In this and other hilly districts of Chattogram, there is the added risk of widespread landslides. Many fear that deadly landslides similar to those in 2017 may occur, with people living on the hillsides or slopes being urged to relocate to safer areas or shelters. The inadequacy of shelters and relief efforts, exacerbated by the difficulty of reaching remote areas, has emerged as another concern in flood-hit areas. Equally troubling has been the disruption in communications and power supply—with several areas entirely disconnected—further isolating the vulnerable populations.

Amid this situation, one development with the potential for a flare-up in Bangladesh-India relations has been the release of waters from an Indian dam likely intensifying flooding in Bangladesh. Although India's ministry of external affairs refuted claims of causing the flooding on our eastern borders, Bangladesh's information adviser has categorically blamed it for opening the dam without any prior warning, depriving Bangladesh of the chance to prepare accordingly. The sheer intensity of flooding in areas like Cumilla and Feni does lend credence to the allegation of dam-barrage opening on India's part. India's water sharing policy has long caused consternations in Bangladesh, and we hope the latest development serves as a clarion call for equitable water-sharing arrangements to be made urgently.

Experts say the situation may improve within two-three days, but until then the dual assaults of heavy rain and onrush of water from India will likely cause further damage. So we urge the government, security forces on duty, and all public representatives including student volunteers to further intensity their efforts to help the affected communities. We must all stand together to ensure that they receive the aid and support they so desperately need. Communications and power supply in the flood-hit areas must also be restored urgently.

Stop extortion in transport sector

Bringing discipline in this vital sector is paramount

It is disturbing to know that soon after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5, BNP-affiliated transport leaders have emerged on the scene and taken control of major transport organisations across the country. According to a *Prothom Alo* report, the offices of Dhaka Road Transport Owners' Association and Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Association, from where the transport sector used to be controlled by Awami League leaders, are now under the control of their BNP counterparts. Similarly, BNP men have taken control of almost all other transport organisations, bus terminals, and workers' unions.

Understandably, the main objective behind their push is to get their hands on extortion money. Reportedly, every year, around Tk 2,000 crore is collected by the transport owners' and workers' associations through extortion across the country. While about Tk 70 is collected openly from each bus or truck every day, there are various other fees, including "gate pass" fees or membership fees, that are collected from transport operators as daily, monthly, and sometimes one-time donations. According to a Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) study published in March, politically connected individuals or groups, traffic and highway police, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) officials, transport organisations, and staffers of municipalities or city corporations all get a share of this money, which shows how pervasive this culture of extortion has been.

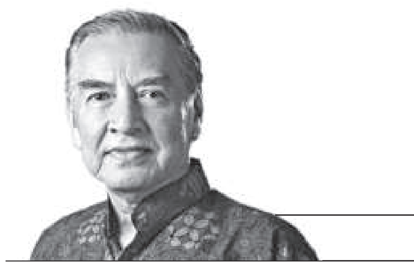
Unfortunately, the transport sector is just one example where BNP-linked men are taking control of important public sectors. After the fall of Awami League, we have seen how BNP-affiliated people have been trying to assert their control in every other sector, such as the health sector. Recently, we have also seen how groups claiming allegiance to the BNP have been trying to take control of slums and footpaths in the city. This tendency must stop urgently.

Extortion is one of the key reasons for the chaos and lawlessness in the transport sector, so the interim government must find a sustainable solution to this problem. The transport organisations, including powerful owners' and workers' associations, must be represented by honest individuals who can save this sector from the crippling influences of corruption and irregularities, which have led to our roads becoming one of the most dangerous in the world. Reform of state institutions was a major goal of the student-led mass movement; and to attain that goal, politicisation of vital public sectors including transport must stop.

Strengthen the chief adviser's hands

Some actions are having contrary effects

THE THIRD VIEW



Mahfuz Anam
is the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

MAHFUZ ANAM

Honestly, we had all lost hope about democracy, rule of law, good governance, accountability of public institutions, corporate governance, integrity in the leadership, free media, etc in Bangladesh. The only way forward was sycophancy and corruption. Options were "lick or fill," meaning either lick their feet or fill their pocket.

Students and citizens together have totally and unbelievably changed the scenario. They have forcibly opened all the doors that were firmly shut but for the lackeys. Suddenly, we are able to breathe again and dream again. But dreams are just as beautiful as they are fragile. Events are taking place that are likely to make the fulfilment of our dreams more difficult than they ought to be. There are occurrences that are unnecessarily raising questions about the interim government and creating doubts about its efficacy. These are happening both within the system and outside.

We start with the police. If any state institution contributed to bringing down the old regime, it was police. They were used by the then ruling Awami League as its own extension, but they later became a Frankenstein and implemented their own agenda. As the saying goes, "Old habits die hard," so now that the police are operating under the new regime, they are doing so in the very same way that they did before: abuse the law in implementing it.

Two journalists, former employees of Ekattor TV—not the best example of objective journalism—were picked up at the airport, handed over to the Detective Branch (DB) of police, and later charged with murder and placed on remand for four days. What law did they break? A murder charge? Their names were not in the original FIR, but were included later under the category of "unknown" miscreants (a most dangerous practice and one that should be scrapped immediately. Police can always add new names as investigation reveals). Even if they were big supporters of the discredited regime, they did not break any established law. The way to handle them is to criticise their journalism and expose their partisanship, but they cannot be jailed without specific charges of breaking the law.

Vandalising media establishments, TV stations—the latest incident occurring at the East West Media Group—deserve our condemnation. The policies of these establishments may have been unethical, one-sided and devoted to serving the fallen government, but their voices still cannot be forcibly shut. However blatant and unethical their journalism may have been, they cannot be subjected to physical attacks, arrests and intimidation.

The East West Media Group's office in Bashundhara Residential Area, Dhaka was attacked on August 19, 2024. PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

These actions are creating fear among journalists, raising the question as to whether we are returning to the old ways with the victims changing—instead of pro-BNP journalists, the victims are now the pro-Awami League journalists. We must not repeat past mistakes.

Then there was the incident at the court premises where former AL minister Dipu Moni was not protected by the police sufficiently to prevent pro-BNP lawyers from assaulting her. Police cannot avoid responsibility for this failure. But also, these partisan lawyers broke their own professional ethics and denigrated the court and their own profession.

We find it very worrying, the way murder charges are being slapped on former ministers, AL leaders, MPs, former judges, scholars, lawyers and, as mentioned above, on journalists without any proof. The approach seems to be "charge first, prove later." Too many murder cases are piling up against the former PM, which is already giving it an air of witch hunt. The more cases pile up, the less will be its credibility. A few well-founded cases that are supported by strong evidence is good enough to hold the former PM to account. But the way it is happening is already raising questions. What we are seeing is that cases are being filed with courts against the former prime minister, some AL leaders, some judges, lawyers, scholars—persons like Muntassir Mamoon, Shahriar Kabir, former Justice Enayetur Rahim, politicians Hasanul Huq Inu, and Rashed Khan Menon (who was arrested last night). Many cases include 30, 40 or up to 120 names. All those on the list are being charged with murder with no specific evidence. The court then sends these cases to local police stations to be recorded. Then, randomly some people are arrested and others not. Such use of the legal process and filing cases for murder without any evidence are misuses of the law, which will only corrode public trust in the legal process and on the present dispensation.

We want to make the point that, like the former regime, such weaponisation of the legal system makes us feel that we are facing the same abuse of law as before. Many of the arrested ministers are being charged with murder instead of the crimes they are most likely to be found guilty of—abuse of power, financial sector crimes, bribery, corruption, banking fraud. Each time such murder cases are being filed, the legal process is coming under question.

Our law adviser has written volumes criticising such laws and practices. We expect him to remove such misuse of laws and ensure more credibility for the whole process.

Then there are other types of events that are increasing our worry about mob rule and people taking up law in their own hands. We really need to think about some of the incidents that have happened recently: i) forcibly entering the Secretariat and compelling the cancellation of remaining HSC exams; ii) forcing the interim government to grant promotions in bureaucracy and various government bodies; iii) forcing the removal of teachers from various posts in different campuses; iv) forcing the interim government to change appointments and dictating choices; and v) political parties competing to occupy critical posts in this transition period.

All the facts mentioned above are of great embarrassment to the interim government, and they are, however moderately, eroding public confidence. Part of what's happening can be accepted as unavoidable. When a powerful and long-standing government suddenly falls, there is a power vacuum, and both those with genuine grievances and the opportunists who try to take advantage of the power shift create situations like the ones mentioned above. Every day, there are demonstrations in front of the Chief Adviser's Office with endless demands, which are mostly self-serving rather than of national interest.

Prof Yunus's government is here only because of the love and respect he enjoys from the people, and especially from the students who spearheaded the latest uprising. They toppled the Sheikh Hasina government and opened up a whole world of possibilities. It's these possibilities that we must all work to try to bring to fruition. We are standing at the doorstep of a new Bangladesh. But we are also standing on very slippery grounds. It is slippery because we are a divided lot at the moment with the cronies of the old regime, power-hungry opportunists, and vested groups—especially those who looted the state coffers and our banks—waiting for a chance to subvert the interim government. This along with many of the advisers lacking experience in the governance process make the slippery grounds even more so.

As Prof Yunus said, let us not take a wrong step and miss the opportunity. In some cases, we seem to be doing so.

To protect free speech, get rid of oppressive laws

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SINHA IBNA HUMAYUN

The Cyber Security Act (CSA), 2023 is widely accepted as a draconian spin-off of the Digital Security Act (DSA), 2018. Hastily passed a few months before the Parliamentary Election of 2024, the CSA carries the same repressive watermarks of the DSA, which was also passed just before an election. The purpose of this law is widely recognised as suppressing the free press and freedom of speech. As a nation in transition, Bangladesh must repeal the CSA to safeguard the rights of its citizens.

All but the most loyal supporters of the Awami League would agree that during its reign, Bangladesh suffered a massive decline in freedom of speech. The World Press Freedom Index ranked Bangladesh 165th out of 180 countries in the 2024 report, placing it at the bottom among South Asian nations, only above Afghanistan. While many factors contributed to this decline, one of the main suppression tools was the CSA and its predecessor.

National and international media, activists, and legal experts strongly opposed non-bailable offenses which existed in the DSA. Unfortunately, the same spirit continued in the CSA, as any offence booked under sections 17, 19, 27 and 33 of the act were declared to be non-bailable.

Section 4 of this act restricted the possibility of anyone criticising the government, even outside of Bangladesh. Unilateral power is given to the Director General of National Cyber Security Agency in section 4, to remove or block any content with the assistance of BTRC.

Section 21 outlines a five-year jail term and/or a Tk one crore fine for any statement, conspiracy, or negative criticism against the Liberation War, the father of the nation, the national anthem, and the national flag, allowing law enforcement to package any form of criticism against the government as anti-state or anti-government and prosecute ruthlessly. Section 25 further doubles down on so-called conspiracies to spread propaganda and falsehoods that affect the image and reputation of the country. The wording of this clause was purposefully kept vague to allow arbitrary interpretation.

Section 42 grants police absolute authority to search bodies, places, confiscate, and arrest without showing any cause or warrant. The former ruling government has been heavily criticised for using this clause as a major fear tactic. Many journalists have refrained from saying or writing anything against the government out of fear of police harassment and brutality.

The extent to which the CSA strangled rights and voices is astonishing and disproportionate. When the law of the land allows accused individuals to get bail for serious offenses, such as loan default, cheque fraud, and land grabbing, how can authorities detain someone without bail for something as harmless as a Facebook post? This law intentionally targets journalists, netizens, and ordinary citizens, tarnishing freedom of speech, expression, and investigative journalism. No authority, either private or public, should be allowed such unchecked power to search, detain, or punish people.

Although the previous regime is gone, the law remains in force, and many of its victims are still behind bars. Between October 2018 and September 2023, 4,520 people were charged in 1,436 cases. The Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) traced identities of the accusers in 859 cases and found that the former ruling party activists filed 263 of them, suing 887 people.

Victims who have been unjustly detained, tried, and convicted should be immediately released. Independent judicial investigation should be conducted and personnel who were involved in framing innocent citizens must face the law.

The CSA must be repealed, and the interim government must form an impartial committee consisting of legal experts, journalists, cyber security experts, and activists to draft a new act. The new act should only focus on cybercrimes such as fraud, theft, hacking, or any action that compromises national cyber security. Any online activities of anti-state or anti-national nature can always be addressed under penal code and other existing laws. Speech, online activism, and all forms of journalistic and creative expression must be excluded from the scope of the future cyber law.

For the first time in many years, there is an environment where publishing an article or a Facebook status doesn't make us feel scared. Online news portals are posting materials and incriminating evidence that were practically impossible just a few weeks ago. Television and print media have also come out of their shells, deviating from their once established party lines. These are steps in the right direction, but the fruits of freedom should not appear circumstantial in the long term; they should be structural.

Years of faulty laws have strangled citizens' voices, to an extent that self-censorship has become our second skin. The youth of the country have obviously spoken, and leveraging on that, the existing legal system should be modified so that the common Bangladeshi can speak freely, too. We must dispel the oppressive legal instruments of the past and enact better laws, so that future governments cannot senselessly prosecute its own citizens, much like the last one did.

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'It's been most challenging to reach those marooned in Feni'

***Syeda Rizwana Hasan**, adviser to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, discusses the severity of the floods, challenges of rescue efforts in Feni and next steps of the interim government in addressing this unexpected national crisis in an interview with **Sushmita S Preetha** of **The Daily Star**.*

Flooding has taken a dire turn in the country within a very short time. Feni, in particular, has not faced such a critical situation in living memory. What's the latest update from the ground?

We are hearing the same thing on the ground. There has been flooding in Feni before, but never to such an extent. Feni locals are not used to such terrible flash floods, neither are government and non-government authorities. Now we are hearing that water is coming into the city as well, which is a matter of great concern. The most challenging aspect has been reaching remote areas and carrying out rescue operations. On Wednesday night, there was no electricity or mobile network, so the rescue mission became very difficult. We could not restore electricity as there was the risk of electrocution. Most of the rescue operation has to be conducted during the day, so the situation really is severe in those areas.

What immediate measures are the interim government taking to help the affected communities?

There is enough relief to provide immediate support, as per government data. But the real issue, as I said before, is accessing the affected people. One of the demands coming out of the flood-affected areas has been to use helicopters to rescue those who are marooned, but we are not able to do so because the weather is still quite treacherous, so helicopters still cannot reach those areas. There is also a demand that helicopters be used to provide relief; even that is not possible at the moment because 1) there is too much water, and 2) when you drop relief from a helicopter, people rush towards it and there is a risk of loss of life, which we must avoid. Right now, we are taking urgent measures to rescue people; the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) is sending boats, the army is there, a lot of volunteers are working; but then again, they are faced with difficulty in accessing places where people are trapped.

Excessive rain and hillside runoff are causing the flood. But many are also speculating that the situation has worsened because a dam in India's Tripura has been opened. What is your take on this?

This is not a matter of personal opinion. It is a government-to-government matter. There has been a lot of rain, and as a result, some dams have been opened on the Indian side. What we are trying to figure out is whether we were told before the [Tripura] dam was opened. We may not have a treaty on this particular river, but there are international treaties—such as the no-harm principle, principle of cooperation—on how to manage transboundary or shared resources between countries. Our chief adviser is set to speak with the Indian prime minister and raise these concerns.

The other issue is, why do we only have agreements on eight rivers when we share so many rivers with India? The chief adviser will address what happened in this particular instance, but he will also discuss and prioritise how to prevent such things from happening in the future.

The climate threats should be taken as an opportunity to start the dialogue and reach an agreement for basin-wide river management. The challenges include involving all basin countries within the framework of existing agreements, getting the consent of the upper riparian countries that are naturally placed in advantageous positions, and adhering to the principles, norms and processes prescribed in the 1997 UN convention as none of the riparian countries is party to it. And of course, an effective dispute resolution mechanism has to be put in place.

How is the shuffling of the local government going to affect disaster and relief management?

A local government is, of course, of tremendous help in such situations. Even though there has been a reshuffling in local government, it is not that it has collapsed. Someone from each of those local government offices has been appointed as the administrator. And during disasters, as you also know, one institution may be tasked with the primary role, but all institutions must come together and give their all. To ensure that all departments and ministries can work effectively and urgently together, the disaster management ministry, along with the ministries of fisheries and livestock, agriculture, health, etc, is taking coordinated efforts at the field level as well as the national level.

The adviser for disaster management and relief, who could not go earlier because of bad weather, went to Feni yesterday. He may not have been able to visit the remote areas, but he will oversee the coordination from a nearby area.

What we are trying to figure out is whether we were told before the [Tripura] dam was opened. We may not have a treaty on this particular river, but there are international treaties—such as the no-harm principle, principle of cooperation—on how to manage transboundary or shared resources between countries.

বাসা ভাড়া
দেওয়া হবে।
দোকান ভাড়া দেওয়া হবে

Feni locals are not used to such terrible flash floods, neither are government and non-government authorities. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Besides Feni, there are other districts such as Cumilla, Khagrachhari, etc, which have also been affected by the flash floods. What steps are you taking there?

The situation in Feni is particularly bad, so we are giving our utmost attention there. But local government agencies, ministries, and the army have all been instructed to do their due diligence in other affected areas, and they are being deployed in the places where the embankments have not broken yet, and to ensure that they are ready with whatever is necessary to tackle the situation. Every area is getting attention, but we are particularly worried about Feni because the communication system there has broken down completely.

Many have also questioned the government's poor river conservation and management initiatives amid the increasing intensity and frequency of floods in the country.

Yesterday, we discussed in a meeting that in many areas, water is not receding because of the arbitrary way in which embankments, bridges and/or culverts have been constructed. Since this is a flash flood, when the rain lets up, the rainwater is supposed to recede quickly. There may be river erosion at that time. However, when the water recedes, there must be no obstruction. So, the bigger concern as to whether we have done adequate river management keeping in mind how flood-prone we are was discussed, though the immediate focus is now on rescue and rehabilitation. I have long been saying that our rivers are losing navigability. We have to address these wider concerns in the long run.

LAW REFORM FOR GENDER EQUALITY

From where we left off...

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TASLIMA YASMIN

As we speak of reform across all sectors today, it has become important to revisit and address the various forms of inequalities that have become ingrained at almost all levels of our society. As the glorious history of the very birth of our country owes it to the students' united voices, it is them who are once again inspiring us when the nation is at a crossroads. The spirit of the student-led mass movement was by all means fairness and equality. Hence, it is the right time to revisit the recommendations that women's rights advocates in Bangladesh have proposed time and again, demanding some law and policy reforms that are meant to remedy the age-old inequalities against women, but which have failed to see the light of day in the past decade.

One of the most critical recommendations for such a reform proposal has been regarding the vague and outmoded laws and practices around rape cases. Perhaps scrutinising our laws on sexual violence is even more crucial now in view of the horrific Kolkata rape incident. It is unacceptable that our law remains so outdated that the rape of a child bride as young as 13 years old still cannot be considered as rape when the perpetrator is her husband—no matter how brutal the rape is or whether it causes the child's death. It is also unthinkable that because an adult offender used sharp objects to penetrate a child—as her body is incapable of penile-vaginal intercourse—his charge might simply be of an "attempt to rape" or "sexual assault" instead of "rape" due to the vague legal definitions.

Another demand from the women's rights activists that has remained largely ignored, despite several advocacy attempts, is the call for an anti-sexual harassment law for all workplaces and educational institutions. Time and again, several organisations, activists and legal researchers have proposed drafts of such legislation and related legal reforms. However, other than a token inclusion of a non-functional sexual harassment provision in the Labour Rules in 2022, no substantive steps have been taken to install a robust sexual harassment prevention and protection mechanism at workplaces and educational institutions. This was a crucial demand that found even stronger grounds when Nusrat was murdered in her madrasa premise, but our voices did not reach the lawmakers, and the educational institutions and workplaces still remain largely indifferent to sexual harassment incidents.

Perhaps scrutinising our laws on sexual violence is even more crucial now in view of the horrific Kolkata rape incident. It is unacceptable that our law remains so outdated that the rape of a child bride as young as 13 years old still cannot be considered as rape when the perpetrator is her husband—no matter how brutal the rape is or whether it causes the child's death.

Undeniably, laws that are discriminatory should be amended and new laws should be passed where effective legal protection is lacking. However, in Bangladesh, passing of a new law to address some form of gender inequality is often presented as the only solution to a crisis, be it domestic violence, dowry violence or child marriage. Such new laws or changes in the law pledging to ensure equality for women are generally uninformed of the reality on the ground and overlook the need to evaluate whether there is an actual necessity of a new law on the subject. The result is several overlapping laws and policies creating a rather weak premise for ensuring justice to women. The key stakeholders, on whom the ultimate enforcement of the law depends, are also often not consulted with when laws are drafted.

VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

For instance, the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980 was repealed in 2018 only to be replaced with an almost identical law with few minor additions. There is no explanation as to why the legislature opted for a new dowry prohibition law without simply amending the already existing one. Rather, the 2018 law missed the opportunity to address the critical gaps that existed in the previous law, which were seemingly problematic for victims of dowry violence in getting effective relief under the law. This is also the case for the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000, which was hurriedly amended in 2020 in the face of public outrage triggered by a series of sexual assault cases. The amendment, which increased the maximum punishment for rape to death sentence, carried no impact on the existing injustice against rape survivors. Rather, the same amendment introduced mandatory DNA test to be done for all cases under the law, paving the way for further stretching the already delayed investigation process in rape cases.

While the problematic laws exist, seeking justice for rape and other forms of sexual violence is far more difficult, resulting in the extremely low rate of conviction in rape cases. Key barriers to such a delayed justice process have been identified time and again in the past several years raising alarms on issues such as the lack of witness protection mechanism, rape survivors having to battle with misogyny, and harmful stereotypes during investigation and trial, corruption, lack of effective legal aid, politically biased and largely inefficient public prosecution system, and so on. Nevertheless, other than removal of the provision relating to character evidence from the Evidence Act, no visibly effective steps have been taken to address the obstacles that make the process of seeking justice extremely gruelling for rape survivors.

Also, there is a lack of any systematic evaluation to monitor the newly enacted laws' progress, and it is commonly left for the activists at the end, to point out the apparent inconsistencies in the law that are blocking its implementation—including the crucial gap in budget allocation.

No doubt, these deep-rooted clogs in the justice system and the legal loopholes that have remained unheeded for years cannot be mended overnight. But as Bangladesh renews its pledge for equality and non-discrimination, what we can now hope for is a stronger political commitment to take the first and most crucial step towards meaningful reform for women's right to justice. Now is the time.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Public Administration
Sarkari Karmachari Hospital, Fullbaria, Dhaka
www.skh.gov.bd

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

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Agency	:	Sarkari Karmachari Hospital (SKH)
Procuring Entity Code	:	N/A
Procuring Entity District	:	Dhaka
Expression of Interest for selection of	:	Individual Consultant (National) (Time-Based)
EDI Ref. No	:	05.87.0000.015.007.023.24-496
Date	:	22.08.2024
KEY INFORMATION		
Procurement Sub-Method	:	Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
Budget and Source of Funds	:	GOB
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
Program Name	:	Procurement of Service of Doctors in various Departments of Sarkari Karmachari, Hospital.
Scheme Name	:	N/A
EOI Closing Date and Time	:	**EOI shall be submitted on or before 12/09/2024 at 12:00 pm in a sealed envelope delivered to the undersigned and be clearly marked Request for Expressions of interest for Selection of (Title of Service for Applied Post)". Contact address with email and mobile number of the applicant should be written on the left side of envelope. Necessary documents in support of education qualifications, experience and skills have to be submitted with prescribed format of application stipulated with Request For Application (RFA).**

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT

Title of Service	No of Position	Minimum Educational Qualification	Minimum Experience	Duties and Responsibilities	Brief Description of Assignment
Junior Consultant (Pathology)	1	FCPS/ MD/M. Phil/DCP degree in Pathology	At least 06 (Six) months Working Experience after Post graduation Degree in the respective field	They will perform the duties of a junior consultant in his/her respective department as like all other govt./Private Hospitals in Sarkari Karmachari Hospital as per directives of the concern authority	Please see RFA for details
Junior Consultant (Radiology)	3	FCPS/MD/M.Phil/DMRD/MCPS degree in Radiology			
Junior Consultant (ENT)	2	FCPS/MS/DLO/MCPS degree in ENT			
Junior Consultant (Dentistry)	1	FCPS/MS/Diploma degree in Dentistry			
Junior Consultant (Maxillofacial Surgery)	1	FCPS/MS Degree in Oral Maxillofacial Surgery			
Junior Consultant (Ophthalmology)	2	FCPS/MS/DO/DCO/MCPS degree in Ophthalmology			
Junior Consultant (Anesthesiology)	2	FCPS/MD/DA/MCPS degree in Anesthesiology			
Junior Consultant (Physical Medicine)	1	FCPS/MD degree in Physical Medicine			
Junior Consultant (Cardiology)	5	MD/FCPS/D Card degree in Cardiology			
Junior Consultant (Casualty)	1	FCPS/MS/MCPS degree in General Surgery			
Junior Consultant (Emergency)	1	FCPS/MD/MCPS in Medicine/ MD in Critical Care Medicine			
Junior Consultant (Respiratory Medicine)	1	FCPS/MD/DTCD degree in Respiratory Medicine			
Junior Consultant (Neonatology)	2	FCPS/MD degree in Neonatology			
Junior Consultant (Blood Bank)	1	FCPS/MD/DTM in Transfusion Medicine			
Junior Consultant (Neurology)	2	FCPS/MD degree in Neurology			
Junior Consultant (Nephrology)	2	FCPS/MD degree in Nephrology			
Junior Consultant (Gastroenterology)	2	FCPS/MD degree in Gastroenterology			
Resident Surgeon (Casualty)	2	FCPS/MS/MCPS degree in general surgery			
Medical Officer: Pathology-2 Radiology-7 ENT-3 Anesthesiology-6 Physical Medicine-2 Cardiology-6 Emergency-6 Respiratory Medicine-2 Blood Bank-2 Neurology-2 Nephrology-2 Gastroenterology-2 Surgery-4 ICU-6 Department of Pediatrics (NICU)-6	58	M.B.B.S from any BMDC recognized medical college	At least 01(One) year working experience in respective field	They will perform the duties of a medical officer in his/her respective department as like all other govt./ Private Hospitals in Sarkari Karmachari Hospital as per directives of the concern authority	
Dental Surgeon	2	BDS from any BMDC approved medical college	01(One) year working experience in respective field after BDS Degree	They will perform the duties of a Dental Surgeon in his/her respective department as like all other govt./Private Hospitals in Sarkari Karmachari Hospital as per directives of the concern authority	

Other Details (If applicable)		1. A copy of the terms of reference (TOR), Request for application (RFA) and necessary forms may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during the office hours and any time from the website of Sarkari Karmachari Hospital (www.skh.gov.bd) within the stipulated date. 2. For any clarification about the application procedure, please contact to this mobile number: 01750-247078
Association with foreign firms is	:	Not applicable

EOI Detail information

Ref No	Phasing of services	Location	Start Date	Completion Date
01.	Single: Time Based	Dhaka	October, 2024	September, 2025 (Renewable)

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

Name of Official Inviting EOI	:	Md. A. Razzaque Sarker
Designation of official Inviting EOI	:	Director General, Sarkari Karmachari Hospital, Fullbaria, Dhaka
Address of official inviting EOI	:	Sarkari Karmachari Hospital, Fullbaria, Dhaka
Contact details of official inviting EOI	:	Phone: 02-223386708, 02-223357727 Email: geh@mopa.gov.bd

The Procuring Entity Reserves all the right to accept or reject all EOI

22/08/24

(Md. A. Razzaque Sarker)
Additional Secretary
Director General
Sarkari Karmachari Hospital
Email. geh@mopa.gov.bd

GD-241

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
কমান্ড্যান্ট এর কার্যালয়
পুলিশ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, রংপুর
ptcrangpur.police.gov.bd

স্মারক নং ১৫৮১/পিটিসি

তারিখঃ ২২/০৮/২০২৪

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০২/২০২৪-২০২৫

The Public Procurement Regulation-2006/2008 & 2010/2016 (সংশোধন) মোতাবেক চলতি ২০১৪-২০১৫ অর্থবছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টার (অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪) এর রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেগুলেশন" ২০০৮ (সংশোনীসহ) মোতাবেক নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে সিলমোহরকৃত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	:	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/পুলিশ বিভাগ।
০২.	সংস্থা	:	পুলিশ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, রংপুর।
০৩.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	:	কমান্ড্যান্ট, পুলিশ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, রংপুর।
০৪.	সংগ্রহকারী সত্তার জেলা	:	পুলিশ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, রংপুর।
০৫.	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত পদ্ধতি (OTM)
০৬.	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	:	বাপ্রপ বাজেটের আওতায় বাংলাদেশ পুলিশের বাজেট।
০৭.	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	:	২২/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ।
০৮.	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির সর্বশেষ তারিখ	:	পত্রিকায় বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের পর হতে ২৩/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৩.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
০৯.	দরপত্র সিডিউল জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	২৪/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	:	২৪/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায় দরপত্রদাতা বা মনোনীত প্রতিনিধিদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
১১.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী অফিস ও ঠিকানা	:	কমান্ড্যান্ট এর কার্যালয়, পুলিশ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, রংপুর।
১২.	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির স্থান	:	১। কমান্ড্যান্ট এর কার্যালয়, পুলিশ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, রংপুর। ২। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, রংপুর।
১৩.	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়	:	২৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ বেলা ১৩.০০ ঘটিকা।
১৪.	দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা	:	(ক) ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের সত্ত্বাধিকারীর জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের কপি (খ) হালনাগাদ নবায়নকৃত ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (গ) টিআইএন নম্বরসহ হালসন পর্যন্ত আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদ (ঘ) মূল্য সংযোজন করের নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র (ঙ) বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের তফসিলভুক্ত ব্যাংক কর্তৃক আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতার সনদপত্র (চ) পুলিশের মালামাল সরবরাহ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতার সার্টিফিকেট দরপত্র দলিল ক্রয়ের সময় উল্লেখিত কাগজপত্রের মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করে আবেদনের মাধ্যমে দরপত্র দলিল সরবরাহ করা হবে এবং উক্ত কাগজপত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি অবশ্যই দাখিল করতে হবে। উল্লেখ্য, কার্যাদেশ প্রদানের পূর্বে দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিলকৃত কাগজপত্র সম্পর্কে তদন্ত/সত্যতা যাচাই করা হবে।

১৫.	কাজের বিবরণ	পরিমাণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ (ফেরতযোগ্য)	কাজ সমাপ্তির সময়
ক.	মশুর ডাল (দেশি, উন্নতমানের ছোট দানাবিশিষ্ট ও প্রতি ১০ গ্রাম ডালে কমপক্ষে ৬০০টি দানা থাকতে হবে) রেশন স্টোরে রক্ষিত নমুনা অনুযায়ী ৩.৫০, ৪.০০ ও ৫.৫০ কেজি ওজনের মানসম্মত স্বচ্ছ পলিপ্যাকে সরবরাহ করতে হবে। প্যাকেটের গায়ে স্পষ্টভাবে পণ্যের ওজন, উৎপাদনের তারিখ ও মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণের তারিখ উল্লেখ করতে হবে।	০১ (এক) কোয়ার্টারে ১৫,০০০ কেজি (আনুমানিক)	৭৫০/- প্রতিটি	৬০,০০০/-	অক্টোবর/২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২৪ পর্যন্ত
খ.	ভোজ্য সয়াবিন তেল সরবরাহ (রূপচাঁদা/তীর/সমমানের) ৫.০০/২.০০/১.০০/০.৫০ লিটার প্লাস্টিক কন্টেইনারে (বিএসটিআই কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত) ভিটামিন "এ", "ডি" ও "ই" সমৃদ্ধ এবং ভোজ্য তেলের বোতলে প্রদর্শিতব্য প্রতীক "সঠিক পুষ্টি ও সুস্থ জীবন" থাকতে হবে।	০১ (এক) কোয়ার্টারে ১৫,০০০ লিটার (আনুমানিক)	৭৫০/- প্রতিটি	৭৫,০০০/-	
গ.	চিনি (১ এবং ২ কেজি প্যাকেট আকারে)	০১ (এক) কোয়ার্টারে ৯,৫০০ কেজি (আনুমানিক)	৭৫০/- প্রতিটি	৫০,০০০/-	
ঘ.	পোলাও এর চাল (কালিজিরা/চিনিগুড়া) সরবরাহ	ফোর্স অনুপাতে (কেজি)	৫০০/- প্রতিটি	৫,০০০/-	
ঙ.	গম পেষাই (৫.০০, ২.০০ ও ১.০০ কেজি ওজনের স্বচ্ছ পলিপ্যাকে সরবরাহ করতে হবে। প্যাকেটের গায়ে স্পষ্টভাবে পণ্যের ওজন, উৎপাদনের তারিখ ও মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণের তারিখ উল্লেখ করতে হবে)।	০১ (এক) কোয়ার্টারে ৬০,০০০ কেজি (আনুমানিক)	৭৫০/- প্রতিটি	২৫,০০০/-	
চ.	পুরাতন চটের বস্তা ও সিনথেটিক বস্তা (৫০ ও ৩০ কেজি ওজনের) বিক্রয়	(স্টোরে যে অবস্থায় আছে) ডেড স্টক অনুযায়ী	৫০০/- প্রতিটি	১০,০০০/-	
ছ.	জ্বালানী কাঠ (চেরাই করা শুকনা আম কাঠ) সরবরাহ	ফোর্স অনুপাতে (কেজি)	৫০০/- প্রতিটি	৫,০০০/-	
জ.	কুলি	লোড-আনলোড (চাল, গম ও চিনি)	৫০০/- প্রতিটি	১০,০০০/-	

১৬. বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্যঃ
ক) দরপত্র সংক্রান্তে অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী দরপত্র সংগ্রহকালে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় হতে জানা যাবে খ) দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ হতে ৬০ দিন পর্যন্ত দরপত্র বলবৎ থাকবে। গ) দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত সময়ের মধ্যে কার্য সম্পাদন করতে হবে। ঘ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। ঙ) রেশন সামগ্রী কোয়ার্টার ভিত্তিতে/মাসিক চাহিদার ভিত্তিতে সরবরাহ করতে হবে।

২২/০৮/২০২৪

মোঃ আবুল কালাম আজাদ
বিপি-৭০৯৯০২০৮৫৪
অতিরিক্ত ডিআইজি (ডিআইজি পদে পদোন্নতি প্রাপ্ত) (প্রশাসন)
কমান্ড্যান্ট এর সাময়িক দায়িত্বে
পুলিশ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার, রংপুর
ফোনঃ ০৫২১-৬২২৯৬, ফ্যাক্সঃ ০৫২১-৫২১৩৪
E-mail: cmdptcrgp@police.gov.bd

GD- 238

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা পরিষদ
উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
লামা, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা
ইমেইলঃ lama@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-উ:জে:স্বা:কম/লামা/দরপত্র/২০২৪-২০২৫/৮৫৩

তারিখঃ ২১/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

"The Public Procurement Act-2006 ও বিধিমালা ২০০৮, সংশোধিত আইন ও বিধিমালা ২০১৯" মোতাবেক, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলার লামা উপজেলাধীন ৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য কমপ্লেক্স/ ইউনিয়ন স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ কেন্দ্র/ কমিউনিটি ক্লিনিক/ স্যাটেলাইট ক্লিনিক/ ইপিআই কেন্দ্র/ অন্যান্য স্বাস্থ্য সেবা প্রতিষ্ঠানের রোগী/ সেবা গ্রহিতা/ সেবা দাতাগণের জন্য ২০২৪-২০২৫ইং অর্থ বছরে পথ্য ও খাদ্য সামগ্রী সরবরাহ, লিলেন ধৌতকরণ/পরিস্কার-পরিচ্ছন্নতা সামগ্রী এবং ষ্টেশনারি সরবরাহ/মনিহারি সরবরাহের নিমিত্ত বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতা সম্পন্ন ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী/লন্ড্রীর নিকট হইতে নির্ধারিত ছকে সীলগালাকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	ঃ	স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয় (স্বাস্থ্য সেবা বিভাগ)
২	সংস্থা/প্রতিষ্ঠান	ঃ	স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১২১২।
৩	বাজেট/তহবিলের উৎস	ঃ	ঐ (রাজস্ব)
৪	সংগ্রহকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ	ঃ	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তা, লামা, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা।
৫	দরপত্র ক্রয় ও সংগ্রহের পদ্ধতি	ঃ	উম্মুক্ত দরপত্র
৬	দরপত্র প্যাকেজের নাম	ঃ	১। হাসপাতালের রোগীদের জন্য পথ্য ও খাদ্য সামগ্রী সরবরাহ, ২। ষ্টেশনারি ও বিবিধ সামগ্রী সরবরাহ, ৩। লিলেন সামগ্রী ধৌতকরণ
৭	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	ঃ	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, লামা, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা।
৮	দরপত্র জমা দেওয়ার স্থান	ঃ	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, লামা, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা।
৯	অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী/কাজের বর্ণনা	ঃ	বিস্তারিত সিডিউলে বর্ণিত (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে শর্তাবলী মতে)।
১০	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির সময়সীমা	ঃ	২৫/০৮/২০২৪খ্রিঃ হতে ১৫/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত, দুপুর ২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১১	দরপত্র জমাদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	১৬/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখ সকাল-১২.০০ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১২	দরপত্র বাক্স খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	১৬/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখ সকাল-১২.৩০ ঘটিকায়। দরপত্রদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
১৩	দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজপত্রাদি দাখিল করিতে হইবে	ঃ	হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর পরিশোধের প্রত্যয়নপত্র ও ভ্যাট নিবন্ধিকরণের প্রত্যয়নপত্রের ফটোকপি এবং ব্যাংক সচ্ছলতার সনদপত্রের (মূলকপি)।
১৪	দরপত্রের মূল্য পরিশোধের নিয়ম	ঃ	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তা, লামা, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা বরাবর সোনালী ব্যাংক, লামা শাখায় চালান মূলে ১-২৭১১-০০০০-২৩৬৬ কোডে জমা করে উপজেলা হিসাবরক্ষণ কর্মকর্তার প্রতিস্বাক্ষরিত করে চালান কপি জমা দিতে হবে।

১৫. প্রতিষ্ঠান/দরপত্রের নাম/ধরণ ও আর্থিক বিবরণঃ

প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ও ঠিকানা	দরপত্রের বিবরণ ও ধরণ	বাৎসরিক প্রাক্কলিত মূল্য (সম্ভাব্য)	কোড নং	সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	বায়নার/জামানতের টাকা পে-অর্ডার/ ব্যাংক ড্রাফট
উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য কমপ্লেক্স, লামা, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা।	পথ্য	৩৫,০০,০০০০/-	৩২৫২১০৪	৭৫০/-	৬০,০০০/-
	মনিহারী বিবিধ দ্রব্যাদি সরবরাহ	৭,০০,০০০/-	৩২৫৫১০৫	৪০০/-	১০,০০০/-
	লিলেন সামগ্রী ধৌতকরণ	১০,০০,০০০/-	৩২১১১০২	৫০০/-	১৫,০০০/-

বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্যঃ

ক। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন প্রকার কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র অথবা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ অত্র অফিসের নোটিশে বর্ণিত তারিখ ও সময়ে দরপত্র বাক্স খোলা না হলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে একই সময় ও স্থানে দরপত্র বাক্স খোলা হবে।

খ। বিস্তারিত শর্তাবলী সিডিউলের সহিত সংযুক্ত থাকিবে।

21.08.24

(ডা. এথিং মারমা)
উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তা
লামা, বান্দরবান পার্বত্য জেলা।

GD- 236

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What to WATCH

T Sports and GTV
Pakistan vs
Bangladesh
1st Test, Day 3
Live from 10:45 am

Sony Sports 5
England vs
Sri Lanka
1st Test, Day 3
Live from 4:00 pm

Opening duo resilient but Tigers' task toughens

SPORTS REPORTER

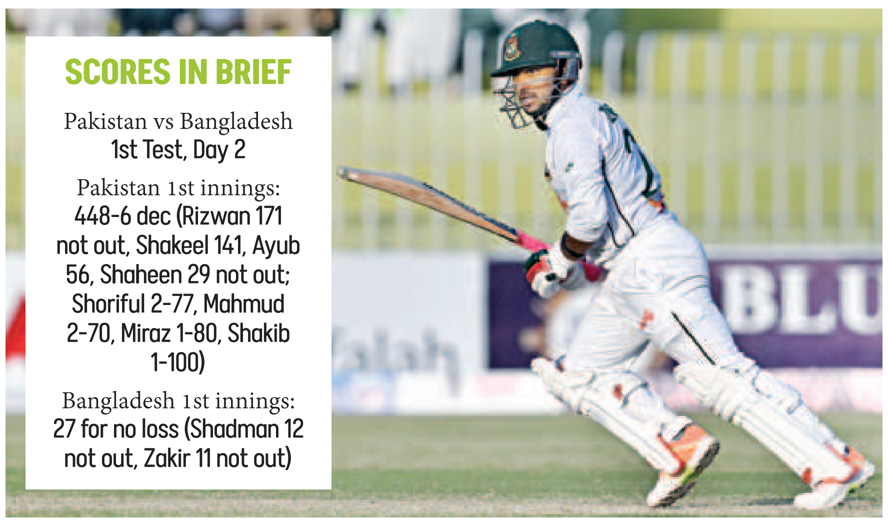
Bangladesh bowlers and fielders toiled under the Rawalpindi sun yesterday as Pakistan batters ensured the visitors would have their work cut out for them on the second day of the first Test.

The visitors picked up just two wickets, having bowled 72 overs on day two as Pakistan rode on Saud Shakeel's 141 and Rizwan Hossain's unbeaten 171 to post 448 for six before declaring.

In reply, the Tigers reached stumps at 27 for no loss as Zakir Hasan and Shadman Islam saw out a tricky 12-over period. Bangladesh will certainly take heart from their short vigil at the crease on the day but will be knowing full well that any slip in concentration can prove disastrous.

Batting form, or lack thereof, especially in the red-ball format has seen the Tigers suffer on a regular basis. In the last series against Sri Lanka at home, Bangladesh regularly lost wickets to false shots, not quite being able to apply themselves.

Batting coach David Hemp was impressed by the opening duo's effort.



SCORES IN BRIEF

Pakistan vs Bangladesh
1st Test, Day 2

Pakistan 1st innings:
448-6 dec (Rizwan 171 not out, Shakeel 141, Ayub 56, Shaheen 29 not out; Shoriful 2-77, Mahmud 2-70, Miraz 1-80, Shakib 1-100)

Bangladesh 1st innings:
27 for no loss (Shadman 12 not out, Zakir 11 not out)

"We are really pleased with how they negotiated the last 12-over block. It can be a challenging time when you have to bat in the last hour of the day's play, especially when you have been in the field all day. The manner in which they played, positive footwork and still looking to score even though you want to be as disciplined and as tight as you can," Hemp said at a press conference yesterday following the day's play.

The surface looked pretty flat and provided plenty of run-scoring opportunities. Talks of whether 20 wickets could be taken by a team had also begun. Hemp acknowledged that the surface is good enough to not deteriorate too much, informing that the plan is to carry on batting throughout the third day.

"From our point of view, it was a good declaration [from Pakistan]; an attacking declaration which I would expect. So it didn't catch us by surprise. For us, it's about batting tomorrow and then see where we are going into day four and five.

"There is still a lot of cricket to be played. So the priority for us is to make sure we bat the day tomorrow and see where we are at. If we are in a good position then can we go past Pakistan or at least get as close as possible. We did see the odd ball grip a bit. But from a distance, it did seem like a batting wicket and I think it will remain that way for a couple of days anyway," Hemp said.

Bangladesh pacers did not manage any reverse swing, an aspect of the game Pakistan revel in. Hemp felt that they have to wait and watch, knowing reverse swing can change the trajectory of the match.

"We will see what happens tomorrow [today] but from our point of view, we didn't think the conditions were such to help with reverse swing," he added.

Jaker, Saif hit tons against Pak Shaheens

SPORTS REPORTER

Jaker Ali and Saif Hassan struck brilliant hundreds for Bangladesh 'A' against Pakistan Shaheens on the third day of the second four-day match at the Islamabad Club Cricket Oval on Thursday.

After the first two days saw no action due to rain and a wet outfield, the match officially commenced on the penultimate day with Bangladesh 'A' being sent to bat. Jaker smashed an unbeaten 136 while Saif made 111 to steer the visitors to 346-6 at stumps.

Saif and Jaker got together when Bangladesh 'A' were struggling on 77-4 and shared a 131-run partnership for the fifth wicket to bring relief to the tourist camp.

The partnership ended with Saif departing soon after completing his eighth first-class ton, falling to Mehran Mumtaz (2-69).

Jaker then put up a 131-run stand for the following wicket with Mahidul Islam Ankon (39), during which the wicketkeeper-batsman completed his fourth first-class hundred.

Ankon got ran out late in the day as Jaker remained unbeaten alongside Tanzim Sakib (0) at stumps.

Earlier, the opening four-day match of the two-match series ended in a draw at the same venue.

'Girls upset' but preparation in full swing

SPORTS REPORTER

Women's wing head of Bangladesh Cricket Board Habibul Bashar insisted that even though the girls are upset about missing out on playing the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup on home soil, it won't hamper their preparation for the global tournament.

"Everyone has the desire to play World Cup on home soil. Most of the girls had the same dream. So, they are a bit upset about it. Of course, we will miss playing on home condition," Bashar told reporters in Mirpur on Thursday.

International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday that the ninth edition of the Women's T20 World Cup has been moved out of Bangladesh because of travel advisories from governments of a number of the participating teams due to the current situation in Bangladesh.

The tournament will now take place in the UAE with BCB continuing to host the event. The tournament will take place across two venues in the UAE -- Dubai and Sharjah -- from October 3 to 20.

Although the venue of the global meet has been changed, BCB is trying hard to give the girls adequate preparation before they compete against England, South Africa, West Indies, and Scotland in Group B of the marquee event.

As part of the preparation, the cricketers reached Rajshahi on Thursday to feature in the 13th Women's National Cricket League 2024-25 where eight divisional teams will compete in the T20 format, beginning on Saturday.

"The preparation isn't being hampered much. We were taking preparation keeping the World Cup in mind. We made arrangements for one-to-one training for the girls. Our local coaches were there. The coaching staff are also here. The NCL is part of our preparation," Bashar said.

Apart from that, BCB is mulling to send the national team to Sri Lanka under the 'A' team banner following the WNCL before they leave for the UAE for the World Cup.

"The wickets in Rajshahi are good. We want girls to play on good and sporting wickets. The monsoon is going on but there is less rain in Rajshahi. We will also get two venues. We will have to finish the tournament in a fixed time. As this is going to be a part of our World Cup preparation, so we decided to hold the matches in Rajshahi.

"We will send our 'A' team to Sri Lanka after the league. That will also be our part of preparation...Those, who will be in our World Cup plan, we will make the 'A' team with them," he said.

AFC CHALLENGE LEAGUE

Kings, East Bengal in same group

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Premier League champions Bashundhara Kings have been drawn in Group A of the inaugural AFC Challenge League along with outfits from India, Lebanon, and Bhutan.

The draw of the AFC Challenge League was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yesterday.

West Zone of the AFC Challenge League will see 12 teams, split into three groups, competing in a round-robin league with three group champions and the best runners-up among three groups advancing into the quarterfinals of the third-tier club competition in Asia.

Along with Bashundhara Kings, East Bengal of India, Nejmeh SC of Lebanon and Paro FC of Bhutan will play the Group A matches between October 26 to November 2 in Thimphu.

Bashundhara Kings had earlier played the now-defunct AFC Cup four times, getting eliminated from the group stages three times while once the tournament was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, Kings have completed registrations of 34 players, including five foreigners, for their upcoming domestic season. Romanian coach Valeriu Tita is expected to arrive early next month as the club management is likely to decide on the date for the start of the club's pre-season.

PAPON
the loose cannon

Nazmul Hassan Papon recently stepped down as the president of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) after spending 12 years at the post. Bangladesh cricket reached some sporadic highs in his tenure but overall, his administration was blighted by allegations of nepotism, corruption as well as sub-par performances over long periods for the men's and women's national teams. Papon's tendency of stirring up controversy with his words, pulling back the curtain on the national team dressing room and bringing up matters which would have been better left untold, made him a colorful figure in the country's cricket. But his loose mouthed nature only added to the chaos, turning a bad situation even worse. Following are a few of his most controversial remarks:

"Mushfiqur's father, Miraz's aunt... beat up someone in some village or so, I had to solve all of that from abroad. These [claims] are a shock to me."
Papon said regarding the players protest over pay-rise in October 2019.

"I was really surprised to see they chose to bat because it was decided the day before [that we would bowl if won the toss]. Both coach and captain said they would take fielding. It was decided. Then when I saw we won the toss and chose to bat, that was the first shock for me."
Papon on Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque's decision to bat first against India during the pink-ball Test in November 2019 in Kolkata.

"Our main focus is the next World Cup, not this one. You can't change everything overnight. We are planning long-term and trying to prepare a squad for the next World Cup. Even if the upcoming World Cup does not go well for us, I won't be disappointed. "
Papon said this, in September 2022, about Bangladesh's short-term and long-term plans regarding the T20 World Cup in the following month and the one in mid-2024.

"This is not a healthy dressing room, this I can guarantee you. This thing [rift between Shakib and Tamim], it's not that I have not tried to sort it out. I have spoken with both of them and I felt that it will not be easy to settle the issues [between them] at the moment. This is my observation,"
the former board president opening up a can of worms, quite unprovoked, when he told the media in February last year that there was a rift between Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan.

"These are rumours. When I was with the team, I neither said nor heard about this. Some people are saying that the atmosphere in the dressing room is not good. I don't know, I haven't seen anything like that."
Papon taking a U-turn a few days later.

"I'm not the same person I used to be. I have not been with the team for the last three-and-a-half years.… I am voluntarily staying detached from the team."
Papon said in July this year, on mending his ways of meddling with the team, following the T20 World Cup.

COMPILED BY STAR SPORTS DESK

Fumble proves costly as U-20s fall to Nepal

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh struggled to recover after a costly fumble by goalkeeper and captain Mehedi Hasan Srabon led to the first goal in their 2-1 defeat to Nepal in a SAFF U-20 Championship fixture in Lalitpur yesterday, coach Maruful Haque said.

The defeat in the second match -- mirroring their losses to Nepal in 2015 and 2017 -- meant Bangladesh finished as Group A runners-up, and they now face a strong possibility of encountering the reigning champions in the semi-finals as India need a draw against Maldives in today's encounter to become Group B champions.

However, Maruful remains optimistic about going all the way in the tournament.

"We lost to Nepal, but we have not lost the championship. If we want to become champions, we have to beat everyone, and we have no choice but to face any team in the semi-final," said Maruful at the post-match conference.

With both teams having already secured semi-final berths, Bangladesh adopted a counter-attacking strategy at ANFA Complex with the objective of at least securing a draw to overtake Nepal in the points table.

However, the home side took the lead in the 17th minute after the advancing goalkeeper Mehedi failed to intercept Nepal's clearance in midfield, leading to forward Samir Tamang snatching the ball from his feet and slotting into open net.

One minute later, Bangladesh conceded again, with Niranjan Dhami doubling the lead with a near-post finish from Abinash Syangtan's low cross.

"Our plan was to allow them to come into the attack in the first 10 minutes, as Nepal needed to score if they wanted to become group champions, but conceding the first goal brought the players' morale down and they could not bounce back for the rest of the match," said Maruful, adding that even world-class goalkeepers concede goals in such a manner.

Trailing by two goals, coach Maruful showed urgency with his substitutions, bringing on forwards Mirajul Islam and Asadul Molla in the 32nd minute. Bangladesh pulled one back when Mirajul converted from the spot in the 43rd minute after being tackled but failed to cash in on the momentum later.

Leverkusen eye repeat after 'magic' title triumph

AFP, *Donaueschingen*

Bayer Leverkusen are vowing to achieve great things again this season after an unprecedented unbeaten league and cup double last campaign.

Leverkusen kick off the 2024-25 Bundesliga campaign at local rivals Borussia Moenchengladbach on Friday.

Xabi Alonso's side have been tipped by many to become the first side other than Bayern Munich to win back-to-back German top-flight titles since Jurgen Klopp's Borussia Dortmund in 2012.

Bayern have spent big and Dortmund and RB Leipzig have had impressive summers but that does not scare Leverkusen in their pursuit of a successive title.

Speaking with AFP at Leverkusen's pre-season training camp in the Black Forest village of Donaueschingen, forward Nathan Tella Tella said: "There's no reason why we can't defend the title".

"We've seen Bayern do it for so many years. Why can't we do something similar to that?

"There's no limit to what we can achieve. Last year, no one believed in us, and at the end of the season, we were undefeated champions.

"Being a part of this team, anything is possible."

Tella's bullish statements are a far cry from even a season ago, when the club was still derided as 'Neverkusen' for failing to win a league title despite five second-place finishes.

Much of Leverkusen's success last season, including their run to the Europa League final, was set up by late goals from a side who did not know they were beaten.

Leverkusen's summer training base was at the same venue from where Spain's triumphant Euro 2024 campaign just a month earlier launched.

Asked if Leverkusen could benefit from a bit of La Roja's magic this season, Tella said his side did not need any external assistance.

"No, we have our own magic to be fair. Last season, it was him," Tella said, pointing at Leverkusen's midfield maestro Florian Wirtz.

Despite attention from some of Europe's biggest clubs, Leverkusen held onto Wirtz this summer, as well as the remainder of their squad.

Perhaps most importantly, coach Alonso has committed to stay on for at least another season despite interest from several of his former clubs including European giants Liverpool, Real Madrid, and Bayern.

Financial advantages aside, Bayern's long dominance of the Bundesliga has been underpinned by a constant desire to get better, even when the club is already at the top.

Despite a barnstorming campaign where the club broke through for their first Bundesliga title, Leverkusen were not resting on their laurels.

Alonso, a serial winner during his playing career, set the tone in pre-season training, saying last year's incredible level "probably wouldn't be enough" this season.

"We have many fundamentals," the coach said. "We need to add something, update it, incorporate other elements. We have to evolve and improve."

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REVOCATION OF RED PASSPORTS

A new reality for Hasina in India

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE
and **ZYMA ISLAM**

After the interim government revoked all diplomatic passports yesterday, questions have now arisen as to how long Sheikh Hasina can stay in India and whether she faces a possible extradition.

Hasina, the former prime minister of Bangladesh, fled to India after being forced to resign in the face of a student-led mass uprising on August 5.

According to the Indian visa policy, Bangladeshi citizens holding diplomatic or official passports are eligible for visa-free entry and a stay of up to 45 days.

As of yesterday, Hasina has already spent 18 days in India.

She does not hold any passport other than the diplomatic passport issued in her name, according to government sources.

The cancellation of her diplomatic passport and its associated visa privileges may put her at risk of extradition.

The extradition of Hasina, who is facing 51 cases, including 42 for murder, falls within the legal framework of the extradition treaty signed between Bangladesh and India.

TREATY AND POLITICAL REALITY

According to the treaty signed in 2013 and amended in 2016, "extradition may be refused if the offence for which it is requested is an offence of a political character."

It also says that certain offences -- like murder -- "shall not be regarded as offences of a political character" for the purposes of the treaty.

However, one of the grounds for refusal of extradition is if the charges being pressed have not been "made in good faith, in the interest of justice".

A former Indian High Commissioner

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan and Saud Shakeel pump fists during their 240-run fifth-wicket partnership, which helped the hosts post a formidable total of 448 for six before declaring the first innings against Bangladesh in the first Test at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday. Bangladesh, in reply, were 27 for no loss at the end of second day's play. Story on Page 11. PHOTO: AFP

Menon arrested in Gulshan

He is facing several cases over killings during protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rashed Khan Menon, president of the Workers Party and key leader of the Awami League-led 14-Party Alliance, was arrested in Dhaka yesterday while facing charges related to deaths during the recent uprising.

Menon, a former MP who had also served in ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's cabinet, was picked up from his home in Gulshan around 5:15pm, one of his relatives told The Daily Star.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police also confirmed Menon's arrest in a message in the evening, saying he was shown arrested in a case filed on Wednesday at New Market Police Station. The charges in the case are related to murder

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

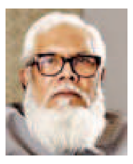
Salman F Rahman, 3 ex-ministers, MP to face ACC probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday decided to launch investigations into graft allegations against Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and four others.

The four others are Md Shahab Uddin, former forest and environment minister; Nasrul Hamid, ex-state minister for power and energy; Zunaid Ahmed Palak, former state minister for posts, telecommunications, and information technology; and ex-Awami League MP Nurunnabi Chowdhury Shaon.

"Whoever is corrupt, be it a politician or a government official, we will take action ... . If the allegations are proved, action will be taken," ACC Secretary Khorsheda Yasmeen told reporters at her office yesterday.



Salman F Rahman

Nasrul Hamid

Salman F Rahman, also the vice-chairman of Beximco Group, is accused of stock market fraud and embezzlement of thousands of crores of taka from shareholders through deception, according to a complaint.

He misused his influence to obtain around Tk 36,000 crore in loans from public and private banks, embezzled funds, and laundered thousands of crores of taka abroad, said the complaint.

The investigation will begin today, ACC sources said.

Shahab Uddin, forest and environment minister 2019-2024, is accused of misusing his power to acquire illegal wealth.

The documents said in "SUFAL" project, a five-year project involving Tk 1,502 crore financed by the World Bank, he and his son took 10 percent commission from contractors and embezzled

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

RECENT VIOLENCE

UN team arrives in Dhaka

Holds talks on scope of probe with foreign secy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

On the first day of a weeklong visit to Bangladesh, a three-member UN delegation held discussions yesterday regarding the scope of the investigation into the human rights violations that took place in the country from July 1 to August 15.

Led by Rory Mungoven, chief of the Asia Pacific region at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the delegation arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning and met Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen.

The team, staying in Dhaka until August 29 for initial discussions, will also meet the advisers to the ministries of home, law, environment, information and communication technology and religious

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Truce hopes fade as Gaza fighting rages

Israeli tanks push deeper into enclave; 22 more Palestinians killed in strikes

AGENCIES

Hopes were dwindling yesterday for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, where fighting raged despite pressure from the United States on Israel and Hamas to reach an agreement.

Israeli forces pressed deeper into areas of the central and southern enclave and battled with Hamas fighters, as Palestinian health officials said that Israeli strikes had killed at least 22 people across the enclave.

The new escalation comes hours after US President Joe Biden pressed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the urgency of sealing a deal for a truce in Gaza and the release of hostages, the White House said.

Months of on-off talks on a ceasefire have circled the same issues, but Israel and Hamas have stuck firmly to their demands.

In the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya, a strike on a house killed 11 people, while another killed six, including a local journalist, in a house in Al-Maghazi camp in the central Gaza Strip, medics said. Five others were killed in separate strikes in the south.

The Israeli military said its forces had intensified their operations in Deir Al-Balah, in central Gaza, and Khan Younis, in the south, dismantling dozens of military structures, locating rockets, and killing Hamas fighters, over the past 24 hours.

- Biden presses Netanyahu for a truce
- New mass exodus in Gaza's Deir el-Balah
- Death toll in enclave rises to 40,265

SAGAR-RUNI CASE

Editors' Council demands swift trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Editors' Council yesterday demanded a swift trial in the Sagar-Runi murder case to ensure justice.

A statement signed by the council's President Mahfuz Anam and General Secretary Dewan Hanif Mahmud called for the immediate filing of the charge sheet to expedite the charge framing in the case.

According to the statement, on February 11, 2012, the journalist couple -- Sagar Sarwar, news editor of Machranga Television, and Meherun Runi, ATN Bangla's senior reporter -- were murdered in their rented house in the capital's West Rajabazar.

The court has so far extended the time to submit the investigation report of this case 111 times, noted the Editors' Council in the statement.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

ENERGY SECTOR

Govt to scrap provision for fixing prices sans hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

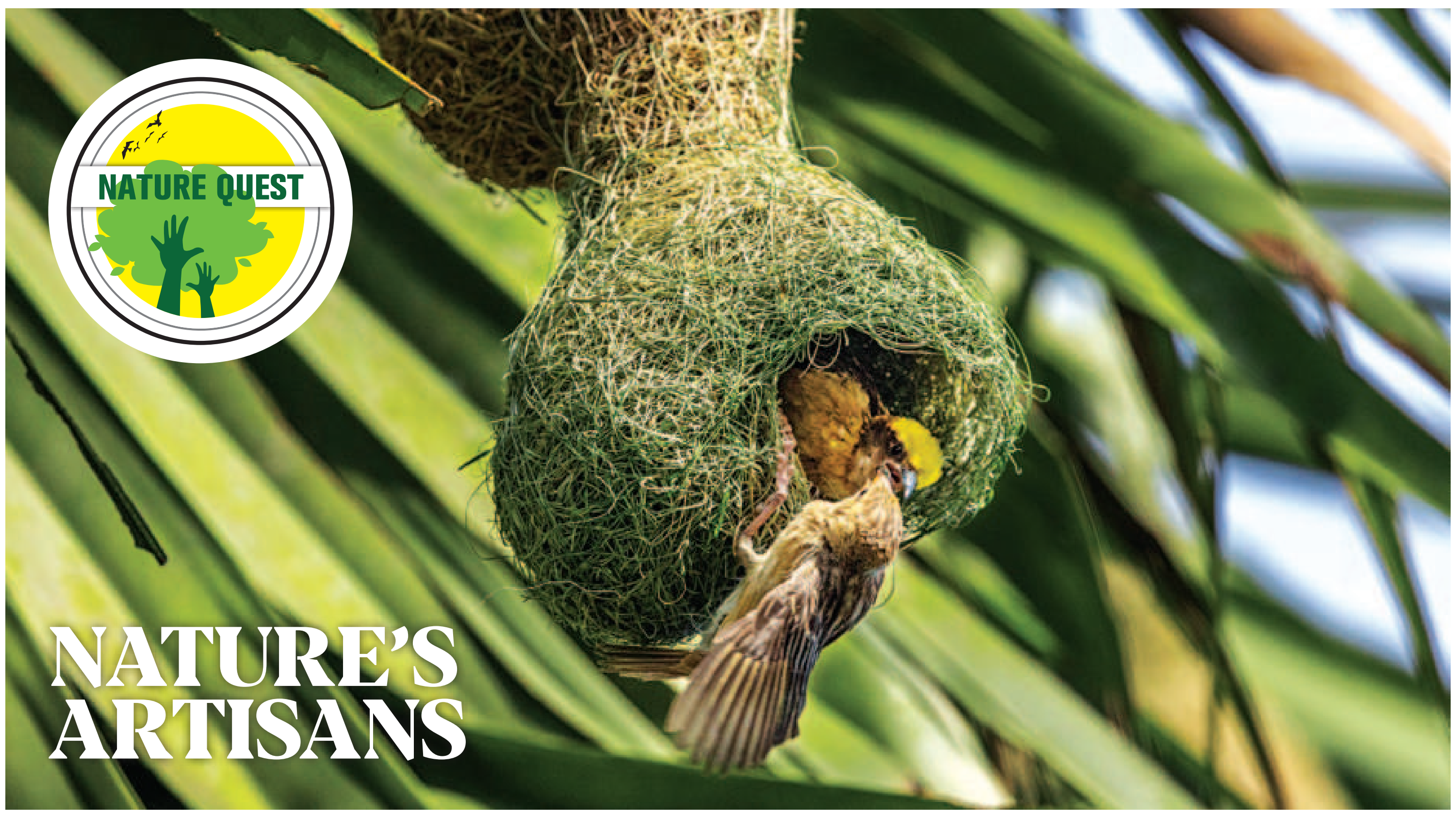
The advisers to the interim government yesterday decided that prices of electricity, gas, and fuel will no longer be increased or decreased without public hearings.

In their third meeting, the advisers decided to repealClause 34 (ka) of the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) Act-2003.

The clause introduced last year allowed the government to set energy prices in special circumstances, bypassing the regulatory body and public input.

Under this provision, the previous government fixed energy prices multiple times without holding public hearings.

The decision was made to promote public engagement in the matter, according to a press release.



A female Baya weaver, locally known as Babui pakhi, inspecting a nest weaved by a male in the port city. Considered artisans of nature, these weaverbirds are found in grasslands, cultivated areas and scrubs across the Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia. Baya weavers are best known for their intricately constructed hanging nests woven from leaves, which are found mostly on thorny trees or palm fronds near or over waterbodies where predators cannot reach them. These nests are pieces of art and engineering and built by the males to woo female mates. The males spend days collecting grass and twigs and weave the nests one grass blade at a time. Once built, they wait for the female suitors to inspect their work and choose. Sometimes, if two females choose the same nest and male, they fight among themselves to establish their place. When a female chooses a nest and male, the couple then join hands to further build the nest and raise a family. After they birth their chicks and lead them into adulthood, they abandon the nest and start all over again. PHOTO: MONJUR MORSHED

Stop teachers' harassment

Samajik Protirodh Committee urges govt, civil society, parents of students to take note

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Samajik Protirodh Committee, a platform of 66 women's, human rights, and development organisations, yesterday expressed deep concern over the recent incidents of harassment and insults of teachers, including female teachers, by some students at different educational institutions.

The committee in a statement urged the government, civil society and guardians to pay special attention to the matter on priority basis.

It also urged the students to refrain from such "uncourteous and audacious" activities.

On behalf of the committee, Fauzia Moslem sent the statement to the media.

The committee said it has been observed that students are forcing headmasters, principals or vice chancellors of educational institutions to resign.

The students are not even refraining from assaulting them physically and the female teachers are not being spared from such harassments, reads the statement.

In some cases, students were being used to pursue personal vengeance. The committee said it is ashamed, sad and worried about such incidents.

"Such incidents are not acceptable at all. Such incidents will create anarchy in the overall education system and teaching process, and will ultimately weaken the education system," said the statement.

Such indiscipline is the testament to social degradation and a lack of human values, the committee said.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6

Abdul Hafiz appointed Yunus' spl assistant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Hafiz, a retired lieutenant general of the Bangladesh Army, has been appointed as the special assistant to Prof Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser of the interim government.

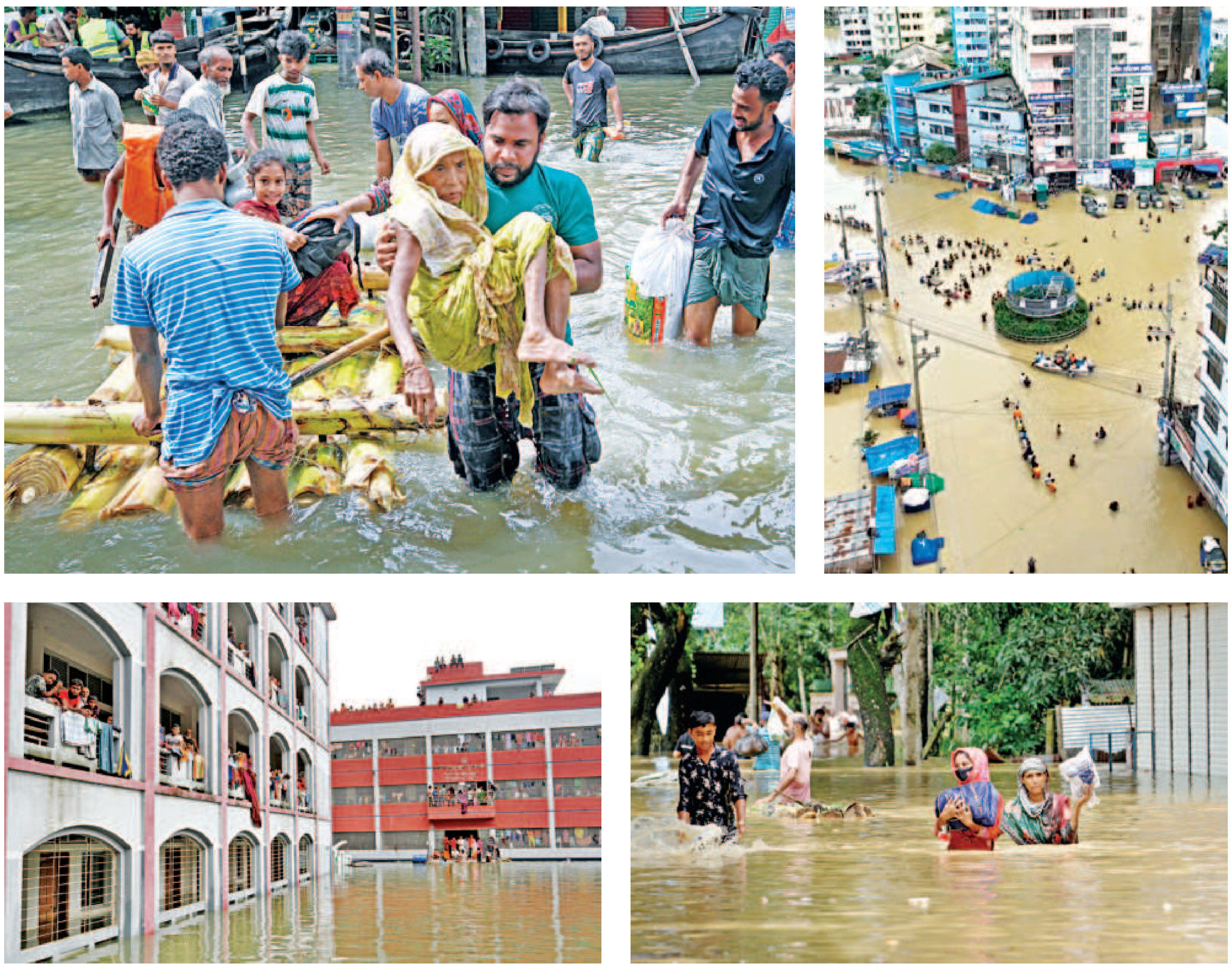
Hafiz will get the status of an adviser and will assist the chief adviser regarding defence and improving national unity.

The chief adviser's press wing announced his appointment in a statement issued yesterday afternoon.

Prof Yunus-led interim government was sworn in on August 8, four days after the fall of the Shiekh Hasina-led government amid an uprising led by students and people. The interim governments have 21 advisers, including Yunus.

Abdul Hafiz was commissioned in the Bangladesh Army in the infantry corps on May 8, 1977. He served as the chief of general staff. He also served as the force commander of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the force commander of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for two terms.

He got his Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from Dhaka University in 1981 and holds a Master's in Defence Studies (MDS) from National University.



At least 3.5 lakh people have been marooned in Feni's three upazilas -- Fulgazi, Parshuram, and Chagalnaiya. Nearly 95 percent of the areas in these three upazilas have been submerged. Affected residents say they have never seen such intense flooding in the region. Road links have been snapped, the power is down, and mobile networks are disrupted in almost all areas.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

MYANMAR CONFLICT

UN fears repeat of 2017 atrocities against Rohingyas

AFP, *Geneva*

The United Nations said yesterday it fears a repeat of the 2017 atrocities committed against the Rohingya minority in Myanmar, warning a human tragedy was unfolding in Rakhine State.

UN human rights chief Volker Turk voiced grave alarm about the sharply deteriorating situation across Myanmar, particularly in Rakhine where, he said, hundreds of civilians have reportedly been killed while trying to flee fighting.

Clashes have rocked Rakhine since the rebel Arakan Army attacked forces of Myanmar's ruling junta in November, ending a ceasefire that had largely held since a military coup in 2021.

The AA says it is fighting for more autonomy for the ethnic Rakhine population in the state, which is also home to around 600,000 members of the Rohingya Muslim minority.

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas fled Rakhine in 2017 during a crackdown by the military that is now the subject of a United Nations genocide court case.

"Thousands of Rohingyas have been forced to flee on foot, with the Arakan Army herding them repeatedly into locations that offer scant safe haven," Turk said in a statement.

"As the border crossings to Bangladesh remain closed, members of the Rohingya community are finding themselves trapped between the military and its allies and the Arakan Army, with no path to safety."

Support pours in for flood victims

FROM PAGE 1

are collecting funds and sending relief materials to the affected areas.

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, the platform that spearheaded the recent uprising, has beefed up its collection and rescue efforts for the flood-hit people. It yesterday launched a programme called "mass relief collection" at TSC.

"There's a line of vehicles at TSC, each filled with relief materials collected on personal initiatives. There are so many people coming to donate that the volunteers are struggling to deal with the volume of donations," Samiul Haque Sami, a Dhaka University student, wrote on Facebook, along with a photo of the crowd.

People who have logistics also come forward for the aid of the affected.

"If anyone needs a boat, please inform me. You don't need to give any money. Location: Bibirhat, Fatikchhari," wrote Shammi Hasan, on her Facebook post.

Various religious organisations, including Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian, are contributing to the relief efforts.

"This is why I still believe and hope that our country remains secular as it is. I say this country belongs to everyone -- people of all beliefs and non-beliefs, rich and poor," Najmul Alam wrote in his Facebook post.

On its Facebook page, As-Sunnah Foundation, a humanitarian organisation, shared a photo of people gathering in front of the organisation to join relief work as volunteers.

"Our initial target was to distribute 500 tonnes of relief materials, which have now been extended to 700 tonnes. Initially, we provided relief to each of 20,000 families, including 2kg of date, 2kg of flattened rice, 1kg of salt, 1kg of sugar, water, and candles.

"In the second phase, we are providing 10kg of rice, 2 litres of oil, 2kg of lentil, and 1kg of salt to each family. These will be loaded onto trucks and sent to Feni, Cumilla, and other flood-affected areas, and this effort will continue," said the foundation, adding that many are contributing to its relief fund.

Volunteers of Bidyanondo Foundation, a non-profit organisation working for social welfare, have also come in support to rescue and provide relief to the flood-hit people.

U Sara Bikkhu shared a post on his Facebook that cooked food is being distributed by Mihinda Mahathero, principal of Aparajita Buddha Bihar, among the flood-affected people at Madhubazar in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila.

Charu Haque, an activist of Rashtrochinta, a political platform, shared a video on Facebook showing a beggar donating Tk 10 to the relief fund.

In a Facebook post, Caregiver Volunteers Forum at Dhaka University, said it needs funds, relief materials such as dry food, baby food, medicine, oral saline, fresh drinking water, water-purification tablets, candles, life jackets, and sanitary pads.

Tasrif Khan, a singer who went to Feni as a volunteer, in his Facebook post said, "Please bring as much relief and fresh water as you can. Boats are available, and people are going out for rescue operations ... Trust me, people here are in dire need of fresh drinking water and relief supplies."

Prothom Alo Trust has sought emergency financial aid to support those affected by the floods.

On its Facebook page, Prothom Alo Bondhushava said they are distributing 10 tonnes of food items to 1,100 families.

Many artists and sports celebrities also urged people to extend their support to the flood victims.

"Our only slogan is: People are for people," ace cricketer Tamim Iqbal wrote in his Facebook post yesterday, urging all to help the flood victims.

The interim government has welcomed the people's eagerness to extend their assistance and cooperation and said the interested can contribute by sending money to the bank account of "Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund".

BB in talks with IMF

FROM PAGE 1

upheaval following deadly protests that forced the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina earlier this month.

The violence that accompanied the anti-government protest has disrupted the garment exports, the country's main foreign exchange earner.

Reserves were already under pressure before the current crisis, and stood at $20.5 billion as of July 31, just enough to cover about three months of imports, reports Bloomberg.

Mansur, a veteran economist who spent three decades at the IMF, was named governor of Bangladesh Bank last week by the interim government headed by Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus.

The former Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder and two other deputy governors resigned as part of a string of bureaucratic departures following the fall of the previous government.

The central bank bought more than $200 million in three days from the interbank market since Mansur was appointed governor at Bangladesh Bank on Aug 13, reports Bloomberg.

Dr Mansur said the central bank aims to buy as much as $1 billion every month from local banks.

In the BBC interview, he emphasised that cleaning up the country's banking sector was his top priority when speaking to the BBC at the central bank's headquarters in the commercial heart of Dhaka.

There has been a "designed robbery of the financial system" which has caused significant damage to banks and has serious implications for the stock market and the broader economy, he suggested.

Bangladesh's banks have seen a flight of deposits and an alarming rise in non-performing assets following defaults by groups allegedly linked with the ousted Awami League government.

The non-performing assets were "just robbery of the banks. They took the money and put it in Singapore, Dubai, London and elsewhere. So the first effort would be to try to take people to task and get the money back," Dr Mansur told the BBC.

Hasina used DGFI

FROM PAGE 1

two started as he took some initiatives to prevent the lower courts from granting bail to notorious smugglers and corrupt persons after being appointed the 21st chief justice of the country in January 2015.

The conflict reached its peak as Justice Sinha ordered the law ministry to make the disciplinary rules for lower court judges keeping powers in the hands of the Supreme Court instead of the executive and declined to deliver judgement in the 16th amendment (SC judges' removal) case in favour of the government in July 2017.

"My last days in Bangladesh were very appalling, which cannot be expressed in words. Because it is a question of realisation. I, as a sitting chief justice, had been kept under house arrest. I was not allowed to communicate with anybody. My internet connections were disconnected. Nobody was allowed to meet me. Security forces [intelligence] would stand guard around my home. One of my staffers was beaten up while he was entering my house. Saiful Abedin, the then chief of DGFI, used to disturb me at midnight and put pressure on me to resign and leave the country."

He said his colleagues (judges) of the Appellate Division of the SC, being influenced by the government, refused to sit with him in the court and told him that the High Court judges would not cooperate with him, putting him under tremendous mental pressure.

"I had then thought I have no right to stay in the country."

On July 3, 2017, the SC bench led by then chief justice Sinha delivered the verdict and scrapped the 16th amendment to the constitution. It means the parliament lost its powers to remove the SC judges for incapacity or misconduct. The Supreme Judicial Council, a body of the chief justice and two senior-most judges of the Appellate Division, got back the jurisdiction.

Justice Sinha said he was called to the Bangabhaban the previous night (July 2) for a meeting with then president Abdul Hamid, premier Hasina, law minister Anisul Huq, now in police custody, and attorney general Mahbubey Alam (now dead).

He said that at the meeting, Hasina asked him to deliver the verdict the following day (July 3) in favour of the government, but he declined for the sake of independence of the judiciary.

"I could figure that the prime minister perhaps convinced the other judges of the apex court bench to deliver judgement in favour of the government. At one stage, the arguments with the prime minister heated up and I told her that I would resign right away. At that, she requested me not to resign and said the people would take it very badly if I resigned. She told me to go ahead as I wished."

Justice Sinha said that after all the seven judges of the Appellate Division unanimously delivered the verdict scrapping the 16th amendment on July 3, 2017, the ruling party members of parliament, including Hasina, blasted him for over five hours.

"Then I thought the government might not allow me to stay in the country. I hurriedly completed other relevant proceedings [including releasing the full text of the verdict]. I went to Japan to join a conference of the chief justices of the Asia Pacific countries. After getting out of the conference room, I got a phone call from DGFI and was told not to return home. A day later, I came back to Bangladesh through Singapore. After I landed at Dhaka airport, I discovered that five to six DGFI members surrounded me. They were not allowing me to go to my officials present there. A tall man told me that they wanted to have a cup of coffee with me and requested me to give them five minutes. I asked them to mind their language and maintain the protocol. Incensed, I said 'get lost'. They wanted to go with me in my car on the pretext of ensuring my security. I told them that I have a car and security and I don't need them and left. I thought it was another bad signal.

"I went to the court [SC]. One day, I just finished my work and the DGFI chief came to my office. He told me that the prime minister herself sent him and she asked me to resign and leave the country. I shouted 'who are you and what are you saying?' He [the DGFI chief] said they implement the orders of only the prime minister, not the law minister or attorney general ... I asked him to get lost. Then I returned home and was put under house arrest.

"The Supreme Court registrar general told me that they had nothing to do. He told me to take leave for some days. I got mentally upset. My secretary prepared an application for a seven-day leave and I signed it. I returned home in the evening. I found all the gates of my residence closed. Military personnel in plainclothes occupied all the things inside my residence. My internet connections were disconnected.

"Around 10:00am the following day, I was doing my work at my residential office. Md Abdul Wahhab Miah called me over the phone and wanted to meet me. I asked him to come to my house. He [Wahhab] asked me to go to his residence. He said other judges are in his house. Instantly, I could sense that there was a conspiracy here. I called them to come to my house. Then they came and told me that they would not sit with me in the court. I could realise that the ground beneath my feet was vanishing. Being influenced by the government, they [judges] made this illegal decision."

Amid this situation, Justice Sinha left Dhaka on the night of October 13, 2017.

Justice Wahhab, who was then the senior-most judge of the Appellate Division, had performed the functions of the chief justice in the absence of Justice Sinha.

During his talks to this newspaper, Justice Sinha congratulated Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus on his becoming the interim government chief adviser and Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed the new chief justice.

The former chief justice said he is ready to return to Bangladesh.

"I will go to the country if my security is ensured. I'm waiting for a green signal. I will surrender before the court concerned and prove that the cases filed against me are false."

Justice Sinha, who resigned as the chief justice on November 11, 2017, while abroad, stands accused in three money-laundering cases. He has been convicted and sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment in a case and two other cases are under investigation.

Customs halts release of 44 luxury cars

FROM PAGE 1

from Chattogram, Mongla ports and Kamalapur ICD, were imported by cricket superstar Shakib Al Hasan, who was an MP from Magura-1; Faizur Rahman from Brahmanbaria-5; Golam Faruque Pinku from Lakshipur-3; Abul Kalam from Natore-1; Mujibur Rahman Manju from Kishoreganj-5; and Jannat Ara Henry, an MP of a reserved seat for women. The identity of one other ex-lawmaker has not been conformed.

The bill of entry (the submission of import documents) for three of the 44 unreleased cars were filed in the name of Muhammad Zakaria from Dinajpur-1, Anupam Shahjahan Joy from Tangail-8, Nasima Zaman Bobby, an MP of a reserved seat for women.

The former lawmakers could not be reached for comments.

Customs officials said the identities of the other 41 former lawmakers would be known when import documents are filed.

According to documents, clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents, including Navana Ltd, facilitated the release of the seven vehicles on behalf of the importers.

Ripon Prakash Das, assistant general manager of C&F Agent Navana Ltd, said some vehicles were released under the names of former MPs.

"The release of these vehicles from the port requires an approval letter from the parliament speaker. The letter is not attainable now," he said.

Customs officials said the cars now must be released by paying the duties.

Chattogram Customs Commissioner Fyzur said they cannot seize the vehicles that were released before the parliament was dissolved.

The customs will seek instructions from the National Board of Revenue, he added.

BRTA Chairman Gautam Chandra Pal told The Daily Star that no vehicle brought under the duty-free facility has been registered in August.

"We verify NBR documents when registering vehicles imported by MPs under the duty-free facility. The law does not mention whether the members of a dissolved parliament can avail the benefit.

"There is a way to stop the registration of these vehicles and collect the duty if the NBR or the law ministry instructs us not to register them."

The duty-free car facility was introduced during HM Ershad's rule in 1987 to please lawmakers. A notification in this regard was issued on May 24, 1988.

In the budget for fiscal year 2024-25, a proposal was made to impose 25 percent duty on the cars for MPs. The proposal was not accepted.

The tax exemption cost the government Tk 5,147 crore in lost revenue over the last 15 years.

Former SC judge Manik, ASM Feroz detained

FROM PAGE 1

formal procedures."

Justice Manik has been co-accused in several cases filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her several cabinet members, and several Awami League leaders recently.

Justice Manik has been at the centre of controversies several times over the years for his judgements and activities during his tenure as judge and after retiring.

Manik was appointed as an additional HC judge on July 3, 2001, for two years. The BNP, which assumed power in 2001, did not confirm his job.

On March 2, 2009, Manik was reinstated as a judge following an HC verdict after the AL government came to power.

He was appointed as a permanent HC judge on March 25, 2009.

On June 5, 2012, then ruling AL lawmakers said in parliament that Manik had violated the constitution by making "derogatory remarks" about the then speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Abdul Hamid.

Earlier in the same day, during the hearing of a rule, Justice Manik observed that the Speaker (Hamid) had committed an offence tantamount to sedition by commenting in the House on an HC order. He also said the speaker was completely ignorant of the apex court and the constitution.

Senior AL lawmaker Tofail Ahmed told parliament, "I was surprised to see how Justice Manik spoke against the speaker and accused him of sedition. We have no words to censure him."

The same judge, Tofail added, had once punished a traffic police officer for failing to salute him on the road. "I think he is a sadist who gets pleasure by hurting people."

Tofail also accused Manik of forcibly sitting in business class seats on Biman flight though he bought economy class tickets through the misuse of his position.

On March 31, 2013, he was promoted to the Appellate Division. Justice Manik retired on October 1, 2015. He was removed from the bench on orders from then chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha. Justice Manik had allegedly secretly recorded a conversation between him and justice Sinha, and published the conversation in the daily Janakantha.

In another development, ASM Feroz, chief whip of the 10th Jatiya Sangsad, was arrested from the capital's Banani last night, according to an SMS sent by Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Feroz, a former lawmaker from Patuakhali-2, served as a whip in the ninth parliament.

However, the DMP did not mention the case in which Feroz was arrested.

Abdul Hafiz appointed Yunus' spl assistant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Hafiz, a retired lieutenant general of the Bangladesh Army, has been appointed as the special assistant to Prof Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser of the interim government.

Hafiz will get the status of an adviser and will assist the chief adviser regarding defence and improving national unity.

The chief adviser's press wing announced his appointment in a statement issued yesterday afternoon.

Prof Yunus-led interim government was sworn in on August 8, four days after the fall of the Shiekh Hasina-led government amid an uprising led by students and people. The interim governments have 21 advisers, including Yunus.

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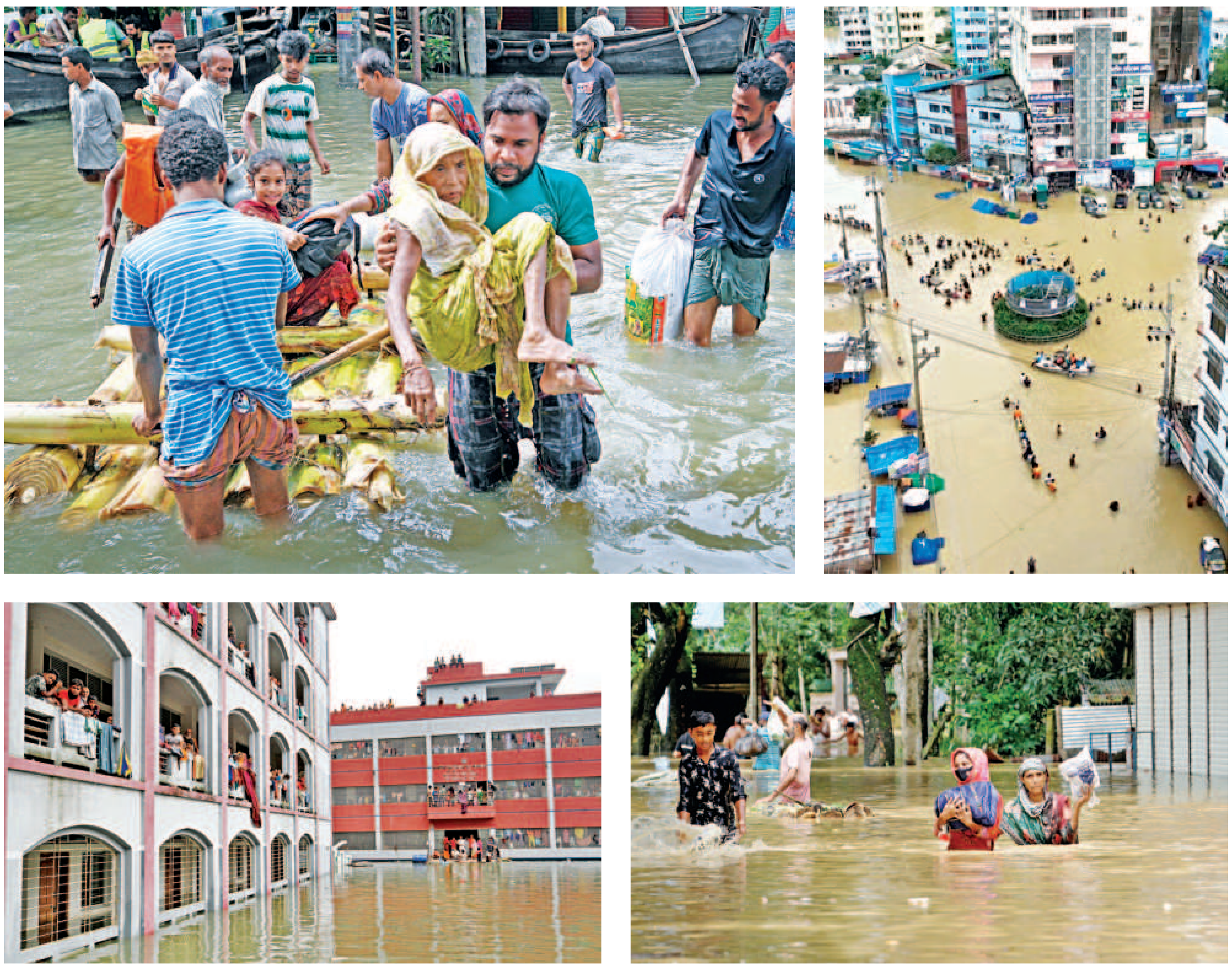
He got his Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from Dhaka University in 1981 and holds a Master's in Defence Studies (MDS) from National University.



At least 3.5 lakh people have been marooned in Feni's three upazilas -- Fulgazi, Parshuram, and Chagalnaiya. Nearly 95 percent of the areas in these three upazilas have been submerged. Affected residents say they have never seen such intense flooding in the region. Road links have been snapped, the power is down, and mobile networks are disrupted in almost all areas.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

MYANMAR CONFLICT

UN fears repeat of 2017 atrocities against Rohingyas

AFP, *Geneva*

The United Nations said yesterday it fears a repeat of the 2017 atrocities committed against the Rohingya minority in Myanmar, warning a human tragedy was unfolding in Rakhine State.

UN human rights chief Volker Turk voiced grave alarm about the sharply deteriorating situation across Myanmar, particularly in Rakhine where, he said, hundreds of civilians have reportedly been killed while trying to flee fighting.

Clashes have rocked Rakhine since the rebel Arakan Army attacked forces of Myanmar's ruling junta in November, ending a ceasefire that had largely held since a military coup in 2021.

The AA says it is fighting for more autonomy for the ethnic Rakhine population in the state, which is also home to around 600,000 members of the Rohingya Muslim minority.

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas fled Rakhine in 2017 during a crackdown by the military that is now the subject of a United Nations genocide court case.

"Thousands of Rohingyas have been forced to flee on foot, with the Arakan Army herding them repeatedly into locations that offer scant safe haven," Turk said in a statement.

"As the border crossings to Bangladesh remain closed, members of the Rohingya community are finding themselves trapped between the military and its allies and the Arakan Army, with no path to safety."

Support pours in for flood victims

FROM PAGE 1

are collecting funds and sending relief materials to the affected areas.

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, the platform that spearheaded the recent uprising, has beefed up its collection and rescue efforts for the flood-hit people. It yesterday launched a programme called "mass relief collection" at TSC.

"There's a line of vehicles at TSC, each filled with relief materials collected on personal initiatives. There are so many people coming to donate that the volunteers are struggling to deal with the volume of donations," Samiul Haque Sami, a Dhaka University student, wrote on Facebook, along with a photo of the crowd.

People who have logistics also come forward for the aid of the affected.

"If anyone needs a boat, please inform me. You don't need to give any money. Location: Bibirhat, Fatikchhari," wrote Shammi Hasan, on her Facebook post.

Various religious organisations, including Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian, are contributing to the relief efforts.

"This is why I still believe and hope that our country remains secular as it is. I say this country belongs to everyone -- people of all beliefs and non-beliefs, rich and poor," Najmul Alam wrote in his Facebook post.

On its Facebook page, As-Sunnah Foundation, a humanitarian organisation, shared a photo of people gathering in front of the organisation to join relief work as volunteers.

"Our initial target was to distribute 500 tonnes of relief materials, which have now been extended to 700 tonnes. Initially, we provided relief to each of 20,000 families, including 2kg of date, 2kg of flattened rice, 1kg of salt, 1kg of sugar, water, and candles.

"In the second phase, we are providing 10kg of rice, 2 litres of oil, 2kg of lentil, and 1kg of salt to each family. These will be loaded onto trucks and sent to Feni, Cumilla, and other flood-affected areas, and this effort will continue," said the foundation, adding that many are contributing to its relief fund.

Volunteers of Bidyanondo Foundation, a non-profit organisation working for social welfare, have also come in support to rescue and provide relief to the flood-hit people.

U Sara Bikkhu shared a post on his Facebook that cooked food is being distributed by Mihinda Mahathero, principal of Aparajita Buddha Bihar, among the flood-affected people at Madhubazar in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila.

Charu Haque, an activist of Rashtrochinta, a political platform, shared a video on Facebook showing a beggar donating Tk 10 to the relief fund.

In a Facebook post, Caregiver Volunteers Forum at Dhaka University, said it needs funds, relief materials such as dry food, baby food, medicine, oral saline, fresh drinking water, water-purification tablets, candles, life jackets, and sanitary pads.

Tasrif Khan, a singer who went to Feni as a volunteer, in his Facebook post said, "Please bring as much relief and fresh water as you can. Boats are available, and people are going out for rescue operations ... Trust me, people here are in dire need of fresh drinking water and relief supplies."

Prothom Alo Trust has sought emergency financial aid to support those affected by the floods.

On its Facebook page, Prothom Alo Bondhushava said they are distributing 10 tonnes of food items to 1,100 families.

Many artists and sports celebrities also urged people to extend their support to the flood victims.

"Our only slogan is: People are for people," ace cricketer Tamim Iqbal wrote in his Facebook post yesterday, urging all to help the flood victims.

The interim government has welcomed the people's eagerness to extend their assistance and cooperation and said the interested can contribute by sending money to the bank account of "Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund".

BB in talks with IMF

FROM PAGE 1

upheaval following deadly protests that forced the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina earlier this month.

The violence that accompanied the anti-government protest has disrupted the garment exports, the country's main foreign exchange earner.

Reserves were already under pressure before the current crisis, and stood at $20.5 billion as of July 31, just enough to cover about three months of imports, reports Bloomberg.

Mansur, a veteran economist who spent three decades at the IMF, was named governor of Bangladesh Bank last week by the interim government headed by Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus.

The former Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder and two other deputy governors resigned as part of a string of bureaucratic departures following the fall of the previous government.

The central bank bought more than $200 million in three days from the interbank market since Mansur was appointed governor at Bangladesh Bank on Aug 13, reports Bloomberg.

Dr Mansur said the central bank aims to buy as much as $1 billion every month from local banks.

In the BBC interview, he emphasised that cleaning up the country's banking sector was his top priority when speaking to the BBC at the central bank's headquarters in the commercial heart of Dhaka.

There has been a "designed robbery of the financial system" which has caused significant damage to banks and has serious implications for the stock market and the broader economy, he suggested.

Bangladesh's banks have seen a flight of deposits and an alarming rise in non-performing assets following defaults by groups allegedly linked with the ousted Awami League government.

The non-performing assets were "just robbery of the banks. They took the money and put it in Singapore, Dubai, London and elsewhere. So the first effort would be to try to take people to task and get the money back," Dr Mansur told the BBC.

Hasina used DGFI

FROM PAGE 1

two started as he took some initiatives to prevent the lower courts from granting bail to notorious smugglers and corrupt persons after being appointed the 21st chief justice of the country in January 2015.

The conflict reached its peak as Justice Sinha ordered the law ministry to make the disciplinary rules for lower court judges keeping powers in the hands of the Supreme Court instead of the executive and declined to deliver judgement in the 16th amendment (SC judges' removal) case in favour of the government in July 2017.

"My last days in Bangladesh were very appalling, which cannot be expressed in words. Because it is a question of realisation. I, as a sitting chief justice, had been kept under house arrest. I was not allowed to communicate with anybody. My internet connections were disconnected. Nobody was allowed to meet me. Security forces [intelligence] would stand guard around my home. One of my staffers was beaten up while he was entering my house. Saiful Abedin, the then chief of DGFI, used to disturb me at midnight and put pressure on me to resign and leave the country."

He said his colleagues (judges) of the Appellate Division of the SC, being influenced by the government, refused to sit with him in the court and told him that the High Court judges would not cooperate with him, putting him under tremendous mental pressure.

"I had then thought I have no right to stay in the country."

On July 3, 2017, the SC bench led by then chief justice Sinha delivered the verdict and scrapped the 16th amendment to the constitution. It means the parliament lost its powers to remove the SC judges for incapacity or misconduct. The Supreme Judicial Council, a body of the chief justice and two senior-most judges of the Appellate Division, got back the jurisdiction.

Justice Sinha said he was called to the Bangabhaban the previous night (July 2) for a meeting with then president Abdul Hamid, premier Hasina, law minister Anisul Huq, now in police custody, and attorney general Mahbubey Alam (now dead).

He said that at the meeting, Hasina asked him to deliver the verdict the following day (July 3) in favour of the government, but he declined for the sake of independence of the judiciary.

"I could figure that the prime minister perhaps convinced the other judges of the apex court bench to deliver judgement in favour of the government. At one stage, the arguments with the prime minister heated up and I told her that I would resign right away. At that, she requested me not to resign and said the people would take it very badly if I resigned. She told me to go ahead as I wished."

Justice Sinha said that after all the seven judges of the Appellate Division unanimously delivered the verdict scrapping the 16th amendment on July 3, 2017, the ruling party members of parliament, including Hasina, blasted him for over five hours.

"Then I thought the government might not allow me to stay in the country. I hurriedly completed other relevant proceedings [including releasing the full text of the verdict]. I went to Japan to join a conference of the chief justices of the Asia Pacific countries. After getting out of the conference room, I got a phone call from DGFI and was told not to return home. A day later, I came back to Bangladesh through Singapore. After I landed at Dhaka airport, I discovered that five to six DGFI members surrounded me. They were not allowing me to go to my officials present there. A tall man told me that they wanted to have a cup of coffee with me and requested me to give them five minutes. I asked them to mind their language and maintain the protocol. Incensed, I said 'get lost'. They wanted to go with me in my car on the pretext of ensuring my security. I told them that I have a car and security and I don't need them and left. I thought it was another bad signal.

"I went to the court [SC]. One day, I just finished my work and the DGFI chief came to my office. He told me that the prime minister herself sent him and she asked me to resign and leave the country. I shouted 'who are you and what are you saying?' He [the DGFI chief] said they implement the orders of only the prime minister, not the law minister or attorney general ... I asked him to get lost. Then I returned home and was put under house arrest.

"The Supreme Court registrar general told me that they had nothing to do. He told me to take leave for some days. I got mentally upset. My secretary prepared an application for a seven-day leave and I signed it. I returned home in the evening. I found all the gates of my residence closed. Military personnel in plainclothes occupied all the things inside my residence. My internet connections were disconnected.

"Around 10:00am the following day, I was doing my work at my residential office. Md Abdul Wahhab Miah called me over the phone and wanted to meet me. I asked him to come to my house. He [Wahhab] asked me to go to his residence. He said other judges are in his house. Instantly, I could sense that there was a conspiracy here. I called them to come to my house. Then they came and told me that they would not sit with me in the court. I could realise that the ground beneath my feet was vanishing. Being influenced by the government, they [judges] made this illegal decision."

Amid this situation, Justice Sinha left Dhaka on the night of October 13, 2017.

Justice Wahhab, who was then the senior-most judge of the Appellate Division, had performed the functions of the chief justice in the absence of Justice Sinha.

During his talks to this newspaper, Justice Sinha congratulated Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus on his becoming the interim government chief adviser and Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed the new chief justice.

The former chief justice said he is ready to return to Bangladesh.

"I will go to the country if my security is ensured. I'm waiting for a green signal. I will surrender before the court concerned and prove that the cases filed against me are false."

Justice Sinha, who resigned as the chief justice on November 11, 2017, while abroad, stands accused in three money-laundering cases. He has been convicted and sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment in a case and two other cases are under investigation.

Customs halts release of 44 luxury cars

FROM PAGE 1

from Chattogram, Mongla ports and Kamalapur ICD, were imported by cricket superstar Shakib Al Hasan, who was an MP from Magura-1; Faizur Rahman from Brahmanbaria-5; Golam Faruque Pinku from Lakshipur-3; Abul Kalam from Natore-1; Mujibur Rahman Manju from Kishoreganj-5; and Jannat Ara Henry, an MP of a reserved seat for women. The identity of one other ex-lawmaker has not been conformed.

The bill of entry (the submission of import documents) for three of the 44 unreleased cars were filed in the name of Muhammad Zakaria from Dinajpur-1, Anupam Shahjahan Joy from Tangail-8, Nasima Zaman Bobby, an MP of a reserved seat for women.

The former lawmakers could not be reached for comments.

Customs officials said the identities of the other 41 former lawmakers would be known when import documents are filed.

According to documents, clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents, including Navana Ltd, facilitated the release of the seven vehicles on behalf of the importers.

Ripon Prakash Das, assistant general manager of C&F Agent Navana Ltd, said some vehicles were released under the names of former MPs.

"The release of these vehicles from the port requires an approval letter from the parliament speaker. The letter is not attainable now," he said.

Customs officials said the cars now must be released by paying the duties.

Chattogram Customs Commissioner Fyzur said they cannot seize the vehicles that were released before the parliament was dissolved.

The customs will seek instructions from the National Board of Revenue, he added.

BRTA Chairman Gautam Chandra Pal told The Daily Star that no vehicle brought under the duty-free facility has been registered in August.

"We verify NBR documents when registering vehicles imported by MPs under the duty-free facility. The law does not mention whether the members of a dissolved parliament can avail the benefit.

"There is a way to stop the registration of these vehicles and collect the duty if the NBR or the law ministry instructs us not to register them."

The duty-free car facility was introduced during HM Ershad's rule in 1987 to please lawmakers. A notification in this regard was issued on May 24, 1988.

In the budget for fiscal year 2024-25, a proposal was made to impose 25 percent duty on the cars for MPs. The proposal was not accepted.

The tax exemption cost the government Tk 5,147 crore in lost revenue over the last 15 years.

Former SC judge Manik, ASM Feroz detained

FROM PAGE 1

formal procedures."

Justice Manik has been co-accused in several cases filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her several cabinet members, and several Awami League leaders recently.

Justice Manik has been at the centre of controversies several times over the years for his judgements and activities during his tenure as judge and after retiring.

Manik was appointed as an additional HC judge on July 3, 2001, for two years. The BNP, which assumed power in 2001, did not confirm his job.

On March 2, 2009, Manik was reinstated as a judge following an HC verdict after the AL government came to power.

He was appointed as a permanent HC judge on March 25, 2009.

On June 5, 2012, then ruling AL lawmakers said in parliament that Manik had violated the constitution by making "derogatory remarks" about the then speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Abdul Hamid.

Earlier in the same day, during the hearing of a rule, Justice Manik observed that the Speaker (Hamid) had committed an offence tantamount to sedition by commenting in the House on an HC order. He also said the speaker was completely ignorant of the apex court and the constitution.

Senior AL lawmaker Tofail Ahmed told parliament, "I was surprised to see how Justice Manik spoke against the speaker and accused him of sedition. We have no words to censure him."

The same judge, Tofail added, had once punished a traffic police officer for failing to salute him on the road. "I think he is a sadist who gets pleasure by hurting people."

Tofail also accused Manik of forcibly sitting in business class seats on Biman flight though he bought economy class tickets through the misuse of his position.

On March 31, 2013, he was promoted to the Appellate Division. Justice Manik retired on October 1, 2015. He was removed from the bench on orders from then chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha. Justice Manik had allegedly secretly recorded a conversation between him and justice Sinha, and published the conversation in the daily Janakantha.

In another development, ASM Feroz, chief whip of the 10th Jatiya Sangsad, was arrested from the capital's Banani last night, according to an SMS sent by Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Feroz, a former lawmaker from Patuakhali-2, served as a whip in the ninth parliament.

However, the DMP did not mention the case in which Feroz was arrested.

FLOOD RELIEF

A nation united, a DU not seen in years

SHUCHISMITA TITHI

"Move aside! Move aside!"

"Please don't gather here; let us take these inside quickly!"

These were the calls echoing through the TSC premises of Dhaka University yesterday, as student volunteers carried relief goods on their heads, one after another, tirelessly moving the supplies into the TSC cafeteria and indoor sports room.

For the past two days, students of DU have been working round the clock to collect and organise relief goods and funds for the flood-affected people in 12 districts across the country.

The scenes were nothing short of extraordinary. Vehicles of all kinds -- private cars, pickup trucks, and even large trucks -- lined up outside of TSC as people from all walks of life brought in donations. From small children bringing their piggy banks to elderly citizens offering whatever they could.

Such a display of unity and compassion has not been seen in DU for a long time, particularly not in the last 15 years of the Awami League regime, when only Chhatra League members called the shots.

The campaign began on Thursday morning, under the banner of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, and was going on till yesterday night.

Ten-year-old Ihaan stood outside Dhaka University's TSC with his little piggy bank in hand, accompanied by his parents. The young boy was determined to do his part for the flood-affected people.

Ihaan was not alone. People from all walks of life -- corporate workers, day labourers, rickshaw pullers, etc. -- flocked to the university, bringing whatever they could, whether it was money, dry food, dates, medicine, sanitary napkins, clothes, or drinking water.

"I wanted to help the flood-affected people. I wish everyone would come forward to help," said 12-year-old Raisa Mehjabin, a sixth grader.

Marina Akhter, a homemaker who came all the way from Mirpur yesterday, said, "Since students of the anti-discrimination movement are collecting funds, I have decided to donate from a place of trust."

Not only were students from every department and dormitories of DU participating, but those from other institutions also joined in.

At the entrance of TSC, a public relief booth has been set up, where donations are registered before being moved to the indoor sports room for packaging.

The relief items are then stored in the TSC cafeteria, ready to be dispatched to the flood-affected areas by covered vans.

Several vehicles had already left for the affected regions on Thursday night, according to Nayeem, a student from one of Dhaka University's seven affiliated colleges.

Ashrefa, a DU student, shared that by Thursday night alone, students collected Tk 29,73,173 through various means.

Meanwhile, by yesterday 8:00pm, the total cash collected (excluding money coming through bank and mobile financial services) had risen to Tk 86,22,172, said Abu Baker Mojumder, a coordinator of the Anti-Discrimation Student Movement and the relief campaign.

"The relief goods we collected yesterday [Thursday], have been sent to Feni, Noakhali, Laxmipur, Cumilla, Akhaura, and Kasba this [Friday] morning. We are also sending funds to our coordinators in Chattogram so that they can get the necessary items themselves and provide those to the flood-affected people there," he said.

"Trucks will leave at 12:00am [early today] with the relief items we collected today [Friday]," he added.

Bhuiyan Asaduzzaman, a member of the Liaison Committee of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, highlighted the unity of people from all classes, professions, and political identities in running the relief camp.

"Our struggle was against the binary identity -- the walls that were erected

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

'Not sure if they are alive or dead'

Say family members of flood victims

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

"I am not sure whether my sick mother and pregnant wife are alive or dead," said Abdul Kaiyum, a private job holder in Dhaka, while still in shock.

Abdul Kaiyum was unable to communicate with his family members for the last four days as mobile towers in the Feni district were not working due to the severe ongoing flood situation.

"I am concerned about my sick mother, pregnant wife and my cousin who is physically challenged," he added.

Kaiyum's family live at ward-9 in GM Union of Fulgazi upazila in Feni district.

Like Kaiyum, many others could not communicate with their family members.

The situation in Cumilla, Noakhali and Feni has been particularly worrying as the Muhuri and Feni rivers kept swelling throughout the last three days.

Many students said they were only able to reach their family over the phone three days back.

Over 90 percent of mobile towers in Feni were not working at the time of writing this report. Feni has seen the worst of the floods, disrupting service at 590 out of 656 towers, as per BTRC.

"I could not communicate with my family till now. But today [yesterday] a team informed me that they rescued my family members from their home at Chhagalnaiya upazila. But I am worried as my brother went missing," Sabbir Hossain Sifat, a student of Dhaka University, told this newspaper.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Govt mobilised 'full force' to combat floods: Rizwana

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government is working "collectively with full force" to tackle the ongoing flash flood situation, said Water Resources Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan yesterday.

With the help of everyone, swift and effective measures are being taken to rescue people from remote areas, she said.

She made the remarks while responding to journalists' questions after visiting various flood-affected areas in Habiganj Sadar upazila, according to a media release.

Rizwana, also the adviser for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ministry, expressed sincere gratitude to the students and general public who have been participating spontaneously alongside the government in providing services to the people arriving at the shelters.

She mentioned that discussions will be held regarding "the release of water from upstream in India without prior warning."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

MURDER CASE

Menon placed on five-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party and key leader of Awami League-led 14-Party Alliance, on a five-day remand in a case filed over the death of 45-year-old trader Abdul Wadud in the city's New Market area during the quota protests on July 19.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Ali Haider passed the order after police produced him before court seeking a 10-day remand, Md Liakat Ali, a sub-inspector working in the court, told The Daily Star.

The defence also sought bail along with cancellation of the remand appeal.

Menon, a former MP who had also served in ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's cabinet, was arrested in Gulshan on Thursday.

On August 21, Abdur Rahman, brother-in-law of the victim, filed the case with New Market Police

SEE PAGE 5 COL 7

More than just NUMBERS

A 16-year-old orphan fatally shot in the head in Bogura. A 24-year-old honours student shot dead by AL activists in Mymensingh. Another 28-year-old electric worker, fatally shot in the head in Dhaka. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

Pellets pierced his eyes, head and body

16-yr-old Shuvo killed in police firing in Bogura

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, *Bogura*

Md Siam Shuvo, a 16-year-old orphan from the Haddipatti area of Bogura town, was the first person to be killed in the district, during the student protests for quota reform in government jobs, on July 19.

Shuvo lived with his foster parents Ashik, a bus driver in Haddipatti area, and Shapla Khatun.

He used to collect old plastic bottles and scraps from around the town and sell them to recycling shops. The money he earned, he would give to his foster mother.

On the afternoon of July 19, Shuvo went out to collect scraps in the town's Amtola area like any other day. Around 4:00pm, protesters from the Anti-Discriminatory Student Movement were blocking the Satmata-Tinmatha road. Police tried to disperse them by spraying hot water from a water cannon, but they were unsuccessful.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'Sagor died a martyr'

Say family members of 24-year-old who was shot dead by AL activists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Md Redwan Hossain Sagor, 24, left his home on the afternoon of July 19, saying he was going to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Sagor was a regular blood donor.

However, Sagor joined other students who were protesting for quota reforms in government jobs, and died as Awami League activists opened fire on protesters near the Alamgir Monsur Memorial (Minto) College area of Mymensingh city.

"We thought he went to the hospital to donate blood as usually does. However, in the evening, we came to know he died in a clash," said Sagor's father Mohammad Asaduzzaman, who runs a small business.

"All hopes of our family have been

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Adiba still waits for her father

28-year-old Mobarak died after a bullet pierced through his head

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Mobarak Hossain, 28, went outside his house in Dhaka's Kadamtoli area on the afternoon of July 19 to buy chips for his two-and-half-year-old daughter Mehrunnesa Adiba.

Soon afterwards, he was hit by a bullet in his head as law enforcers fired at student protesters, who were demanding for quota reform, in the neighbourhood.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead. His body was taken to his village home in Ananda Bazar area of Karimganj municipality in Kishoreganj the next day. He was buried at a local graveyard there.

Little Adiba, who is yet to figure out what happened to her father, still waits

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Details of chief adviser's relief fund announced

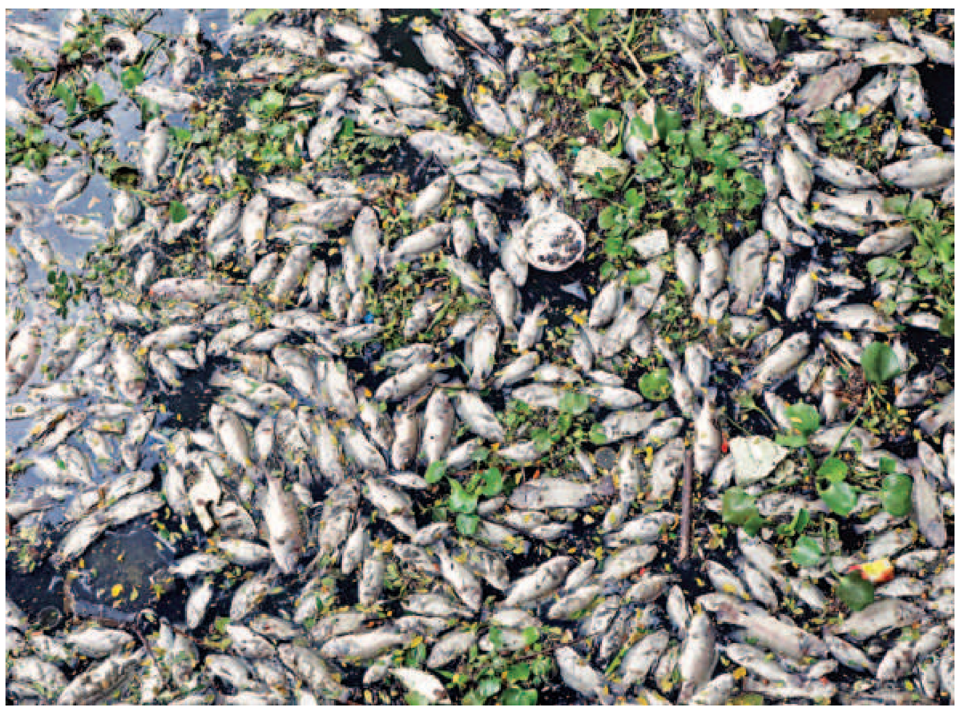
STAR REPORT

The government has expressed its appreciation for the many who are eager to assist those affected by the recent floods, according to a message from the press secretary to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus yesterday.

Interested individuals can send their contributions to the following account of the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund.

Account name: Chief Advisor's Relief and Welfare Fund; Sonali Bank Corporate Branch, Chief Adviser's Office; Account Number: 010733004093.

The government assures that all donated funds will be used for relief and welfare and that proper records will be maintained.



Scores of dead fish lay on the surface of Dhanmondi lake. Locals have alleged that the fish were poisoned. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

Locals separate snails from their shells next to a road. Afterwards, the meat is use to make fish feed, while the shells are processed into chicken feed and sold to poultry farms. The women earn around Tk 100 for breaking each bag of snails. Around 80-100 families in the village earn their livelihood through this. The photo was taken in the Hasanpur village in Khulna recently. PHOTO: **HABIBUR RAHMAN**

Adiba still waits for her father

FROM PAGE 3

for him to return with chips and biscuits for her.

"Adiba does not understand that her father is no more. She still says her father will bring chips, bread and biscuit for her when he returns home," said her grandmother Jamena Begum.

Mobarak used to work at an electric shop in Dhaka's Nawabpur area. His younger brother, Mosharraf Hossain, also works there.

"As my brother returned home after offering Juma prayers, Adiba wanted to eat some chips. Mobarak then went out again to buy chips for her, when a clash between cops and students was going on outside. The cops were firing at student protesters. My brother was hit by a bullet right in front of our rented house. On information, we went out to recover his body and took him to DMCH, where doctors declared him dead," Mosharraf said.

Mobarak's untimely demise has left his wife Shanta Akter in dire straits.

"A single bullet shattered my entire family. How am I going to raise my child by myself? Who will take care of us?" she asked.

The couple had two daughters -- Mehrunnesa Adiba, and Mehrunnesa Jannat. Jannat died of Neuroblastoma, a type of cancer, a year ago at the young age of just four, said family sources.

Jannat underwent a year-long treatment before she eventually passed away. The family had to spend around Tk 9 lakh for her treatment, much of which was borrowed, leading to financial strains for the family. Mobarak's demise means this financial strain is now much worse, said Mosharraf.

"After my brother's death, the rest of the family had to remain at our village home, while I returned to Dhaka to join my job. With just my earning, it is not possible to sustain the family in Dhaka," he added.

Demanding justice for Mobarak, Mosharraf and Shanta urged authorities to properly investigate the killing to bring the perpetrators to book.

"Mobarak grew up amid poverty. He was a humble, hard-working person with no involvement in politics," said Mohammad Alauddin, the local ward commissioner.

Not sure

FROM PAGE 3

Jahangirnagar University student Nafisa Sharmin told The Daily Star that she could not learn the whereabouts of her uncle's family for three days.

"I was able to contact my grandfather and grandmother three days back. They had said that water levels had reached the first floor of their home at that time. They were staying on the roof, but now I cannot reach them," said Jabir Abdulla, another DU student.

The ongoing floods in Bangladesh have claimed the lives of at least13 people so far, with more than 44 lakh people affected across 11 districts, according to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief yesterday.

Pakistan envoy meets Fakhrul

UNB, *Dhaka*

Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Syed Ahmed Maroof yesterday met BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

The bilateral issues, including trade and business between the two countries, and regional cooperation, came up for discussion in the hour-long meeting held at the BNP Chairperson's Gulshan office.

BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury and Special Assistant to the BNP Chairperson's Foreign Affairs Advisory Committee Member Shama Obaid were present at the meeting.

A nation united

FROM PAGE 3

between us. Through this effort, we have reached a stage where personal ideologies are set aside; what matters now is our shared identity as Bangladeshis," he told The Daily Star.

Dr Samina Luthfa, professor of Sociology at Dhaka University, said, "The way TSC became a centre for relief during the floods of '88 and '98 is something we haven't seen in a long time. These are encouraging signs. It shows that the people of Bangladesh, who have been enduring severe repression and persecution, are now trying to transform the country into a democratic one."

"Previously, everything was controlled by a specific group of people who wouldn't let others in; everything bore their mark. Since the situation changed, anyone can now contribute to any social initiative, knowing that it won't become a part of Awami League, Chhatra League, or the prime minister's relief fund," she added.

Prof Tanzim Uddin Khan echoed the sentiment.

"For the past 16 years, we have seen these kinds of initiatives be limited to the government's student organisations. But before that, during any crisis, we used to see collective participation from everyone. It seems that we have returned to that place," he said.

"This is the beauty of DU, where, in times of national crisis, everyone ensures their participation equally to overcome it," he added.

Govt mobilised

FROM PAGE 3

Besides, initiatives will be taken to properly manage the silt coming from upstream, while action will be taken against those engaged in illegal dredging, she added.

She said all embankments will be repaired on time to control flooding, instructing government officials to involve students and local residents in all activities.

During her visit, she was briefed on the flood situation, the condition of affected people, and the progress of rehabilitation efforts.

Prior to this, she held discussions with the local administration, media, and civil society on the flood situation in Habiganj district.

Pellets pierced his eyes

FROM PAGE 3

Then a clash ensued between protesters and policemen. An armoured police car came to the spot around 5:20pm and the policemen began firing pellets at the protesters indiscriminately, said Saikat Ali, a coordinator of the student protesters who was there.

During the firing, Shuvo slipped and fell while trying to flee from the spot. As he stood up again, he was hit by several pellets in his head, body and both of his eyes. Some protesters rushed him to the nearby Bogura Nursing Home, where the on-duty doctor, Md Moshiur, declared him dead at 6:30pm.

However, some protesters took his body to Bogura Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital, hoping that he might still be alive, but the on-duty doctor there declared him to be dead as well.

Thus, Shuvo became the first person to lose his life amid protests in Bogura.

"Shuvo suffered a severe head injury as pellets entered his skull. He died of intracranial hemorrhage," said Md Saleh, a medical officer at the emergency department of the hospital.

Shuvo's identity could not be ascertained till around 8:30pm. Later, his foster parents were informed and they collected his body from the hospital.

"Shuvo had been living with us since he was seven-years-old. His real father was Bablu Mia of Karihat village under Nandigram upazila. Bablu had passed away earlier," said Ashik.

"I also used to collect bottles in the past, when one day I met Shuvo at Bogura Railway Station premises some nine years back. The small boy came and hugged me and called me mother. Since then, he lived with us. We have four children, but we loved him as our own son," said Shapla.

"We searched for Shuvo's family but found no one. He also refused to leave us. I demand justice for my Shuvo's death," she added.

Sagor died a martyr

FROM PAGE 3

ruined," he added, breaking into tears.

A third-year honours student of accounting at Phulbaria Degree College in Mymensingh, Sagor sustained critical bullet injuries in his chest during the clash. He was rushed to MMCH where doctors declared him dead.

Sagor's mother, Rahima Khatun, a bed-ridden cancer patient, has been unresponsive since her son's demise.

On the fateful day, Sagor repaired the water tank of the family's residence in Akua Chowrongir Mor (intersection) area before going out around 5:00pm.

"All our family's savings have been spent in the past eight years for the treatment of my mother. Due to our financial strains, bhaiya [Sagor] started working at a computer shop to bear his educational expenses as well as mine," said Sagor's younger sister Afia Tabassum Supti, a first-year honours student of management at Govt Ananda Mohan College.

"In the morning, bhaiya, our cousins and I had tea in the house. Then, in the evening, bhaiya was no more," Supti said, also breaking down in tears.

"Sagor became a martyr, shedding blood in a just movement," said his grandfather Md Siddique Hossain, 84.

Locals said Sagor was not only a meritorious student, but was always the first person to come forward and help his neighbours whenever they needed support.

Mohammad Mainuddin, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said police lodged a case on July 20 against 600 unnamed persons over the clashes involving activists of AL and its associated organisations, and student protesters.

The clashes left Sagor dead and some 30 others injured, he also said, adding that investigation is on to identify and nab the culprits.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 24

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

বাণিজ্যিক প্লট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা বারিধারা আবাসিক এলাকায় পুরাতন **আই-ব্লকে** ও **আই-এক্সটেনশন ব্লকে** ২ বিঘা, ৩ বিঘা, ৪ বিঘা ও ৫ বিঘার বাণিজ্যিক প্লট। প্লটগুলো রেজিস্ট্রেশন, মিউটেশন ও বাউন্ডারী সম্পন্ন করা আছে।

যোগাযোগ: ০১৭১১ ৫৪৬৬৮৭

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা এফ- ব্লকে ১৫০০ বর্গফুটের শতভাগ রেডি ফ্ল্যাট।

ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।

০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬

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ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

লালমাটিয়া বি-ব্লক-এ ১৬০০ বর্গফুটের শতভাগ রেডি ব্র্যান্ড নিউ ফ্ল্যাট।

ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।

০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৭
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা এফ ব্লক রানিয়া এভিনিউতে ১৮৫০ বর্গফুটের দক্ষিণমুখী নির্মাণাধীন ফ্ল্যাট।

ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।

০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮

Invitation to submit proposals for two Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by UNICEF Bangladesh

RFP No. LRPS-2024-9192424: For carrying out a study on the effectiveness of CPD programme for the primary education teachers in Bangladesh.

UNICEF Bangladesh is inviting interested companies with a strong track record and professional credibility of providing the above-required services under one contract. To receive the detailed scope of work and procedure to submit the bid response, please email to **supplybangladesh@unicef.org**

The pre-bid meeting schedule and bid submissions deadlines are mentioned in the respective bid document.

Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of the solicitation process.

www.unicef.org/bangladesh

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game

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition,
Entrepreneurship, and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part)
Department of Agricultural Marketing
Wholesale Flower Market (level-2)
Department of Agricultural Marketing
Deepnagar, Gabtoli, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216.

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

1.	**Ministry/Division**	: Ministry of Agriculture
2.	**Agency**	: Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM)
3.	**Procuring Entity Name**	: Agency Program Director, Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part), Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM)
4.	**Procuring Entity Code**	: 224374700
5.	**Procuring Entity District**	: Dhaka
6.	**Expression of Interest Selection For**	: **Hiring Firm for Market Integration Service**
7.	**Invitation Reference**	: 12.02.0000.549.35.009.24-1079 Date: 22/08/2024
	KEY INFORMATION	
8.	**Procurement Method**	: Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)
	FUNDING INFORMATION	
9.	**Budget and Source of Funds**	: GoB, Development Fund
10.	**Development Partners**	: IDA (World Bank), IFAD
	PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
11.	**Program Name**	: Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER-DAM Part),
12.	**EOI Closing Date and Time**	: Expressions of interest (EOIs) must be submitted by **2:00 PM on September 10, 2024** in a sealed envelope to the address provided below. The envelope must be clearly labeled with "**Request for Expression of Hiring Firm for Market Integration Service.**"
	INFORMATION FOR CONSULTANT FIRM	
13.	**Title of Service**	Hiring Firm for Market Integration Service.
14.	**No. of Service (Firm)**	01
15.	**Brief Description of the Assignment**	: To connect farmers and entrepreneurs with the buyers at local, regional and advanced market, promoting the product, market information, technology and connect with advisory services. [**See details in Terms of reference (TOR)**]
16.	**Eligibility Criteria**	1) The minimum number of years of **general experience** of the Tenderer in Commodity/Perishable Trading shall be 03 (Three Years) 2) The minimum **specific experience** as a Supplier with domestic Retail Chain Shop and International Retail Chain Shop. Total value of trading will be BDT 50.00 (fifty lakh) of last 6 months whereas at least ONE Purchase Order (PO) should be on any single product (Value-10 lac above) 3) List of Required staff personnel (MIC, MISSP) [Include the list such as Name, NID/Birth certificate, Years of Experience, Relevant certificate) of personnel in 208 upazila;] 4) TIN Certificate, VAT Registration/BIN Certificate, Valid Trade License (2024-25) must be included in Marketing in category of business (The firm those who have practical experience and established agro commodity export and trade business/market linkage). Income Tax Certificate (2022-23). Proof of VAT Submission (June-2024) for the tendered service. 5) Audit Report (2022-23). Last annual turnover of the Tenderer shall be at least of the amount BDT. 1.00 (One) crore. 6) Tenderer having Export License to create market linkage will be given highly preferences; 7) Tenderer having membership of Bangladesh Fruits, Vegetables & Allied Products Exporters, Association (BFVAPEA) and license of Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) will be given highly preferences; 8) Tenderer having quarantine Certificate for perishable items export facilitation will be given highly preferences; 9) The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e. working capital or credit line (s) of the Tenderer shall be BDT 40.00 [Forty lakh only} 10) Financial solvency certificate from any schedule bank [last Six month]
17.	**Details Information of EOI and Proposal**	: Firms are requested to submit 01 (One) copy of EOI with necessary documents at the Program office **between 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.** within the deadline. The procurement shall be regulated as per PPA-2006 and PPR-2008. For submitting proposal details Terms of Reference (TOR) can be obtained from Contact details of EOI inviting office or Tender menu at **www.dam.gov.bd** website.
	PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS	
18.	**Package No**	SD/PARTNER/DAM-5
19.	**Place of Opening EOI Document**	: Room 301, Wholesale Flower Market (level-2), Department of Agricultural Marketing, Deepnagar, Gabtoli, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216.
20.	**Name of Official Inviting EOI**	: Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al Faroque
21.	**Designation of Official Inviting EOI**	: Agency Program Director
22.	**Address of Official Inviting EOI**	: Room 301, Wholesale Flower Market (level-2), Department of Agricultural Marketing, Deepnagar, Gabtoli, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216.
23.	**Contact Details of Official Inviting EOI**	: Agency Program Director, Room 301, Wholesale Flower Market (level-2), Department of Agricultural Marketing, Deepnagar, Gabtoli, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216. E-mail: partner.dam@gmail.com
	Note: The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or all EOI.	

22/8/2024

Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al Faroque
Agency Program Director
Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition,
Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh
(PARTNER-DAM Part)
Department of Agricultural Marketing.
E-mail: partner.dam@gmail.com

GD-244

Army members donate one-day salary for relief

UNB, *Dhaka*

Members of Bangladesh Army have donated their one-day salary to aid people affected by devastating floods in various districts across the country.

According to ISPR, an amount equivalent to one day's salary of all ranks of Bangladesh Army has been donated to the Chief Adviser's Relief Fund in support of the flood victims.

"This money was paid in the service of humanity to help the victims of the recent floods in Feni, Chattogram, Cumilla, Noakhali, Sunamganj, and Habiganj," it added.

Meanwhile, the ongoing floods have claimed the lives of 13 people, with more than 44 lakh people affected across 11 districts, according to update provided by Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief yesterday.

The floods have submerged 77 upazilas, impacting 584 unions and municipalities. Over 887,000 families are suffering from the devastation, added the ministry.

US senate majority whip to visit Bangladesh

UNB, *Dhaka*

US Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin, an old friend of Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, is likely to visit Bangladesh soon.

He will meet Professor Yunus, civil society members, and media representatives during his forthcoming visit, reported yesterday.

This will be the first visit of any US politician to Bangladesh since the formation of the interim government.

Senator Dick Durbin, a Democrat from Springfield, is the 47th U.S. Senator from the State of Illinois, the state's senior senator, and the convener of Illinois' bipartisan congressional delegation.

Durbin serves as the Senate Majority Whip, the second highest ranking position among the Senate Democrats.

As the moonsoon thunder roars through Barishal this peacock spreads its feathers, normally a sign that it is trying to ward off predators. The photo was taken from the mini zoo in Durgasagar of Babuganj upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: **TITU DAS**

BARISHAL CITY CORPORATION

Uncertainty looms for Tk 797cr dev work

SUSHANTA GHOSH, *Barishal*

After the election to the Barishal City Corporation at the end of last year, the city authority took a Tk 797 crore mega project to develop and renovate 142 roads and 100-kilometre of drains across the city.

Upon approval by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council, work began for renovation of 40 roads and 100-km of drains at a cost of Tk 267 crore in July this year.

However, after the Awami-League-led government resigned on August 5 following a mass upraising, all the ongoing renovation works have stopped.

With the BCC ward councillors mostly on the run, uncertainty now looms over the project's implementation.

According to BCC sources, most of the works under the project were being done by different AL influentials, including the ward councillors.

After the fall of the government, none of their whereabouts could be known. As such, all works of the project, including piling roads, construction of drains, among others, have remained suspended.

So far, at least 18 percent work for renovating 40 roads in Barishal city, including Rajkumar Ghosh Road, Nazir Mohalla Road, and Oxford Mission Road, have been completed, the sources added.

> **The contractor has abandoned the work on Nazir Mohalla Road, leaving behind a pile of bricks on the under-construction road. The road is hardly usable, causing a lot of inconvenience to commuters and locals, especially since it is monsoon now.**
>
> KAJAL DAS
> A local resident

"The contractor has abandoned the work on Nazir Mohalla Road, leaving behind a pile of bricks on the under-construction road. The road is hardly in a usable state, thus causing a lot of inconveniences to commuters and local residents, especially since it is monsoon now," said Kajal Das, a local resident.

Anwara Begum, a resident of Oxford Mission Road, echoed him.

BCC sources said the mayor and ward councillors may remain absent for prolonged time amid the prevailing situation.

Contacted, Abul Bashar, executive engineer of BCC, said letters have already been sent to two contractors.

"If they leave the work, we will cancel their work orders," he added.

Nazrul Islam, owner of Latif Builders, one of the contractors, said they received several road renovation work orders in the tender and started the work, but had to stop due to lack of security in the current situation.

"We decided to observe the situation for a few days before resuming the work," he added.

Contacted, Israil Hossain, chief executive officer of BCC, said they were aware of the matter.

"A decision has been taken to speed up implementation of the ongoing development projects. If someone is unable to complete his work, the remaining work will be re-tendered," he added.

PSTU VC, treasurer resign

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Patuakhali Science and Technology University Vice-Chancellor Swadesh Chandra Samanto and Treasurer Muhammad Ali resigned yesterday evening.

Both sent their resignation letters to the education ministry amid student protests against alleged corruption and irregularities.

Md Imadul Haque Prince, deputy registrar of PSTU's publicity department, confirmed the resignations.

A wave of resignations is sweeping through the nation's higher education sector, as an unprecedented number of vice chancellors from the public universities are stepping down from their positions.

Most of these resignations took place following the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina in the wake of a mass upsurge led by the students.

All the VCs' were appointed by the previous Awami League government.

Azad Majumder deputy press secy to chief adviser

STAR REPORT

Journalist Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad Majumder was appointed yesterday as a deputy press secretary to the Chief Adviser of the interim government, Prof Muhammad Yunus.

The public administration ministry issued a circular confirming his contractual appointment. Azad Majumder previously served as the joint news editor of the English daily New Age.

He was also the Bangladesh correspondent for Agencia EFE, a leading Spanish news agency, and is a former sports and lifestyle correspondent for Thomson Reuters and former sports correspondent for Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Additionally, Azad Majumder is a member of the global talent pool at The Washington Post and has written for various international newspapers. He has also worked with The Business Post, Daily Manab Zamin, and Prothom Alo. Azad Majumder is a graduate of Dhaka University.

Inst for planning and dev against cancelling DAP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Institute for Planning and Development has urged the interim government to investigate groups pushing for the cancellation of the Detailed Area Plan (DAP)-2022 for their own business interests, warning that such moves could lead to unplanned urban development.

In a virtual press conference yesterday, IPD leaders called for the recovery of all water bodies and wetlands encroached upon by housing projects, emphasising the need for exemplary punishment for those responsible.

Adil Mohammed Khan, IPD Director, expressed concern over a recent gazette notification amending the DAP (2016-2035) to relax the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in certain areas.

He criticised the decision as being made under pressure from real estate interests, bypassing planners and the working committee.

He warned that this could undermine the government's commitment to a livable city, especially in light of Dhaka's recent severe flooding.

IPD Advisor Prof Aktar Mahmud questioned the contribution of housing developers to the lower and lower-middle classes, noting the abundance of vacant plots in projects like Purbachal and Uttara Phase III. He stressed sustainable planning that preserves agricultural land and floodplains.

Dr Chowdhury Zaber Sadeque, an IPD director, criticised housing developers for prioritising the upper class, making homeownership unaffordable for ordinary citizens.

Menon placed on

FROM PAGE 3

Station against Sheikh Hasina, Menon, and 128 others. Recently, Menon has also been made Hasina's co-accused in a number of cases over the deaths in clashes between protesters and law enforcers during the student-led movement. During the past AL governments, Menon first served as civil aviation and tourism minister, and later as social welfare minister. He was elected MP from Barishal-2 in the last national polls.

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Establishment of 100 Technical School and College (TSC) In Upazilla (2nd Revised)
Directorate of Technical Education
Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
Web : www.techedu.gov.bd

Memo No: 57.03.0000.070.007.203.024-

Date: 22 Aug. 2024

e-GP Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of goods details belows in the table.

Sl. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender ID No. (From e-GP Portal)	Tender Description	Publication Date and Time	Opening Date and Time
01.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.24 -722 Date: 22.08.24	1008066	APP-3, Supply & installation of Equipment for Apparel manufacturing Lab For 6 TSC	25-Aug-2024 09:00	23-Sep-2024 12:30
02.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.24 -721 Date: 22.08.2024	1008068	CIVIL-3, Supply & installation of Equipment for Civil construction & safety Lab For 7 TSC	25-Aug-2024 09:00	23-Sep-2024 12:30
03.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.24 -720 Date: 22.08.2024	1008069	Elec-3, Supply & Installation of Equipment for General Electrical Works Lab For 13 TSC	25-Aug-2024 09:00	23-Sep-2024 12:00
04.	57.03.0000.070.007.203.24 -719 Date: 22.08.2024	1008070	RAC-3, Supply & installation of Equipment for Refrigeration & air conditioning Lab For 6 TSC	25-Aug-2024 09:00	23-Sep-2024 12:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required

The fees for downloading the e-GP tender documents from the national e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to specified date & time mentioned in the e-GP system.

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.

22/08/2024

Dr. Abul Kashem Mohammad Jahangir Hossain
Project Director (Deputy Secretary)
Email: 100ts.pd@gmail.com

ATTACK ON POLICE STATION

Cops sue 30,000 in Araihazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Narayanganj*

Police have sued 25,000-30,000 unnamed people in a case filed yesterday afternoon over vandalising, torching and looting Araihazar Police Station on August 5.

Sub-inspector Ripon Ahammed filed the case with Araihazar Police Station, said Ahsan Ullah, officer-in-charge of the station.

However, no one has been arrested so far.

According to case documents, after the fall of the former Awami League government, 25,000-30,000 people attacked the police station around 3:45pm on August 5. They vandalised and torched the station complex and looted firearms and ammunitions.

At least 21 police personnel were injured in the incident. Police were forced to open fire in self defense and managed to escape the station before taking shelter in a local mosque, states the case report.

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Floods in Tripura displace tens of thousands

Death toll rises to 23; Gomti river still above danger mark

REUTERS, *Guwahati*

Soldiers in lifeboats ferried people to safety in India's northeastern state of Tripura yesterday after heavy rain triggered floods and landslides, forcing more than 65,000 people from their homes and killing 23, authorities said.

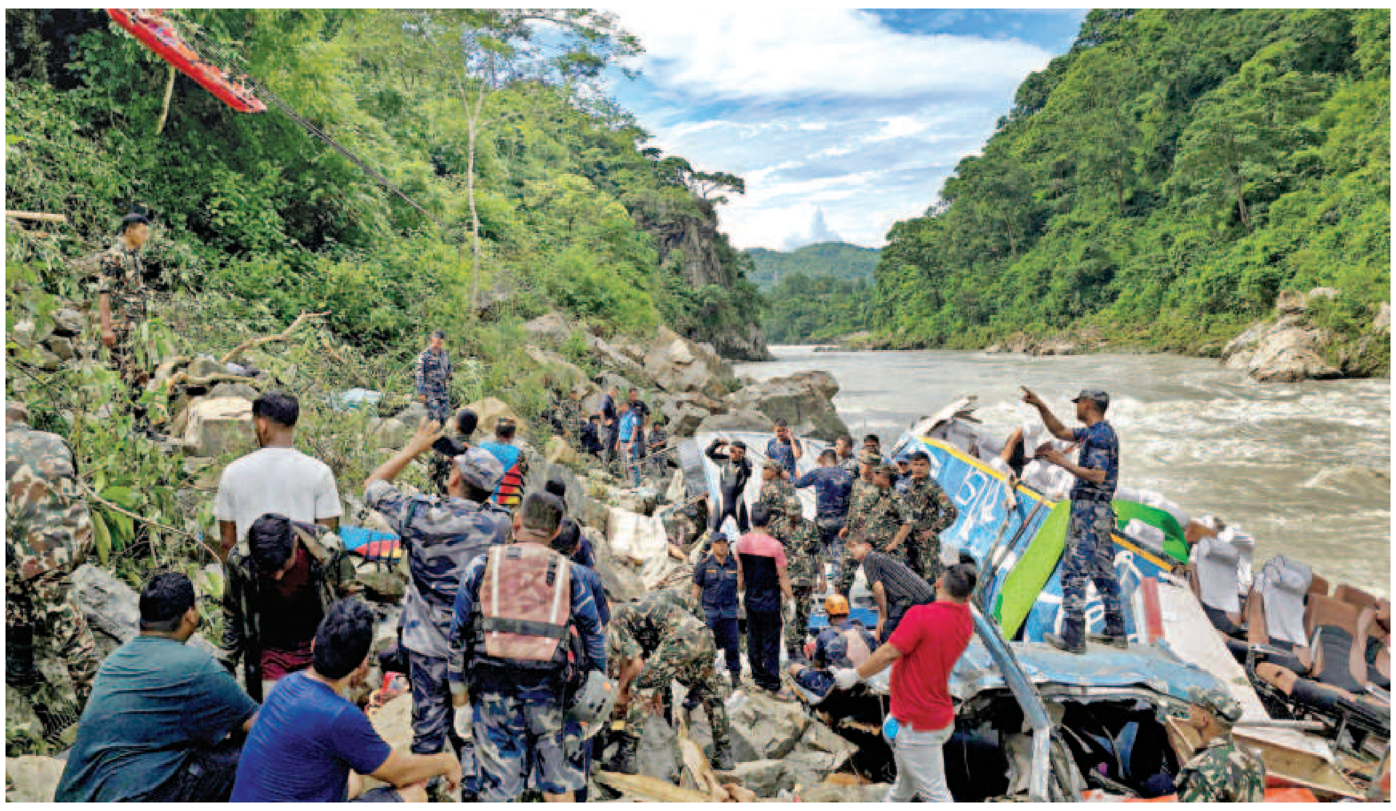
Television images showed army personnel manning the rescue craft, while cars and buses were marooned in streets of knee-deep water, and disaster management officials said four days of incessant rain had swelled rivers.

"As of this morning, most rivers are flowing below the critical mark," said one of them, Suman Deb, although the intensity of the rain had reduced since Thursday night.

"However, the river Gomti still continues to flow above the danger mark," Deb said, referring to the state's main river, which flows through the district of Comilla in neighbouring Bangladesh to empty into the Bay of Bengal.

The displaced have gathered in 450 camps, the officials said, with a total of about 1.7 million affected, along with extensive damage to infrastructure, crops and livestock.

Most deaths were caused by landslides, though some followed the collapse of mud walls and drowning, another official said on condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to speak to the media.



Security force personnel work to rescue injured passengers after a bus carrying 43 Indian passengers traveling to Kathmandu from Pokhara plunged into a river in Tanahun District, Gandaki Province, Nepal yesterday. At least 27 people died and 16 were injured after the bus plunged into the river. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Sit down for talks with Russia

Modi urges Zelensky in wartime Kyiv, offers to act as a friend to help bring peace; Russian strikes kill eight civilians across Ukraine

REUTERS, *Kyiv*

India's Narendra Modi yesterday urged President Volodymyr Zelensky to sit down for talks with Russia to end the war in Ukraine and offered to act as a friend to help bring peace as the two leaders met in wartime Kyiv.

The first visit by an Indian prime minister in modern Ukrainian history comes at a volatile juncture in the war launched by Russia in February 2022, with Moscow making slow gains in eastern Ukraine as Kyiv presses a cross-border incursion.

Modi, whose visit to Moscow last month was criticised by Kyiv, said he had come to Ukraine with a message of peace and called for dialogue between Russia and Ukraine at the earliest opportunity.

"The road to resolution can only be found through dialogue and diplomacy. And we should move in that direction without wasting any time. Both sides should sit together to find a way out of this crisis," Modi said.

"I want to assure you that India is ready to play an active role in any efforts towards peace. If I can play any role in this personally, I will do that I want to assure you as a friend," he said.

The remarks were made during joint statements, in which both leaders hailed the visit as "historic". Modi spoke second and Zelensky did not have an opportunity to respond to the call for dialogue.

But the Ukrainian leader said in his remarks that "the matter of ending the war and a just peace are the priority for Ukraine".

Ukraine has repeatedly said it wants the war to end but on Kyiv's terms, not Russia's. Ukraine has been pushing to hold a second international summit later this year to advance its vision of peace and involve representatives from Russia.

Meanwhile, Russian strikes killed eight civilians across Ukraine, regional authorities announced yesterday.

Attacks killed two in northeastern Sumy region, the national police said. Further to the east, in the Kharkiv region bordering Russia, two civilians died in an attack, regional governor Oleg Synegubov said.

Lanka flags civil service pay hike ahead of vote

AFP, *Colombo*

Bankrupt Sri Lanka will offer hefty salary increases and higher pensions to civil servants, President Ranil Wickremesinghe's office said yesterday just weeks before September 21 polls in which he is seeking re-election.

Wickremesinghe is seeking a mandate in September's presidential polls for his efforts to repair the island nation's ruined finances after an unprecedented 2022 economic crisis and $46 billion foreign debt default.

Despite hiking taxes and reining in public spending, in line with an International Monetary Fund (IMF) rescue plan, his administration has backed a government committee's recommendation to boost public sector pay from next January.

"Regardless of which government is in power, there is a pressing need to increase the salaries of public servants," his office said in a statement.

The committee recommended increasing salaries by 25 to 50 percent, boosting pensions and expanding healthcare benefits for government workers.

Israeli strikes on Lebanon's south kill seven people

AFP, *Beirut*

Lebanon's health ministry said yesterday Israeli strikes killed seven people including a child in different parts of the south, with Hezbollah saying three of its fighters were among the dead.

Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran, has exchanged regular fire with Israel in support of its ally Hamas since the Israeli offensive in Gaza began on October. The health ministry said an "Israeli enemy drone strike" killed two people including a "seven-year-old" in Aita al-Shaab, and two other "Israeli" strikes killed five people in three other locations in the south.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said a "hostile drone" targeted a house in Aita al-Shaab with "two guided missiles". The health ministry said Israeli strikes included a raid "on the village of Tayr Harfa that killed three people", with Hezbollah later mourning three fighters killed by Israeli fire, including a man from that same village.

Shadman

FROM PAGE 12

316-5 at stumps on day three after Pakistan declared at 448 for six late on Day 2.

Bangladesh saw a stable opening pair in Joy and Zakir Hasan in their last five Tests in between June 2023 and March 2024 and the injury of the former surely brought some anxiety in the camp before the opening Test as Shadman, who was a reserve opener in the current 16-member squad, hadn't played a Test since April 2022.

The southpaw was dropped following his poor show against South Africa in Durban where he could make only nine and zero in both innings and was unpicked in Bangladesh's next 13 Tests.

Bangladesh found their back against the door on the third day after they resumed on 27-0 as they soon lost Zakir (12) and skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto (16) to get reduced to 53-2.

Despite the fall of two wickets, Shadman showcased great patience, playing a composed innings from one side with his partner Mominul Haque taking charge from the other hand.

Shadman's determination could be gauged from the fact that he struck his first boundary during the 24th over of the day.

The 29-year-old reached his third Test fifty in 123 balls with another boundary -- a pull at deep backward square leg off Naseem Shah.

Shadman's fifty was also a big relief for Bangladesh as ever since the historic 312-run opening stand between Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes in Khulna in 2015 -- a game in which both openers struck tons -- no Bangladeshi openers were able to score a fifty against Pakistan in the following four Tests.

The only instance when Shadman looked to be troubled by Pakistani bowlers was when he was given LBW off an Agha Salman delivery just after the lunch break, but that decision had to be reversed following a review.

However, he failed to finish on a high as he was bowled by pacer Mohammad Ali in the last ball before tea.

By the time Shadman got dismissed, he already laid a solid platform for his side and also for himself as he had all but regained his lost spot in the Test eleven.

Bangladesh now trail by 132 runs and would hope at least one of the unbeaten set batters -- Liton Das, who scored 52 off 58 deliveries, and Mushfiqur Rahim, who is on 55 off 122 deliveries -- get to the three-figure mark that Shadman had missed out on.

UN watchdog wants action on UK 'racist acts and violence'

AFP, *Geneva*

A United Nations committee yesterday voiced concern about recurring racist violence in Britain following the recent anti-immigration riots, and called for measures to curb "racist hate speech" by politicians.

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) demanded thorough investigations into racist hate crimes, and strong penalties for the perpetrators.

"The committee expressed its concern about the persistence of hate crimes, hate speech and xenophobic incidents on various platforms and by politicians and public figures," it said in a statement.

"It was particularly concerned about recurring racist acts and violence against ethnic and ethno-religious minorities, migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers by extremist far-right and white supremacist individuals and groups, including the violent acts committed in late July and early August 2024."

More than a dozen English towns and cities saw unrest and riots. Officials have accused far-right elements of stirring up the disorder, which targeted mosques and hotels housing asylum seekers as well as other properties and police officers.

Row among trustees spells trouble for NSU

FROM PAGE 12

NSU VC Atiqul Islam, also an ex-officio member of the reconstituted trustee board, refused to clarify the current situation.

"I don't have any clarification regarding the prevailing situation. I don't know anything," he told this newspaper yesterday.

Prof Biswajit Chanda, University Grants Commission (UGC) member responsible for overseeing private universities, declined to make comments.

On Tuesday, the High Court bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Sashanka Shekhar issued a stay on the government's decision that reconstituted the NSU trustee board in August 2022.

The court passed the order and a rule after hearing two writ petitions filed by Aziz, Azim, Benajir, MA Kashem, Rehana and Shahjahan.

Md Imam Hossain and Kazi Akhtar Hosain, lawyers for the petitioners, told reporters that the previous trustee board was revived through the HC order.

The NSU, one of the leading private universities in the country, was established in 1992. It has about 23,000 students.

WHY BOARD WAS RECONSTITUTED?

Then president Abdul Hamid on August 16, 2022, reconstituted the NSU Board of Trustees, dropping seven of its former members.

Hamid, also then chancellor of the university, reconstituted the board as some members of the previous board were found to be "involved in anti-state activities, sponsorship of militancy, corruption and arbitrariness" in a probe by the UGC.

He also cut the number of board members to 12 from 16.

The seven dropped previous trustee board members are Azim Uddin Ahmed, Benajir Ahmed, Aziz Al Kaiser, MA Kashem, Rehana Rahman, Mohammed Shajahan, and Nurul H Khan.

The ex-president, however, kept nine of the previous board members in the new one -- ex-officio member Atiqul Islam, MA Kalam, SM Kamaluddin, Abul Kashem, Yasmin Kamal, ASF Rahman, Junaid Kamal Ahmad, Fawzia Naaz and Tanveer Harun.

Three new faces were added to the board -- Javed Munir Ahmed, Faiza Jamil and Sheema Ahmed. Javed was later made chairman of the board.

This correspondent did not find the names of the trustees on the NSU website yesterday.

A member of the previous trustee board yesterday said the decision on reconstituting the board came following pressure from different offices and agencies of the previous Sheikh Hasina-led government. He said four members of a single family were even made trustees.

Meanwhile, a group of NSU students have been staging demonstrations for more than a week to press home their 30-point demand, including removal of the VC and several top officials, reformation of the proctorial body, ban on student politics and waiver of tuition and other fees.

Kaiser yesterday said students have put forward some demands, including removal of the VC. "We are yet to take any decision on terminating him."

Civic platform launched to protect rights

FROM PAGE 12

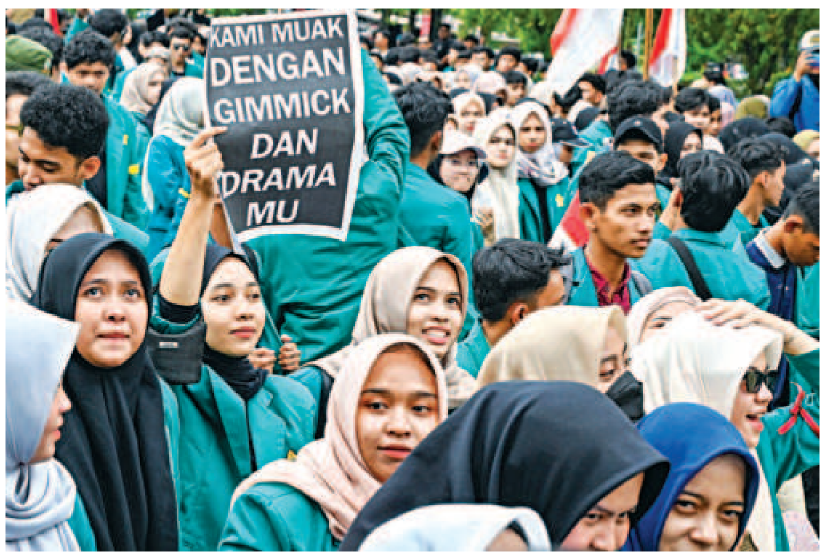
the independence of the judiciary, protecting the rights of workers and farmers, and ensuring democratic campus free of occupation," reads the press release.

After every mass uprising, it was seen that fascism was reestablished and all the achievements made at the cost of human lives were in vain, it said.

"This mass uprising cannot be allowed to fail. So, a unified platform comprising all forces that took part in democratic movements is necessary. That is why this committee has been formed."

The joint conveners of the committee are Prof Haroon-ur-Rashid, Abdullah Kafi Ratan, Prof Tanjimuddin Khan, Seema Dutt, Maha Mirza and Kallol Mustafa.

The committee members include Prof Anu Muhammad, Prof Salimullah Khan, Prof Akmal Hossain, Prof Mamun Al Rashid, Prof Mohammad Azam, Moshahida Sultana Ritu, Snigdha Rezwana, journalist Abu Saeed Khan, Ashraf Qaiser, Bidhan Riberu, Anis Raihan, Chowdhury Mufad Ahmed, ASM Kamal Uddin, Afzalur Basar, Mazharul Islam Babla, lawyers Jyotirmoy Barua and Manzoor Al Mateen, writer and artist Mostafa Zaman, artist Arup Rahi, Mofizur Rahman Laltu, Bithi Ghosh, Sushmita Roy Supti, Azimun Nuzhat Manisha, Omar Tarek Chowdhury, Jamshed Anwar Tapan, film producers Amitabh Reza Chowdhury and Kamar Ahmad Simon, Prof Kazi Rafiqul Islam, Baki Billah, Joydeep Bhattacharya, Nasimul Khabir Deik, Taslima Akhtar Lima, Jolly Talukder, Amena Khatun, Sunayan Chakma, Haroon-or-Rashid Bhuiyan, Manas Nandi, Shamim Imam, Satyajit Biswas, Iqbal Kabir, Afzal Hossain and Rashed Shahriar.



University students hold a poster reading "We are fed up with your tricks and drama" during a protest against a move to overturn a Constitutional Court ruling that changed eligibility rules for candidates in the general election later this year, in front of the People's Representative Council (DPR) in Banda Aceh, Indonesia yesterday. PHOTO: **AFP**

Hasina, Rehana, S Alam

FROM PAGE 12

was rushed to the hospital with bullets in his chest and stomach. He died on August 7.

Hasina is also facing charges of ordering the killing of Dhaka Commerce College student Abdul Ahad Saikat in Savar. His father Nazrul Islam also accused 126 others in the case yesterday, Savar Model Police Station OC Atiqur Rahman said.

The other accused include AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, ex-minister Asaduzzaman, former state minister Arafat, and former state minister for disaster management Enamur Rahman.

According to the case details, they ordered the Chhatra League, Jubo League, and Awami League members to carry out the attack.

Nazrul said in the case that his son was killed when he participated in the student-led mass uprising against "systematic inequalities" on August 5, the day Hasina resigned and fled.

According to the case dossier, Saikat was brutally beaten and shot on Mukti Road. He was declared dead upon arrival at the hospital. OC Atiqur said they were investigating the incident.

Another case was filed at the same police station over the death of Malaysian expatriate Shraban Gazi, 20. Shraban's father Mannan Gazi filed the case against 85 AL leaders and activists, including Quader, Asaduzzaman, Arafat, and Enamur.

Protest victims' families filed nine other murder cases against AL leaders in different parts of the country, including five in Ashulia and three in Sirajganj.

The Ashulia victims were meat seller Lebu, 20, Maulana Sadiqur Rahman, Tanzil Ahmed Sujoy, Class VIII student Arafat Munshi, and BNP activist Mamun Khandkar. All of them were shot dead in the Baipile area on August 5. Their family members named a total of 78 people and around 1,200 unidentified individuals in the cases.

In Sirajganj, ex-MPs Jannat Ara Henry, Millat Munna, former cabinet secretary Kabir Bin Anwar, and 461 AL men were sued in three cases on charges of killing three BNP men – Md Ronju Sheikh, a joint convener of Sirajganj district Jubo Dal, Jubo Dal activist Abdul Latif and Chhatra Dal activist Sumon Sheikh.

Their family members filed the cases at Sirajganj Sadar Police Station on Thursday night, OC Md Humayun Kabir said.

In Dhamrai, former Dhaka-20 MP Benjir Ahmed and 81 others were sued over the death of Ariful Islam Sader, 18, a student of Savar Cantonment Public College, by his father Azim Uddin.

In Barishal, the accused in a case over vandalising and looting the BNP office include former state minister for water resources Zahid Farooq, and former city corporation mayors Abul Khair Abdullah and Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Staying silent is never an option: SAFA KABIR

At the outset of the anti-discrimination student movement, only a few artistes voiced their support. Among those who did was actress Safa Kabir, who felt a sense of duty and stepped out of her comfort zone to ask, "Why are these kids being beaten on the roads?" She also suggested that these students are young and need to be dealt with love, not aggression, leaving her message to the protestors, "Dear students, I'm with you all."

SHARMIN JOYA

In a conversation with The Daily Star, she shared her thoughts on her vision for a new nation, the current crisis in the entertainment industry, and more.

Feeling suffocated by the situation, Safa decided to raise her voice against the injustice and stand in solidarity with the students. On July 19, she, along with her friends, joined the protests on the streets, determined to support their cause.

"For any sane and sensible person, staying silent was not an option after witnessing the brutal treatment of innocent students on the streets," remarked Safa. She was devastated to see the unarmed Abu Sayeed shot to death. "I thought, this is it—as a human being, I have to raise my voice to stop such brutality."

At that time, Safa drew her strength from friends who stood by the students alongside her. They included Redoan Rony, Adnan Al Rajeev, Subrina Irine, Mostafa Monwar, Shankha Dasgupta, Aniqa Zaheen, and Sami. "I am blessed to have such compassionate friends who stepped forward. The lives of the young people lost will never return, and we all sought an immediate solution to end the conflict surrounding the protest."

Safa mentioned that she felt an instant change within herself on July 19, when she chose not to back down but move forward after seeing a group of people approaching with sticks and firebombs in their hands. "I realised these couldn't be students—these were people intent on harming innocent, unarmed citizens on the streets. Despite being extremely sensitive to any form of violence, I decided to confront the situation."

What changes does the actress want to see the interim government making? — "I want to see a country that ensures safety for all its citizens, particularly on the roads, where frequent accidents claim many lives. Second, our poorly structured systems need urgent upgrades. Last but not least, I envision a technologically advanced Bangladesh. If we want to compete globally, we must have the ability to do so. The young generation, who have opened new avenues for us, must be provided with all the resources and accessibility they need to elevate the country to an international level."

The actress, known for her humble nature, feels that her contribution pales in comparison to what others did. While the students were managing traffic, Safa supported them by providing food and water. "I did my best to stand by those who, on behalf of the nation, fought for their rights. When they stood in extreme heat or rain, I could relate to their struggle, as we endure similar conditions during shoots. Their smiles made me feel that it was a lifetime achievement."

> **The actress, known for her humble nature, feels that her contribution pales in comparison to what others did. While the students were managing traffic, Safa supported them by providing food and water.**

The actress returned to shooting after a long break on August 20. She noted that the industry, like many other sectors, is going through a tough time. "Many people depend on this industry for their livelihood. Although it is slowly regaining its rhythm, the main challenge at the moment is people are not willing to invest. Also, the small screen sector, in particular, needs many changes. For instance, we don't have any paperwork procedure before we take on a project, which is a mandatory task for other sectors. Implementing a systematic approach is now essential."

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
Monsieur Spade

Prime Video
Batman: Caped Crusader

Disney plus
Selenkay

HBO Max
City of God: The Fight Rages On

OF GOD
THE FIGHT RAGES ON
NEW SERIES
AUG 25 max

Apple TV+
Lady in the Lake

OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA

The
DHAKA HERITAGE
Stroll
Reminiscing vintage tales of the Old Town
26 August, 2024

Heritage Walk Dhaka: Reminiscing Vintage Tales of Old Town
August 26| 8:30 am- 2:30 pm
Old Town, Dhaka

trikalam
গায়েব
এড়িয়ে যাবে
Passenger
28th Aug, Wed
6:00-8:00 PM
FILM
FIESTA
Details in Caption

Film Fiesta
August 28| 6 pm
Dhaka Trade Centre

17th JULY
NATIONAL LIBRARY AUDITORIUM

Barshanabeg- Barshay Kaktal
August 30| 3 pm-9 pm
National Library Auditorium

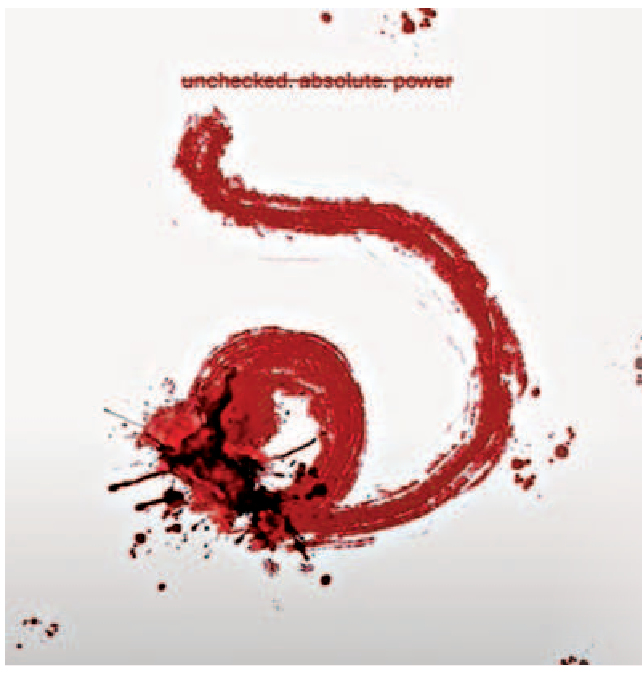
WHAT'S ON THE GRAM

HUGH JACKMAN AND BLAKE LIVELY

While ***Deadpool & Wolverine*** and ***It Ends With Us*** captivate audiences and shatter records in North American theatres, their brilliant stars, Blake Lively and Hugh Jackman, have graced Vogue's September 2024 issue in an homage to Alfred Hitchcock's classic 1955 film ***To Catch a Thief***.

This exquisite tribute, captured through the lens of Baz Luhrmann, melds cinematic history with contemporary elegance in a stunning modern reinterpretation of the classic movie.

In this shot from Luhrmann's photo story, Jackman looks elegant in a black tuxedo, adjusting his cuffs, while Blake Lively stuns in a plunging Michael Kors dress and a Cartier necklace once owned by the legendary Elizabeth Taylor.



WHAT'S PLAYING

JULY

July by EIDA is a raw and poignant tribute to the tragic events of the student-led mass uprising that shook the nation. Released on August 4, the song captures the anguish and resilience of those who faced brutal repression during the July massacre.

The lyrics are haunting, with vivid depictions of violence —"Bloodstains on backpacks" and "Sound grenades, tear shells"— that bring the horror to life. The refrain, "Tell me how you kill the will?" resonates deeply, challenging the forces that sought to crush the spirit of resistance.

With Shahryar's artwork depicting "Ek" (one) written in bloody red to represent the "Ek Dofa" (one demand), ***July*** is not just a song, but a powerful reminder of the revolution the country has witnessed.

TV TALKIES

'The Umbrella Academy' Season 4:A wildly preposterous ending

The Umbrella Academy, one of Netflix's most unique and unconventional successes in recent years recently concluded its story in its fourth season in the most audaciously preposterous way.

This quirky superhero tale with several loose ends needed resolution, including those involving Gene, Jean, the Keepers, Jennifer, and Allison's betrayal, among other factors.

This season, fresh off having lived without their powers for the past six years, the Hargreeves siblings seem to find a way to get them back, albeit at the cost of their health.

The realisation that the timeline they had been living on would once again come to an end led to further confusion, especially when it was revealed that their very existence was ultimately inconsequential, with the Cleanse—another word for the apocalypse—looming.

Steve Blackman and Jeremy Slater's concoction for this fourth and final season was swift and to the point, but it was possibly the first time that the ending of a superhero series resulted in the death of all the main heroes.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

We must reduce our vulnerability to flood

Signs of resilience as severe flooding tests the nation

The ongoing flood has once again highlighted the need for taking decisive actions to reduce our vulnerability to seasonal disasters. With climate change, our internal river management problems, and unresolved external issues with India exposing the fault lines for a country otherwise known for its disaster preparedness, the time has come for Bangladesh to approach this issue with the urgency that it deserves, especially considering the huge human and economic tolls. Reports coming from the ground are quite alarming: at least 13 lives lost and over 44 lakh people affected in 11 districts as of Friday evening. In other words, over 887,000 families remain marooned, with about 77 upazilas under water.

The Feni and Cumilla situations remain as dire as before. In Cumilla, the collapse of an embankment on the Gumti River has left about 500,000 people stranded. People in other districts are also facing severe challenges. Despite all that, one reason to be hopeful about the direction in which Bangladesh is going at present is the spontaneous response of people to help with the aid and rescue efforts. Besides government initiatives in collaboration with the military, coast guard, and emergency services, private platforms and student volunteers have come up in large numbers, reflecting the nation's solidarity at this moment of crisis. They are working with considerable challenges, including the lack of electricity and communication disruptions, with a large number of people in flood-hit districts still disconnected.

That said, we must turn our focus to what's causing the severe flooding and how to reduce our vulnerabilities. Since August 19, the country's eastern region has experienced extremely heavy rainfall for three consecutive days, the highest in 53 years. This, combined with upstream flooding and the narrowing of water drainage paths in Bangladesh, has rapidly deteriorated the situation. This was compounded by inadequate early warning systems. A critical factor in this is the lack of warning about upstream water flows from the Indian authorities, which experts say has exacerbated the situation. Effective cross-border water management and better coordination with India are essential to improve our response. The Joint River Commission and the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC) have a huge role to play in this regard, which they must do.

In addition to cross-border river issues, encroachments and blockages in Bangladesh's river systems are another major concern. The estimates given by the NRCC about river encroachers show how the latter have encroached river land across the country, exacerbating the impact of flooding. Going forward, we must bring these encroachers to book and improve water flow in our rivers. A comprehensive approach to flood management is necessary. This includes restoring natural river channels, addressing encroachments, and strengthening regional cooperation and the effectiveness of relevant institutions to prevent future disasters.

A step in the right direction

Enforced disappearance commission must provide answer, justice

We welcome the interim government's decision to establish a commission to investigate all the cases of enforced disappearance in Bangladesh. The government also seems on track to sign the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, making the country answerable to international forums. These moves mark a clear departure from the Awami League government's policy of denial, misrepresentation, and inaction on this issue.

Through these efforts, the country can finally expect some clarity on something the very existence of which was repeatedly rejected by the previous regime. The families of those who were disappeared, mostly critics and political rivals of the Awami League, can finally hope to get justice and closure. According to rights organisation Odhikar, at least 708 people were victims of enforced disappearance between 2009 and 2024. Although many have since returned, at least 158 are still believed missing, according to Mayer Dak, a platform for the families of victims of enforced disappearance. Meanwhile, those who returned did not, until recently, speak up about their experience in fear of further retribution.

After the fall of Sheikh Hasina, several victims were released from the secret internment facilities, including what is popularly known as Aynaghar. This gave many hope that their loved ones might still be alive in one of the other 23 facilities apparently run by the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI). The challenge now is to ensure transparency and accountability in the investigative process without the interference of political and security entities that stand accused of committing the crime. The decision to appoint a person with the rank of a High Court judge as the head of the commission—and members with prior experience of working on prevention of enforced disappearances—is a step in the right direction, but they must be empowered enough to do their job right. The chief adviser's recent meeting with Mayer Dak has raised hopes of establishing justice for the victims.

As the legal framework of the commission is being drafted, we would also urge the government to create provisions to prevent future governments from exploiting security agencies to commit such heinous crimes—not just enforced disappearances, but also extrajudicial killings and custodial torture—for political purposes. For that, it is not enough to just bring to justice those involved in these gross violations of human rights. It must pursue reforms to insulate security agencies from the corrupt influences of politics and politicians, and end the culture of impunity for their crimes.

Revolutionary changes needed to deal with floods

Dr S Nazrul Islam
is the founder of Bangladesh Environment Network (BEN) and the initiator and vice-president of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA). He is also the former chief of development research at the United Nations and a visiting professor at the Asian Growth Research Institute (AGI) based in Japan.

S NAZRUL ISLAM

Much of eastern Bangladesh is under water right now. The flood-affected areas extend from Sylhet in the north through Cumilla, Feni and Noakhali to Cox's Bazar in the south. People need help and it is encouraging to see that the students and young people, together with others, have engaged themselves with the relief work.

Global, regional, and national drivers have all combined to create the current flood disaster. The global driver is embodied by climate change, one of whose effects is the increase the frequency, scope, and intensity of extreme weather events, including untimely and excessive rainfall. The main cause of the ongoing flooding is excessive rainfall in India's Tripura state as well as in Bangladesh. Climate change is also causing sea-level rise, which slows down the passage of river water to the sea, thus aggravating and prolonging flooding. In the coming days, this may play a significant role in Feni and Noakhali districts, which are close to the sea.

The regional drivers are rooted in the fact that about 90 percent of the water that flows through Bangladesh's rivers originate outside—mostly in India. Almost all the water from the torrential rain that fell in Tripura (about 330mm in just two days of August 20-21) came to Bangladesh through Gumti, Khowai, Feni, Muhuri, Manu and other rivers and added to the rainwater that fell inside Bangladesh to cause the flooding. Some water also came from the reservoir (about 60 sq-km) of the 30-metre-tall Dumbur Dam that India has constructed on the Gumti River, about 120 kilometres from the Bangladesh border. Some reports suggest that gates of this reservoir were deliberately opened to release water. The Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh, however, maintained that the release was an automatic process, triggered by the reservoir's water level exceeding a certain limit. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that water, released from the reservoir, added to the volume of water that caused the flooding.

This is another example of the increasingly man-made character of flooding in Bangladesh, i.e. flooding caused or aggravated by decisions made by the operators of the dams and barrages that India has built on almost all rivers that it shares with Bangladesh. Consequently, India's river intervening structures not only reduce dry season flow in Bangladesh's rivers, but have also become a source of untimely and more severe floods. This has particularly been the case with the Teesta basin in Bangladesh, where residents have witnessed seven such floods in a recent year alone.

It is well-known that the previous government failed miserably in protecting Bangladesh's right on its rivers. For political reasons, it approached India as a supplicant and allowed it to do whatever it wanted with the rivers, with little resistance offered. Yet, just as Bangladesh depends on India for river flows, India also depends on Bangladesh for easy access to its seven northeastern states. In 2013, the Bangladesh Environment Network (BEN) put forward the "transit in exchange for rivers" formula, under which India would restore the natural flows of the shared rivers and, in exchange, Bangladesh would grant India transit and transshipment facilities to access its northeastern states. BAPA and BEN have also been urging the Bangladesh government to sign the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, which forbids a country from intervening in shared rivers without the consent of other co-riparian countries. We hope that the interim government, with a renowned environmentalist in charge of the water ministry, will lose no time to sign the 1997 UN convention and use it in negotiations with India under the "transit in exchange for rivers" framework.

Of course, national (domestic) drivers are the ones over which Bangladesh has the greatest control. In this regard, the current floods further vindicate the necessity of moving away from the Cordon approach towards the rivers, which Bangladesh has been following since the 1950s, to the Open approach. While the former approach strives to constrict rivers (by constructing embankments) to their channels only, the latter one allows rivers to overflow onto the floodplains during the rainy season. This allows floodplains to serve as an additional passage for river water to move to the sea and for sediment to be deposited on floodplains, raising their elevation. Under the Cordon approach, the opposite happens: the elevation of floodplains cannot increase, while sediment gets deposited on river beds, raising their level. Consequently, after some time, the riverbed reaches an elevation that is higher than that of the adjoining floodplains. The Gumti River embankment illustrates this perverse outcome. In many places of Cumilla district, the riverbed has a higher elevation. One can easily imagine the catastrophe that can result if the embankment breaches in such places—as seen when the embankment collapsed in the Burichang upazila in the early hours of yesterday, flooding several villages. About five lakh people are now marooned in the area.

Once the immediate tasks related to the relief and rehabilitation necessitated by the floods are dealt with, the interim government will have to make a clean break from the Cordon approach and make the Open approach the official policy. The mindset of the personnel in all water-related agencies has to change. Instead of a money-making business of politicians, bureaucrats, engineers, and contractors, water development has to be about the noble business of serving people. Embankments have to be gradually opened up, the obstructions on the floodplains have to be removed, and the sediment has to be used to raise the ground of villages and towns. All roads in floodplains have to be built on pillars. In short, revolutionary changes have to be brought about in the water sector of the country. That is the only way we will be able to protect the people from the recurring pain and suffering caused by floods. That is how we will be able to equip Bangladesh and its people to confront the impact of climate change.

মহিষমারা উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়
স্থাপিত : ০১-০১-২০০০খ্রিঃ।
প্রতিষ্ঠাতা : এডভোকেট একলাছ উদ্দিন ভূঁইয়া।

Global, regional, and national drivers have all combined to create the current flood disaster in Bangladesh. The photo was taken in Burichang, Cumilla on August 23, 2024.
PHOTO: **NAHID MAZHAR**

A tolerant society must respect differing opinions

Laila Khondkar
is an international development worker.

LAILA KHONDKAR

The dean of Harvard Kennedy School sometimes meets students—usually a group of seven or eight—over breakfast or lunch to have discussions. There is no specific agenda; students can express their opinions or suggestions on any matter. Over a year ago, I had the chance to have such a discussion with the dean over lunch as I was studying there for a mid-career course. During our lunch, the dean listened to everyone, took notes, responded to questions, and said he would raise some of the issues that were discussed with other faculty members.

Whether everyone can openly express their opinions on political and social issues also came up in our discussion. The dean commented, "It is believed that most of the teachers and students at Harvard Kennedy School support the Democratic Party. That's why the supporters of the Republican Party here are usually reluctant to share their own opinions." He added, "It hurts both the Democrats and the Republicans." The dean was interested in having more students supporting the Republican Party so that discussions and debates could be more diverse and meaningful.

A professor who taught exercising leadership once told us, "Talk more with those with opinions different from yours. Try to understand their perspectives." His suggestion was simple. If someone says something completely contrary to one's thoughts, instead of reacting strongly, one should express interest and say, "Tell me more about it." This inquisitive mindset can lead to effective communication and generate new learning.

Listening to others does not mean agreeing with them, but acknowledging that different opinions exist and seeking to understand them is crucial. But is it actually happening? Harvard Kennedy School, like other places in the United States, has what is called the "cancel culture." If someone says or does something that others find "unacceptable," the tendency to boycott or isolate them is called "cancelling." According to some analyses, cancel culture has provided an opportunity for marginalised members of society to voice their opinions. Others believe that it narrows free speech and makes debates impossible. However, almost everyone agrees that the cancel culture has grown with the expansion of social media. As a result, many people are afraid to express their thoughts, especially if they don't conform to the views of the majority.

In Bangladesh, are we interested in knowing and understanding everyone's perspective on an issue? Can we have a constructive debate on anything—be it politics, social change, sports or entertainment? Or does it turn into an argument in no time?

Someone may have a different way of thinking from us about society and politics and their way of living, but that does not mean that they are "wrong." Has the internet liberated us mentally, or are we living in a bubble with like-minded people? Many people are constantly expressing their views on all sorts of social, political and cultural issues in private chats or on social media. But is there a real exchange of ideas?

I have observed that many people in our society suffer from confirmation bias, which means they only believe in evidence that confirms their existing views and disregard other information. However, it is important to maintain an open mind, challenge various ideas and also get challenged by others. Having candid conversations is intellectually stimulating and is a sign of maturity.

Extreme polarisation has happened in different parts of the world, making debates challenging. In any society, there has to be a space for many kinds of discussions to look at an issue from all perspectives. Unfortunately, that space seems to be shrinking every day. The rise of populism has contributed to a situation where rhetoric is more important than sound reason and evidence. The ability to critically examine an issue and not jumping to quick conclusions remains critical if we are to become responsible members of a tolerant, democratic and inclusive society.

Last year, I had an opportunity to visit the ancient Agora of Athens. This place was at the centre of public life in Athens; from trade to legislation—everything was done here. A professor of political philosophy explained that in Athens, questioning and debates were encouraged, and welcoming foreigners and their ideas was normal. Many of Athens's famous philosophers came from other cities, and they enriched the ancient city. Another Greek city, Sparta, however, was the opposite. There was no place for foreigners, and dissent was not tolerated. Are many countries in the world becoming Sparta? In that case, is that not a serious threat to democracy?

If we start a discussion with the attitude of clinging to our opinions, it does not get us very far. Prof Julia Minson of Harvard University proposed an approach so that people can have open, meaningful conversations, termed HEAR: i) hedge your claims (i.e., do not express opinions too blatantly); ii) emphasise agreement; iii) acknowledge other perspectives; and iv) reframe to the positive. The point is to respect others' opinions. In building an inclusive, democratic society, tolerance is paramount, and it is particularly important to give space to opposing views. Are we creating an environment in our society where reason prevails?

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The triumphs and challenges of a generation in flux

BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Dr Shamsad Mortuza
is professor of English at Dhaka University.

SHAMSAD MORTUZA

The timing of the flood couldn't have been worse. The country is yet to recover from the political storm that has created an administrative vacuum both at the centre and in the periphery. The students are once again at the forefront by reaching out to the victims of the flood that has inundated the country's eastern region.

The creativity and passion with which they are collecting funds, identifying essential items, creating support networks, and undertaking rescue missions are remarkable. This is another example of our youth rising to the occasion. Social media displays their activism, allowing us to hear their humanitarian voices and connect with their peers. However, we must avoid any undue and oversimplistic expectation that this generation alone will change everything overnight. Such expectations will place huge pressure on this generation that is still coming of age. And they may not have yet developed a thorough idea of the complex and intricate nature of the problems that they are dealing with. I believe that in order for us to move forward as a country with all of its desired reforms, we need to have a reality check and emphasise intergenerational dynamics.

The young generation's rise to prominence in politics is both phenomenal and accidental. What began as a movement among some public university graduates seeking systemic changes for equal job opportunities transformed into a singular demand: regime change. The tide has turned. The autocratic regime is toppled. A new challenge has now emerged: filling the power vacuum.

Members of Students against Discrimination movement collect money and relief items to help flood-affected communities, at Dhaka University on August 23, 2024.
PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

We have thrust many of our students into leadership roles. Thankfully, an interim government comprising experienced civil society and public service members assists them in understanding the institutional knowledge and the intricacies of the governance machinery. But due to the movement's spontaneity and sporadic nature, there is no clearly defined leadership. The coordination team represents the movement, but many volunteers and local enthusiasts are operating in uncharted areas. This inexperience, combined with their youthful idealism, is likely to cause missteps.

There is also a risk of elevating the leaders through excessive praise. We should use constructive criticism as a stimulus for meaningful change. The nation does not require further reminders about the negative effects of hero worship and the formation of cults. Generation Z, like any generation, is not a homogenous entity. Many of them are deeply committed to political change, but they vary in their scope and conviction. Leaders of the movement, when elevated to positions of power, may not accurately reflect the diverse views and concerns of all their peers representing different social strata.

The recent cancellation of HSC exams will be a classic example. A group of students stormed the Secretariat and demanded immediate annulment of the public examination. An adviser attempted to reason with the students, but to no effect. Their threats of violence compelled the government to concede to a proposal to prepare results based on the examinations that they have appeared in so far. With the memory of the quota reform movement still vivid, the government probably did not want to risk exacerbating the situation. The caution is understandable, but it will lead to further complications. Not surprisingly, another group of students have contradicted the demand of their peers, as they feel that the compromised results based on partial exams will jeopardise their future in competitive exams, higher studies, and selection of majors. Mobocracy drowned out their response.

This incident exemplifies a troubling aspect where group interests precede institutional ones. This is also seen in the series of news reports that state how institutional heads are being asked to resign from their posts. Those who faced the call to step down ostensibly remained silent or ambivalent during the movement. These individuals are found guilty of complicity in the crimes of the previous regime. There could be many invisible local factors or hidden agendas. It is possible that different dormant regimes will return. Indeed, we need a culture of accountability. But we also need to refrain from rash judgements that can destabilise many of our already fragile institutions. At the same time, we need to be careful about less noble intentions that may take advantage of a power vacuum. As Greta Thunberg, one of the most prominent Gen Z climate activists, has emphasised, real change requires action from those in power, not just from passionate young people.

There is also a risk of elevating the leaders through excessive praise. We should use constructive criticism as a stimulus for meaningful change. The nation does not require further reminders about the negative effects of hero worship and the formation of cults. Generation Z, like any generation, is not a homogenous entity. Many of them are deeply committed to political change, but they vary in their scope and conviction. Leaders of the movement, when elevated to positions of power, may not accurately reflect the diverse views and concerns of all their peers representing different social strata. Already, we have seen madrasa students complaining that their cleaning or street monitoring activities did not get equal media attention. Private university students assert that their sacrifices received insufficient recognition. This disconnect could lead to fractures within the movement as different factions vie for influence and control. The HSC fiasco is a case in point.

The use of technology, particularly social media, plays a crucial role in the rise of Gen Z activism. It allowed activists to connect with one another, share information rapidly, and mobilise support on a global scale. However, the rapid pace of online activism can result in superficial engagement, reducing complex issues to mere hashtags and soundbites. Some groups could intensify their activism to become more radical. For instance, a group of female students went to Shahbag Police Station insisting on forcing an alleged perpetrator of sexual assault into writing a confessional statement, snatching him away from the uniformed forces. Support for a patient army officer and a radical female voice divides the internet.

A prerequisite of nation-building is continuity and stability. Gen Z has been the catalyst for change. However, a single generation cannot bring about changes. We must not overlook the contributions and experiences of previous generations. We need intergenerational collaboration, not generational rivalry, to address the multifaceted crises facing us. For instance, as a flood-prone country, we developed a disaster management model. Although we should have immediately deployed professional forces to deal with the flood aftermath, the focus appears to be more on crowdsourcing and their viral visibility.

While we are thankful to Generation Z for the ultimate sacrifice they made to bring down an autocratic regime and force far-reaching reforms, we need to bridge the intergenerational divide. We need a reality check. The future depends on whether we can channel their energy and idealism into sustainable, long-term change, highlighting each generation's role. We need to build a bridge over the troubled waters.

How Awami League soured the youth's perception of Bangabandhu

Azmin Azran
is digital features coordinator at The Daily Star.

AZMIN AZRAN

August 15 this year was unrecognisable compared to how the day has been observed over the 15 years of Awami League rule. This year, the day came just 10 days after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, in the face of a student-led mass uprising, was forced to resign and flee the country. Her government was subsequently dismantled.

Hasina's government declared August 15 the National Mourning Day and a public holiday to solemnly remember the assassination of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members in 1975. Yet, on the day of Hasina's fall, statues of Bangabandhu were torn down in various places, and his residence at Dhanmondi Road 32, which had been turned into a museum, was set on fire.

The interim government subsequently cancelled the public holiday, and many individuals were stopped and harassed at Dhanmondi Road 32 on August 15, apparently for trying to pay respects at the residence of the country's first president.

But what does this mean? Does the new generation really think so little of Bangabandhu? How did it get to this stage?

We spoke to some youngsters and asked them about their perception of who Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was, and how that perception changed over time.

Rubama Amreen, 15, says she can't recall when she first learnt about Bangabandhu, but admits that she has been hearing the name for as long as she can remember. "It was more like knowledge instilled within us from birth," she said. The one thing that stood out to her when she learnt about the Liberation War in school was the "incessant glorification of Bangabandhu, which was strange, especially compared to how we were taught about other world leaders."

Sakib Rahman (not his real name), 24, points out what was missing in history lessons about Bangabandhu. "In our social science textbook, the history mostly revolved around the Liberation War and a big section about his March 7 speech. Nothing was mentioned about the Awami League rule during 1972-75. Back then, I thought of him as a national hero who was a saint."

However, the post-war period in Bangladesh's history was recent enough that many youngsters had the chance to learn about Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's time in power from family members who saw it firsthand. The advent of the internet, on the other hand, has made it doubly difficult to limit anyone's knowledge of history simply to textbooks or other government-approved media.

Sakib's interest in that period of history was recent. "I got interested in the history of post-war politics during the recent protests. Books like *Bangladesh: A Legacy of Blood, Jasod er Utthan Poton,* and *3 Ti Shena Obbhutthan o Kichhu Na Bola Kotha,* etc painted the real picture about Sheikh Mujib for me. I knew his rule wasn't that great, but after knowing the details, it completely changed how I viewed him."

Anindya Alam, 24, shared how his perception was shaped by his family's honesty about the history of that period. "My family background is diverse. My father's side has been very pro-Awami League and has political history, while my mother's side, post-liberation, has been very critical of the Awami League. As I grew up and my family began to have more honest conversations about history with me, I had access to two different narratives." For Anindya, while one side reaffirmed the narratives taught by his textbook, the other side told him about the looting, the nepotism, the extrajudicial killings, and the terror perpetrated by the Rakkhi Bahini.

FILE ILLUSTRATION: **BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY**

Even if an honest reading of history is not consistent with what the younger generation has been taught, it doesn't explain the disdain with which many in this generation have treated the memory of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, especially since the fall of the Hasina government.

Some think the Awami League is to blame for that.

Wasima Aziz, 19, said, "The previous government shoved the idea of Bangabandhu being an unquestionable figure down everyone's throat, to the point of mockery. I think the previous government tainted the image of Bangabandhu themselves, by overdoing it to the point of no return."

Anindya Alam added, "Bangabandhu had a fairly positive perception among Bangladeshis and the Hasina regime took advantage of that. The previous government, in Bangabandhu's name, tried to rewrite history. By attributing every little success to him, the previous government tried to justify their authoritarian regime. All good things happened because of Bangabandhu. But people aren't stupid. We recognised our oppression, and we attributed that to Bangabandhu, because all oppression was justified in his name."

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Mesbah Kamal, professor of history at Dhaka University, echoed some of these sentiments and pointed out exactly where the Awami League got it wrong.

"History is non-linear in nature; every action has a reaction. The post-1975 attempts to erase Bangabandhu from our history brought about a serious reaction in 2009 when Sheikh Hasina came to power. She tried to establish Bangabandhu as the father of the nation and the commander-in-chief of the Liberation War. However, in the process of doing this, she often presented her father in a way as if Mujib is their family property and her family has a special authority over the country. No one, especially the young generation, was on board with it."

Pointing out the Awami League's mishandling of Bangabandhu's history, he said, "Another dimension is the overprojection of Bangabandhu—the tendency to force him onto the nation. Bangabandhu should have been portrayed as the champion of nationalist and humanitarian spirit, but that was not done."

So, what comes next? How do the young generation want to approach the figure of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman now, out of the yoke of Awami League?

"Frankly, the history of Bangabandhu should be regarded in the same way as that of any other historical leader. There's no need to glorify him or put his name in the mud. Acknowledging both sides provides a better chance to understand not just the heritage of our country, but also what it means to rise up to a position of that much power and act as a representative of a huge population," said Rubama Amreen.

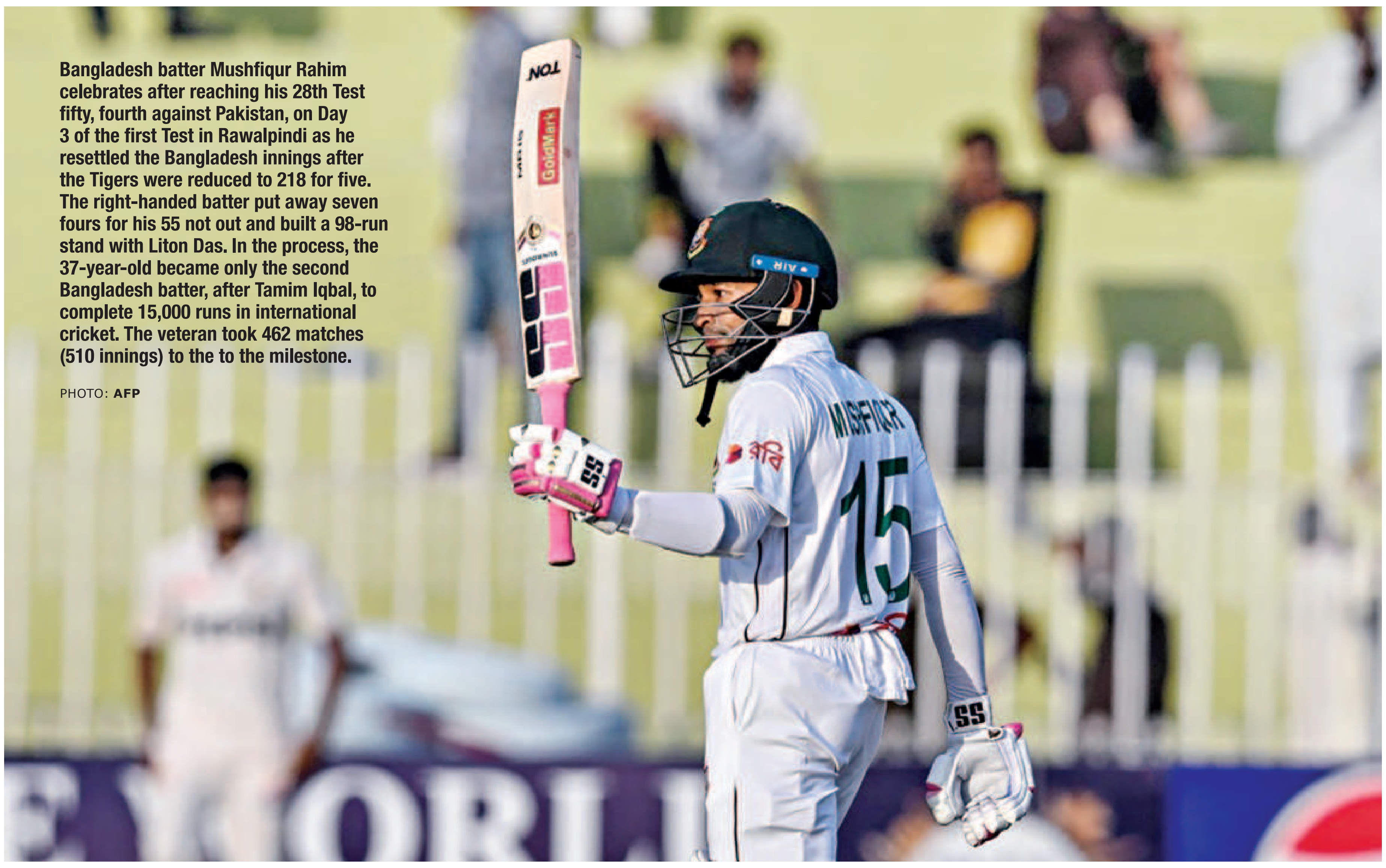
Anindya Alam suggested, "People must be given an authentic historical account of Bangabandhu and his regime. Whether they decide to view him as the father of the nation or not should be left to them. The people of this country have never been given a choice. I hope the future is different. I hope the younger generation of Bangladeshi students are encouraged to form their own opinions."

Historian Mesbah Kamal extends hope for the future too. "Bangabandhu was a politician; he may have made mistakes alongside making many correct decisions. The young generation could have been told what the Awami League learnt from his successes and mistakes, and what other parties should learn from that period.

"Bangabandhu's contribution in the period between 1947 and 1970, in 1971, and in rebuilding the war-ravaged country is undeniable. But these histories don't just belong to the Awami League or Bangabandhu. The history that has been told until now has not done justice to people like Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Comrade Moni Singh, Muzaffar Ahmad, Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, and Col Abu Taher. Students understand this," Kamal said. "I feel that whatever distance may have been created among the youth in understanding Bangabandhu's contribution will change over time in the synthesisation process, and Bangabandhu will eventually be recognised and respected in general."

Star
SPORT
DHAKA SATURDAY AUGUST 24, 2024, BHADRA 9, 1431 BS

Bangladeshi-born English footballer Hamza Choudhury has finally received a Bangladesh passport, confirmed Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) general secretary Emran Hossain yesterday. The 26-year-old Leicester City footballer had earlier expressed his desire to represent Bangladesh in international level and had applied for a Bangladesh passport in June.



Bangladesh batter Mushfiqur Rahim celebrates after reaching his 28th Test fifty, fourth against Pakistan, on Day 3 of the first Test in Rawalpindi as he resettled the Bangladesh innings after the Tigers were reduced to 218 for five. The right-handed batter put away seven fours for his 55 not out and built a 98-run stand with Liton Das. In the process, the 37-year-old became only the second Bangladesh batter, after Tamim Iqbal, to complete 15,000 runs in international cricket. The veteran took 462 matches (510 innings) to the to the milestone.

PHOTO: AFP

Mushfiqur's role 'most important' in rare good day

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh batters had one of their better days in Pakistani conditions in the sweltering heat of Rawalpindi yesterday where a number of batters put their hands up to help the side reach 316 for five at stumps, 132 runs behind Pakistan's first innings score.

Opener Shadman Islam batted over five-and-a-half hours during a patient 93 off 183 deliveries, his resistance unwavering in the face of Pakistan's four-pronged pace attack, while Mominul Haque kept the runs ticking in his natural flair to help Shadman's cause.

Liton Das displayed his array of stroke-play in an unbeaten 52 off 58 balls. But according to Mominul, the most important knock of the day came off the bat of the veteran Mushfiqur Rahim, who on his way to an undefeated 55 off 122 balls, forged a number of crucial stands which essentially held together the Tiger's middle-order.

After the loss of Zakir Hassan (12) and skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto (16), Shadman and Mominul put up a solid 94-run stand to steady the ship. Their partnership ended when pacer Khurram Shahzad found a way through Mominul's defences after a 76-ball 50.

That partnership worked as the backbone of the entire innings and then Mushfiqur along with Shadman and later Liton, ensured Bangladesh ended the day happier of the two sides.

Mushfiqur had opened his account in the 12th delivery he faced, a sweep shot that manifested after a pressure period.

He did not make many noticeable mistakes during his patient vigil bar one inside-edge in the 82nd over off Naseem Shah, which almost ricocheted onto his stumps. He dispatched Naseem's final delivery of that very over through extra cover to show that he was in control.

Mushfiqur exemplified his experience of handling pressure in his innings and Mominul, who came to the press conference after the day's play, pointed to the many admirable qualities of the experienced campaigner.

"Mushfiqur bhai is a very dedicated person. Whatever I say about him won't be enough. His playing style is completely different from us. He plays every ball so carefully, you can just tell that he has played a lot of Test matches," Mominul said.

Following a 52-run stand with Shadman, Mushfiqur then partnered with Shakib Al Hasan (15) for a short while before forming a 98-run unbroken stand with Liton.

"Look at the way he played and managed everything when Shadman and I got out. You must have noticed how Shadman accelerated after he [Mushfiqur] came to the crease. So, there must have been some instructions. His role was the most important according to me," Mominul said about Mushfiqur. Liton's late assault against Naseem, where he took 18 runs off one over against the pacer, pushed Bangladesh's total beyond 300 on the day.

Mominul heaped praises on Liton for his late blitz and expressed optimism about his team's chances in the match.

"Spinners might get some turn and I felt pacers might get some help too [in the final two days]. The way Liton attacked in the end, I feel the game is now in our grasp. Mushfiqur bhai handled the situation brilliantly.

"Definitely as an opposition team, I always believe in thinking positively and that we can play better than them [Pakistan]. Liton is a classical batsman and he made the difference in that one over."

'A' team's Pak series ends in stalemate

SPORTS REPORTER

The two-match four-day series between Bangladesh 'A' and Pakistan Shaheens ended in a stalemate after the rain-marred second match concluded in a draw at the Islamabad Club Cricket Oval on Friday.

Resuming on 346-6, Bangladesh 'A' declared their first innings on 404-9 after Jaker Ali made the highest 172.

Pakistan Shaheens leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed took all three Bangladesh wickets that fell on the final day to finish with 4-103.

The hosts, in reply, reached 281-4 before both captains accepted a draw. Shaheens opener Al Zaryab top-scored with 117.

Pacer Taskin Ahmed, who is also in the Bangladesh squad for their second Test against Pakistan, trapped Imam-ul-Haq (0) LBW in the first ball of Shaheens innings but that remained his only success in the 15 overs he bowled on the day. Pacers Tanzim Hasan Sakib and Ruyel Miah also took one wicket each.

The first two days of the match saw no play owing to rain and a wet outfield. The first four-day match had also ended in a draw.

Both teams will now play a three-match one-day series, starting on August 26.

Jamal 'signed a contract', but with which club?

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh football team captain Jamal Bhuiyan said that he had signed a contract with a local club on Friday but the midfielder was among the ones who were excluded from the list of players registered by the clubs for the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

Jamal, midfielder Masuk Mia Jonny and forward Matin Mia were the big names left clubless following the conclusion of the transfer window ahead of the 2023-2024 BPL season.

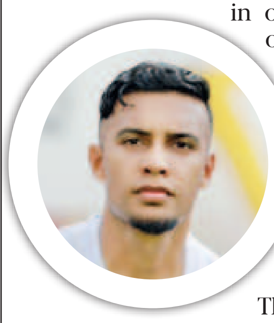
"I have signed a contract with a local club and will let you know within a couple of days what exactly happened," Jamal told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, Jamal's name was not found in the players' list of any of the 10 clubs who completed the players' registration formalities on Thursday night – the deadline day for the transfer window.

Before the window closed, there were talks of Jamal playing for Brothers Union as he played for Abahani in the latter part of last season after coming from Argentina's third-tier Club Sol de Mayo.

Meanwhile, three-time champions Sheikh Jamal DC and treble winner Sheikh Russel DC pulled out of the upcoming 2023-24 season owing to financial constraints. The withdrawal of two outfits from the top-tier league meant at least 60 local players lost the opportunity to play BPL this season.

Also, a good number of footballers who were supposed to play for Sheikh Jamal DC and Sheikh Russel KC have been forced to lower their payments in order to sign contracts with other outfits.



Jonny, who was supposed to play for Sheikh Russel this season, said he did not join any club for family reasons after Sheikh Russel failed to form a squad. "I was supposed to play for Sheikh Russel but they did not form the squad. There was also an offer from Brothers Union but I have decided not to play this season for family reasons," Jonny told The Daily Star.

Jonny also informed that Matin Mia was also offered contracts from different clubs like Sheikh Russel, Abahani and Brothers Union but he too did not accept any offers to stay out of football this season. The Daily Star was unable to reach Matin for confirmation on the matter.

Meanwhile, Chittagong Abahani, who were uncertain about forming a squad, finally completed their players' registrations at the eleventh hour with the help of former national striker Zahid Hasan Emily and former captain Mamunul Islam, who reportedly took permission from the club officials to form the squad.

Jamie Smith scored his maiden Test hundred before England reduced Sri Lanka to 107-4 at Tea in their second innings as the hosts strengthened their grip on the series opener at Old Trafford on Friday. Surrey wicketkeeper Smith's 111 on the third day was the centrepiece of England's first-innings 358 all out. PHOTO: AFP

NSC clarifies Faruque, Fahim appointments at BCB

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) on Friday offered an explanation for the appointments of Faruque Ahmed and Nazmul Abedeen Fahim as directors of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) a day after former NSC nominated director Sajjadul Alam Bobby alleged the sports ministry of 'direct interference' with BCB's functioning.

During BCB's board meeting on Wednesday, held at the sports ministry, the NSC named Faruque and Fahim as its two mandated nominees in the 25-member board of directors at the BCB, replacing Sajjadul and Jalal Yunus. In the same meeting, Faruque was elected as the BCB president, replacing Nazmul Hassan Papon.

While Yunus had resigned from his directorship role on Monday after being asked by the NSC, Sajjadul, who was also asked to step down, had refused.

Sajjadul claimed he was not invited to Wednesday's board meeting and was only sent a notice of the new appointments on that evening.

"I am extremely surprised and disappointed. What the NSC did is akin to direct interference in the board's functioning. It is completely unacceptable," he told The Daily Star on Thursday.

NSC, seemingly in response to Sajjadul's claim, issued a clarification yesterday regarding the new appointments, two days after they were nominated.

"In accordance with Article 9.3.2 of the Constitution of Bangladesh Cricket Board, Mr. Mohammad Jalal Yunus resigned on August 19, 2024 from among the 05 (five) representatives previously nominated by the National Sports Council in the Councillor category and Mr. Nazmul Abedeen Fahim was appointed for the 01 (one) stated vacant post Nominated by Sports Council," the NSC press release read.

"On the other hand, Mr. Faruque Ahmed and Mr. Nazmul Abedin Fahim have been nominated by the National Sports Council in the director category according to Article 13.2 (kha) 4 of the constitution, which is being widely appreciated.

"Such nominations are made on the basis of Philosophy of Jurisprudence with the utmost careful application of prevailing rules. The government is committed to keeping the activities of all federations/associations, including the Bangladesh Cricket Board fair, efficient, active and uninterrupted," the press release stated further.

Article 13.2 (kha) 4 explains that the NSC can nominate two directors from three councillor categories of the general council. Both Faruque and Fahim are councillors under category 3 of the BCB constitution (Article 9).

'Crazy love' for Rashid and Co on home turf

AFP, KABUL

Afghan student Basit Wali Hotak travelled hundreds of kilometres overnight to Kabul on Thursday for the chance to glimpse his cricket hero, Rashid Khan, on a home pitch.

The Shpageeza T20 league kicked off last week, with the usual cricket fever fanned by the promised inclusion of national players, many of whom have not joined domestic tournaments since the Taliban authorities swept to power in 2021.

Thousands of fans turned out at the Kabul International Cricket Stadium to see the famous players.

"I am extremely happy," Hotak told AFP, as he waited in a crowd jostling for tickets and fried snacks before filing past Taliban security guards to enter the stadium.

"I hardly noticed how long the line was out of joy that I would finally get to see Rashid Khan," Hotak said of the ace spinner and captain of the T20 national team.

Hotak left the southern city of Kandahar on Wednesday night to reach Kabul by 6 am (0130 GMT), sleeping only an hour before rushing to the stadium.

In cricket-mad Afghanistan, the national team's strides on the international stage have provided rare moments of widespread celebration in a country ravaged by four decades of war.

Hotak was one of many who made long journeys over accident-prone and poorly maintained roads and spent their limited cash to buy the 50 Afghani (70-cent) tickets.

"For Rashid Khan, even if the ticket was 1,000 Afghanis ($14), I would still have bought one," said the 21-year-old, who has a picture of the Afghan sensation as his phone background. "This has been my biggest dream."

Much to Hotak's dismay, Khan and other star players expected to join the match between the Speenghar Tigers and Mis-e-Ainak Knights were not part of the playing eleven.

Still, when the cameras showed the Afghan captain sitting in the dugout, loud cheers erupted in the all-male crowd.

After the match, Khan signed autographs at the edge of the stands, with fans injuring themselves on barbed wire along the barriers as they scrambled to reach the star.

"If you see my room and my social media accounts, they are flooded with photos of king Rashid Khan," said 18-year-old Abid Usmani from Kapisa, who had printed a banner covered with Khan photos.

During the match, a chant of "heroes, long live heroes" periodically boomed from loudspeakers, occasionally drawing jubilant responses from the crowd.

Former captain and allrounder Mohammad Nabi did take to the pitch, facing off against his son, Hassan Eisakhil -- both wearing "Number 7" jerseys.

Another fan, Kamil Shah Mashal, travelled hours with his friends to the capital. "It is crazy love that has brought us here to Kabul from Khost," which borders Pakistan, he told AFP.

"It's only cricket left that keeps us happy."

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What to WATCH

T SPORTS AND GTV
Pakistan vs Bangladesh
1st Test, Day 4
Live from 11:00 am
SONY SPORTS 5
England vs Sri Lanka
1st Test, Day 4
Live from 4:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
Premier League
Brighton vs Man Utd
Live from 5:30 pm
Man City vs Ipswich Town
Live from 8:00 pm
Aston Villa vs Arsenal
Live from 10:30 pm

Bringing Gundogan back was a no-brainer Guardiola

REUTERS, *Manchester*

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola said the decision to re-sign former captain Ilkay Gundogan was an easy one, considering the season the German international enjoyed at Barcelona.

Midfielder Gundogan, who played seven seasons for Guardiola's men before departing for Spain, could feature in Saturday's home Premier League match against Ipswich Town.

"(Gundogan) called me and asked me the situation, the chance to come back and we said yes immediately," Guardiola told reporters on Friday.

"He played really well last season and I know how competitive it is. I love his qualities and he will give us an incredible alternative.

"If he has to play (Saturday) then he knows everything."

Gundogan left City for Barcelona in 2023 on a free transfer after leading Guardiola's side to the treble, among 14 major trophies he won with the English champions including five Premier League titles.

Gundogan made 51 appearances last season, helping Barca to a second-place finish in La Liga.

He described City's offer as the "perfect package" and Guardiola agreed.

"It is a privilege for all of us (to be at the club). It is an honour," the manager said. "The club is being ran for everyone amazingly. (The players) have everything they need to perform at the highest level possible."

Manchester City will hope that Erling Haaland's flying vigour continues against newly-promoted Ipswich Town at home on Saturday in the Premier League and also throughout the season after the forward got things going in the right direction with his opening goal of the season in City's 2-0 win against Chelsea in the last game week.

PHOTO: **MANCHESTER CITY**

Bangladesh contingent for Paris Paralympics reduced after crticism

SPORTS REPORTER

The Youth and Sports Ministry of Bangladesh yesterday revised a government order (GO) that cut the list of members set to go to the Paris Paralympics, running from August 28 to September 8, following criticism.

It cancelled GOs of six members, revising the Bangladesh contingent from 13 to seven members. They will accompany the two athletes – archers Joma Akhter and Al Amin Hossain - who will participate in the tournament.

The National Paralympic Committee (NPC) on July 18 secured the approval for a 13-member contingent from the ministry which saw the NPC come under immense scrutiny.

Now, the new government order approved five officials – NPC acting president Dr Sheikh Abdus Salam, chef de mission Fakhruddin Haider, physician Monirul Islam, team official Ashif Sobhan, and coach Nisith Das – to accompany the athletes.

International Paralympic Committee guests Rebeca Sultana and Maksudur Rahman, chef de mission's support Nigar Haider, team official Mohammad Faisal Ahsan Ullah, and two government officials – Aminul Islam and Mohammad Sanaul Haque – were excluded from the contingent.

Sri Lanka to host NZ Test during presidential vote

AFP, *Colombo*

Sri Lanka will host New Zealand for a two-match Test series during next month's presidential election, Sri Lanka Cricket board said Friday.

The first Test will begin on September 18 at Galle, but there will be a rest day on September 21 when the voting is set to take place, the board said.

The final match will also be played at Galle from September 26.

New Zealand's last tour of Sri Lanka was in August 2019, when they drew a two-match Test series with the hosts.

Next month's presidential election is the country's first poll since it declared a sovereign default in 2022 during an unprecedented economic crisis.

Months of protests over shortages of food, fuel and medicines forced then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to step down after an immense crowd of angry Sri Lankans stormed his compound.

His successor Ranil Wickremesinghe introduced tough austerity measures in line with an IMF rescue package negotiated last year.

Arsenal seek Villa REVENGE

United travel to Brighton

AFP, *Manchester*

Arsenal's Premier League title aspirations face an early test away at bogey team Aston Villa on Saturday, while Manchester United's defence are set for a stiff examination at Brighton.

Arsenal's two defeats to Villa last season cost them the chance of a first league title in 20 years.

"They scored and we didn't, it's very simple," Arteta told reporters of the two defeats by Villa last season.

"In two games, even though we had an enormous amount of chances to do that, and that was one of the big differences, one of the details we have analysed. We have to do better tomorrow [Saturday]."

The Gunners are gearing up to again try to dethrone Manchester City but a trip to Villa Park begins a tough run of fixtures so early in the season.

Arsenal will also travel to north London rivals Tottenham and City in their opening five games.

Mikel Arteta's men got off to a winning start at home to Wolves as Bukayo Saka and Kai Havertz showed no sign of fatigue from their exertions at Euro 2024.

Arsenal need more of the same against a Villa side that also got off to an encouraging start by winning 2-1 away at West Ham.

Villa have strengthened their squad in preparation for their first Champions League campaign since the competition was the European Cup back in 1982/83.

Doubts remain over Villa's ability to maintain a fight for the Premier League top four alongside their European commitments, but with just one game a week early in the season they are well capable of dealing an early blow to Arsenal in the title race.

Two sides to Man Utd start

Manchester United's 1-0 win over Fulham on the opening night of the season could be read one of two ways.

After finishing eighth in a torrid campaign last season, Erik ten Hag's men badly needed a winning start as a sign that a new era off the field at Old Trafford will be accompanied by an improvement on the pitch.

The fact new signing Joshua Zirkzee came off the bench to score the winner helped raise belief United have sufficiently strengthened to at least threaten the top four with defenders Leny Yoro, Noussair Mazraoui and Matthijs de Ligt also arriving in the transfer window.

Yet, the ease with which Fulham created chances was eerily reminiscent of how United were consistently cut open last season.

A truer test of United's credentials come at the Amex on Saturday against a Brighton side themselves flying high after a 3-0 win at Everton.

The youngest ever manager in the Premier League Fabian Hurzeler, 31, takes charge of his first home match for the Seagulls, who have Kaoru Mitoma back fit and could hand a debut to new £40 million ($52 million) signing Georginio Rutter.

Slot 'trusts' Liverpool squad without signings

AFP, *Liverpool*

Liverpool manager Arne Slot said on Friday he was relaxed about his new club's lack of transfer activity after inheriting a "very good team" at Anfield.

Slot has the unenviable task of succeeding Jurgen Klopp but got off to a winning start by beating newly-promoted Ipswich 2-0 on the opening weekend of the Premier League season.

Liverpool are the only side in the English top flight yet to make a single signing in the window.

Spain international Martin Zubimendi rejected the opportunity to leave Real Sociedad, while a deal for Valencia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili is reportedly close that would see the Georgian stay at the Mestalla this season on loan.

"I trust the team," said Slot on why he is not stressing about the lack of new signings.

"I've said before, I have inherited a very good team, with young players. We trust them a lot. They proved that they have earned our trust."

Slot takes charge of his first competitive game at Anfield on Sunday when Brentford are the visitors.

The Dutchman, though, said he was too focused on getting the three points to feel the nerves of having to impress the home fans.

"I am not nervous at all. Certainly not at this moment because I'm in the middle of preparation, prepare the team for Sunday," he added.

"It wouldn't be a good thing if you have nerves. I trust what me and my staff do to prepare the team in the best possible way. I trust the team a lot."

Liverpool's window has been more dominated by sales.

Sepp van den Berg and Fabio Carvalho have joined Brentford for combined fees of close to £50 million, while Bobby Clark has joined Red Bull Salzburg.

Mbappe set for 'beautiful' Bernabeu debut

AGENCIES

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said striker Kylian Mbappe will enjoy a "beautiful day" when he makes his home debut for the Spanish giants on Sunday in La Liga.

Los Blancos face Real Valladolid in their first match at the Santiago Bernabeu this season with supporters clamouring to see the French superstar in action.

Mbappe scored on his debut for Madrid in Warsaw against Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup win but could not find the net in a 1-1 league draw at Mallorca.

"I think it will be a beautiful day for Mbappe, to play at the Bernabeu for the first time in a Real Madrid shirt," Ancelotti told reporters Friday.

"The fans are very excited about him, and he will have a great game, because of the quality he has -- the fans will enjoy themselves."

Mbappe was linked with Real Madrid for several years while at Paris Saint-Germain and was finally able to make his dream move this summer at the end of his contract in France.

Even with Mbappe joining Vinicius Junior, Rodrygo Goes and Jude Bellingham in attack, Ancelotti has complained his team have lacked balance in their first two matches.

"We have prepared well for the game on Sunday... we know very well what happened against Mallorca and we have tried to fix it for this weekend," said Ancelotti.

"I think facing Valladolid will be a good test... we lacked balance at times and we have to work on that.

"It's not so hard to look for a solution when the problem is clear, there is also a clear solution."

Bellingham could be sidelined for a month

However, as things stand, Ancelotti will have to find balance without Bellingham for a number of upcoming matches as, according to Spanish reports, midfielder Bellingham is set to be sidelined for around a month after suffering a calf injury in training on Friday.

Bellingham will miss La Liga games against Real Valladolid, Las Palmas and Real Betis, as well as England's Nations League matches against the Republic of Ireland and Finland in September.

"(Bellingham) took a knock, we're evaluating it," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti told a press conference earlier Friday.

Training behind closed doors

Meanwhile, Ancelotti, who usually talks to the media one day before each Real game, decided to change the schedule so he could hold his final training session before the Valladolid game behind closed doors at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium today.

Ancelotti said his unusual move had nothing to do with Real's drab performance at Mallorca last weekend which left the usually calm and collected Ancelotti fuming at his players' effort.

"It's nothing special, I'm doing it just to test the pitch, because it has changed compared to last year. I want the players to try the new pitch to see how they feel there. There is nothing superstitious or anything else behind it," Ancelotti said.

Barca hope to register Olmo for Bilbao clash

REUTERS

Barcelona hope to have new signing Dani Olmo available against Athletic Bilbao amid the midfielder's LaLiga registration issues due to Barca's breach of Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules, manager Hansi Flick said on Friday.

Barcelona host Bilbao on Saturday after winning 2-1 at Valencia in their LaLiga opener.

Former Germany midfielder Ilkay Gundogan, one of the top earners at the club, re-signed for Manchester City on Friday, clearing the way for Olmo's arrival.

"(The registration) is not my job, we have worked well this week, (Olmo) is ready to play and I hope he will be in the team, that will be very positive for us," Flick told reporters.

"In training he is amazing and it is important to have him as soon as possible."

Flick's side will be missing Pedri, Gavi, Ronald Araujo and Frenkie De Jong due to injuries but will welcome back midfielder Fermin Lopez, who rejoins the squad after winning the European Championship and Olympic title with Spain.

"From what I see, he will be ready to play. It was important for him to rest after two tournaments," Flick said.

Flick said former Barcelona midfielder Gundogan had told him he wanted to help the LaLiga side but changed his mind.

"It happens. At the end, I know him as a person and as a player. He has been a fantastic player for Barcelona and the German national team," Flick said.

Flick was asked about the threat of Bilbao forward Nico Williams, who was superb during Spain's Euro 20244 run alongside Barca's Lamine Yamal.

"It's not my job to talk about a player from the opposing team," he said. "Bilbao are physically very strong and they have a great coach. It will be a tough game."

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Row among trustees spells trouble for NSU

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The country's first private university, North South University, is in trouble over running its operations due to a conflict among the trustees.

The problem emerged as the trustee board members, who were part of the board before its reconstitution in August 2022, held a meeting on the campus on Wednesday.

Among them, five then trustees -- Azim Uddin Ahmed, Mohammed Shajahan, Benajir Ahmed, MA Kashem and Rehana Rahman -- were facing a case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission over irregularities worth Tk 304 crore involving land purchase and other matters.

Two members of the previous trustee board confirmed this newspaper that they held the meeting on the campus, with Azim Uddin in the chair.

A source who attended the meeting said the trustees decided to make decisions that would benefit the university, taking into account the opinions from students and teachers.

Aziz Al Kaiser, a member of the previous trustee board, said they secured a High Court stay order on a government decision that reconstituted the NSU trustee board in August 2022.

"The High Court order means the previous trustee board has been revived," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Asked about the ACC case against the five former trustees, Kaisar said the case was "politically motivated" and the allegations were "baseless".

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh opener Shadman Islam plays a shot down the leg side during the first session of Day 3 of the first Test against Pakistan in Rawalpindi yesterday. The left-handed batter fell seven runs short of a century as he was castled by Pakistan pacer Mohammad Ali.

Shadman makes statement on return

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Left-handed batter Shadman Islam can claim himself lucky to be part of the opening Test against Pakistan as he hasn't been the first-choice opener of the Bangladesh Test team in recent years.

Regular opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy sustained a Grade 1 adductor strain in the right groin while playing for Bangladesh 'A' in the opening four-day match against Pakistan Shaheens, and that saw Shadman start the first of the two-Test series against Pakistan in Rawalpindi.

However, when he finally got an opportunity to showcase his merit, Shadman made it count. He might have missed out on a well-deserved ton but managed to strike a resilient 93 off 183 balls, helping the visitors reach

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Civic platform launched to protect rights, free speech

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A platform named Gonotantrik Odhikar Committee (Democratic Rights Committee) was launched yesterday with the aim to resist any actions that infringe on democratic rights and freedom of expression.

The committee comprises more than 100 people, including teachers, students, writers, journalists, artists, lawyers, doctors, and others from different professions.

Emeritus Professor Serajul Islam Choudhury was made the convener of the committee, formed at a meeting at the Dhaka University's TSC Cafeteria last night, according to a press release signed by DU Sociology teacher Samina Luthfa.

Samina is also a joint convener of the platform.

"The committee will work on ensuring the democratic rights and freedom of expression of all citizens in the hills and plains, abolishing the repressive and anti-people laws, ensuring

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

STUDENT PROTESTS

Hasina, Rehana, S Alam sued over worker's killing

The tycoon's two sons, Shakib Al Hasan also made accused

STAR REPORT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and S Alam Group Chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam have been accused in a case over the death of a garment factory worker in Dhaka during the recent uprising.

Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana, cricketer and ex-MP Shakib Al Hasan, Saiful's sons Ahsanul Alam and Ashraful Alam, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former state minister for information Mohammad A Arafat, and former Dhaka South mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh were also named in the case.

Victim Md Rubel's father Rafiqul Islam filed the case at Adabor Police Station on Thursday, Inspector (Investigation) Mintu Chandra Banik told The Daily Star yesterday.

Other accused include AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu and Jahangir Kabir Nanak, JaSad President Hasanul Haq Inu, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, Tarikat Federation President Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizvandary, Samyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua, and Jatiya Party (JP) President Anwar Hossain Manju.

The former and current police officers named in the case include ex-IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, ex-RAB DG Haroon-ur-Rashid, former DMP chief Habibur Rahman and former DB chief Harunor Rashid. About 500 more unidentified people were also accused in the case.

According to the case documents, Rubel was shot on direct and indirect orders from the accused when he took part in a procession on Ring Road on August 5. He

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Freeze bank accounts of Papon, family

BFIU directs banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) on Thursday instructed all banks to freeze accounts of former president of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Nazmul Hasan Papon and his family members.

The anti-money laundering agency directed banks to suspend transactions of all personal and privately-owned institutional accounts of Papon and his family members for a period of 30 days, BFIU officials said.

The BFIU also sought an update of the accounts within five working days since the issuance of the letter.

Nazmul Hassan Papon resigned from his role of Bangladesh Cricket Board president during the board of directors' emergency meeting at the Ministry of Youth and Sports on Wednesday.

Israeli negotiators in Cairo for Gaza talks

Hamas slams Netanyahu's 'refusal' to reach final truce deal; 18 more Palestinians killed in strikes

AGENCIES

Israeli negotiators were in Cairo yesterday for talks on a Gaza truce, a spokesman said, but a dispute over the presence of Israeli troops on Gaza's southern border remained among sticking points.

Mossad spy agency chief David Barnea and Ronen Bar, head of the Shin Bet domestic security service, were in the Egyptian capital and "negotiating to advance a hostage (release) agreement", Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's spokesman Omer Dostri told AFP.

Egypt with fellow mediators Qatar and the United States are trying to reach a deal that would end more than 10 months of offensive in the enclave.

A Hamas official yesterday accused Israel's prime minister of refusing to agree to a final truce accord for Gaza. But Hamas representatives were not taking part and an official from the movement, Hossam Badran, told AFP that Netanyahu's insistence that troops remain on the Philadelphi border strip reflects "his refusal to reach a final agreement".

Witnesses yesterday reported combat in the Gaza Strip's north, heavy shelling in the centre, and tank fire in the far south near Rafah city. Israeli attacks have killed 18 Palestinians since yesterday morning in Gaza, as it continues to expand its ground operation in Khan Younis and Deir el-Balah.

Israel's military campaign has killed 40,283 Palestinians in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry. The UN rights office says most of the dead are women and children.

The United Nations said tens of thousands of civilians have been on the move again this week from Deir el-Balah and the southern city of Khan Yunis after Israeli military evacuation orders, which precede military operations.

The offensive has displaced about 90 percent of Gaza's population, often multiple times, leaving them deprived of shelter, clean water and other essentials as disease spreads, the UN said.

- Disputes over presence of Israeli troops linger
- Thousands fleeing parts of southern Gaza: UN
- Death toll in enclave rises to 40,283

Bimstec summit postponed

REUTERS, *Bangkok*

Thailand has postponed its hosting of next month's Bimstec summit of the leaders of seven mostly South Asian countries until after a new administration is formed, its foreign ministry said yesterday.

Thailand currently has a caretaker government following a court's dismissal of Srettha Thavisin as premier last week and his successor, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, has yet to name her cabinet.

The summit had been due to take place in Bangkok from Sept 3-4. The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bimstec) includes Thailand, India, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan and its leaders meet every two years for a summit.

Earlier, foreign ministry officials said that Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus may attend the Bimstec summit.

CPJ worried over arrest of journo couple Rupa, Shakil

UNB, *Dhaka*

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has expressed concern over the arrests of journalist couple Shakil Ahmed, former head of news at Ekattor Television, and its former principal correspondent Farzana Rupa.

"We urge authorities to respect the reporters' procedural rights, ensure their safety, and drop any investigation brought in retaliation for their journalistic work," it posted on X yesterday.

The journalist couple was arrested by immigration police at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka on Wednesday while attempting to leave for France. They were subsequently handed over to the detective branch of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Later, a Dhaka court yesterday granted a four-day remand for them in connection with the murder of government employee Md Fazlul Karim.

Palestinians stand on the balcony of a damaged flat in the vicinity of a building which was levelled by Israeli bombing in the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

US PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Harris accepts Democratic nomination

REUTERS, *Chicago*

US Vice President Kamala Harris sealed the Democratic presidential nomination with a muscular speech, laying down broad foreign policy principles and sharp contrasts with Republican rival Donald Trump with 11 weeks left in the race for the White House.

On the final night of the four-day Democratic National Convention (DNC), Harris, 59, promised to be a "realistic," "practical" president for all Americans, as she battles Trump, 78, in a razor-close campaign.

"In the enduring struggle between democracy and tyranny, I know where I stand and I know where the United States belongs," she said on Thursday night, accusing Trump of bowing down to dictators. She promised to back Nato, Ukraine and "stand up to Putin's aggression," a reference to Russia's president.

After days of protests from Palestinian supporters who were disappointed at not getting a speaking spot at the convention, Harris delivered a pledge to secure Israel, bring the hostages home from Gaza and end the offensive in the Palestinian enclave.

"Now is the time to get a hostage deal and a ceasefire deal done," she said to cheers. "And let me be clear, I will always stand up for Israel's right to defend itself and I will always ensure Israel has the ability to defend itself."

She said she wanted to end the offensive in a way that provides for Israel security and allows the Palestinian people to realise their right to self-determination.

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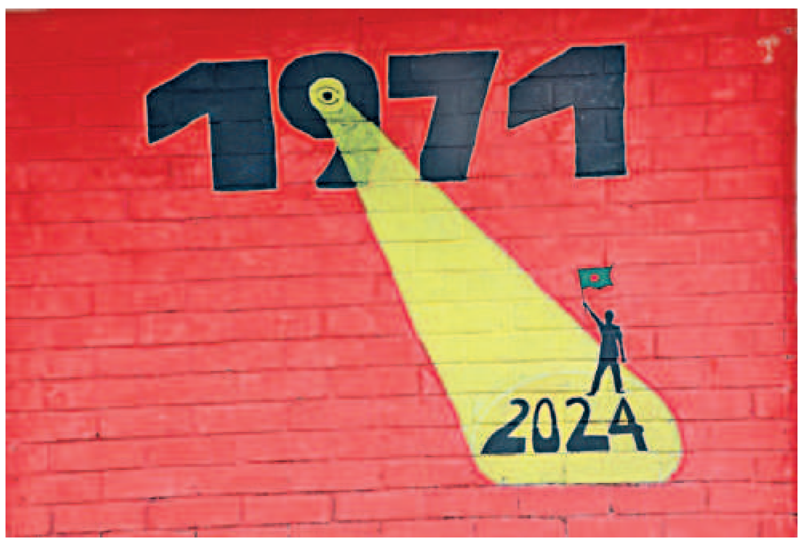

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Graffiti vs Regime

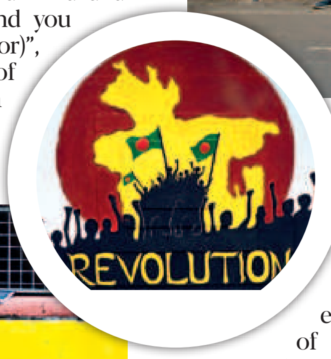
When street art becomes a voice of dissent against authoritarianism

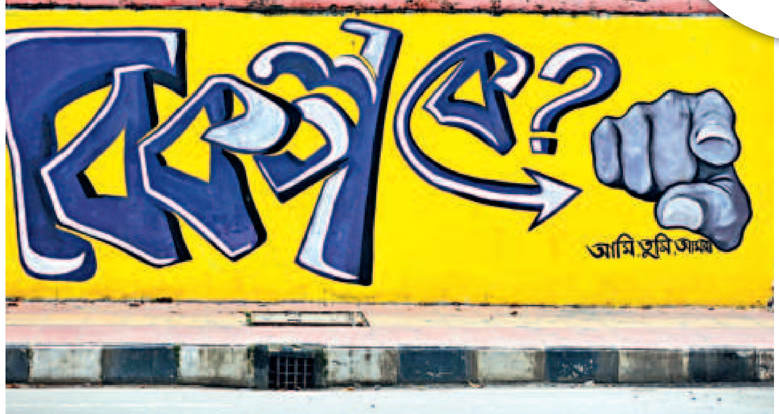
Throughout July 2024, a series of increasingly violent protests erupted in Bangladesh. For every unjust act, students responded with graffiti and other forms of visual art, showcasing the government's disregard for human rights and excessive use of violence. This persistence in the face of oppression helped to turn the student protest into a people's uprising.

RAFFAT BINTE RASHID

The early stages of the quota reform movement in Bangladesh saw the use of a subtle yet powerful language of protest: graffiti. University students, who were at the forefront of the Anti-discriminatory Student Movement that started in July, used public walls and streets to express their anger and frustrations as a potent form of resistance. These expressions, painted boldly in public spaces, became symbols of defiance against an oppressive regime.

Slogans like "No signal," "Pani lagbe pani?" (Do you need water?), and "Desh ta karo baaper na" (The country does not belong to anyone's father) echoed the frustration of a generation unwilling to be silenced. Who can forget the graffiti "Chaite gelam odhikar, hoye gelam Razakar (We asked for rights and you tagged me as a traitor)", which was a reflection of the sentiment of youth against the prevailing culture of tagging.





These strong messages helped ignite a movement that ultimately toppled an autocratic government that had ruled with an iron fist for more than 15 years.

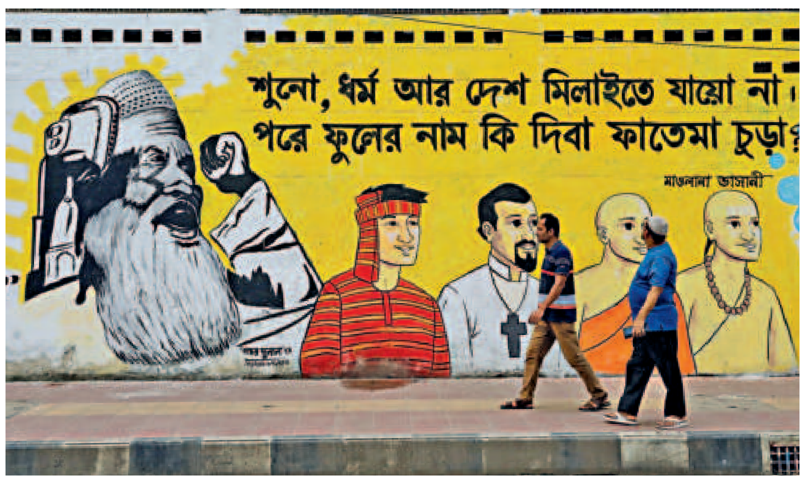
As the government increasingly restricted free speech, cracked down on political dissent, and implemented internet shutdowns, graffiti became a critical tool for protest. It allowed students to voice their dissent in a way that was visible, accessible, and difficult to censor. Public walls turned into canvases of resistance, where the youth painted their grievances and aspirations.

Graffiti as a form of protest is not new to Bangladesh. In our struggle leading to the Liberation War and in the political upheavals of the 1980s and 1990s, graffiti was used by various groups to voice dissent. However, the wave of graffiti during the quota reform movement was distinct in a sense that it involved a generation many had presumed to be politically detached. This new generation's graffiti not only expressed specific political grievances but also raised broader issues of social justice and human rights.

This time around, young people from all backgrounds used graffiti to voice their rebellion. They owned the consequences and demanded justice, and many adults found themselves relating to the bold thoughts they had not dared to articulate.

Their work reflected deep emotions -- stories of betrayal, hope, and resistance. The walls of cities were splashed with colours -- bright reds, greens, blacks -- each stroke carrying a message. Anti-government and pro-democracy slogans covered walls and streets, while images of mosques, churches, temples, and pagodas called for coexistence and secularism.

When protests turned violent, graffiti captured the brutality. One powerful image depicted student activist Abu Sayed standing unarmed, arms stretched out, holding only a stick, facing police brutality. This image, etched on walls across the country, became a symbol of courage against a merciless authoritarian government -- a visual reminder of the sacrifice made by those who stood up for their rights.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মাওলানা ভাসানী

Public spaces became storytellers of the resistance. Graffiti depicted the police attempting to silence protesters by covering their mouths. The portrayal of Mugdho, a student, handing out bottles of water to fellow protesters while struggling to cope with tear gas just minutes before he was shot in the head, will be forever in our memory. His final words, "Pani lagbe, pani?" became a symbol of the selflessness of the young protesters. His graffiti has become a part of our collective memory.

Throughout July 2024, a series of increasingly violent protests erupted in Bangladesh. For every unjust act, students responded with graffiti and other forms of visual art, showcasing the government's disregard for human rights and excessive use of violence. This persistence in the face of oppression helped to turn the student protest into a people's uprising.

It was inspiring to see students from schools, colleges, madrasas, and universities come together, using public spaces to protest through witty slogans and powerful images. 'If you repeat a lie often enough it becomes politics instead' (they scratched off the word truth and replaced it with politics). They documented the stories of scores of martyrs like Abu Sayed and Mugdho who were mindlessly killed during the violence.

Even after the fall of the government, students continued to draw graffiti, repainting erased images, and creating new ones on the ruins of burned-down buildings in areas like Dhanmondi, Agargaon, and Uttara -- hotbeds of the violence. Their graffiti focused on themes of secularism, human rights, freedom of the press, and clean politics against autocracy and anarchism.

"Bangladesh is a resilient nation, shrouded in geopolitical problems. We love to raise our voice. We are opinionated, and we are driven by emotions," said rights activist Shahana Huda.

"Drawing graffiti in public spaces gave our frustration and desperation an animated expression," she said, noting that this informal expression of anger and resistance of youth captured the attention of both the authorities and adults who had chosen to remain silent.

"Graffiti, often created in defiance of the system on public property, is typically deemed illegal by authorities. This illegality is intrinsic to its role as a form of protest and rebellion. If graffiti is created with permission, it becomes a mural, losing its rebellious edge," explained Syed Rashad Imam Tanmoy, a cartoonist and graphic novelist. He sees graffiti as akin to cartoons -- both are forms of visual communication that must be quick and easy to understand. "Throughout history, when oppressive regimes controlled public media to suppress voices, people took to public spaces to express their opinions through graffiti," Tanmoy added.

This time around, young people from all backgrounds used graffiti to voice their rebellion. They owned the consequences and demanded justice, and many adults found themselves relating to the bold thoughts they had not dared to articulate.

For photographer Farhana Setu, a graffiti image of a man running with a cage and a sun trapped inside it, drawn around 2017 with the words "Subodh tui paliye ja, ekhon shomoy pokkhe na" (Get away Subodh, time is not on your side), spoke volumes. 'Subodh,' metaphorically, means good sense and reasonable judgment. "I felt as if I was the one trapped inside the cage, unable to speak out against the social and political injustice around me. But this time, I saw the graffiti again on Fuller Road, with a slight alteration that said: 'Subodh fireh esheche' (Subodh has returned). I was elated! These kids taught us to talk back," Setu says.

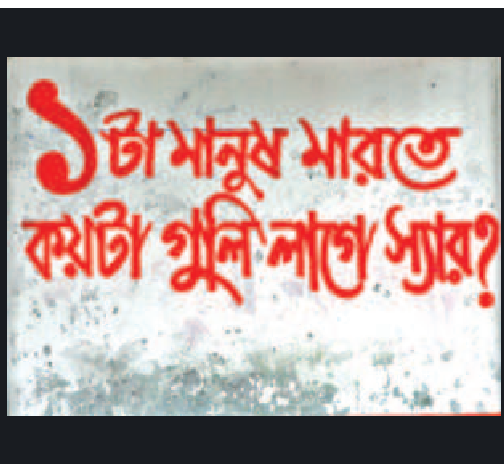
Morshed Mishu, assistant editor of UNMAD Magazine, believes the street art that students enthusiastically created at the beginning of the quota reform movement exposed the brutal suppression and moral bankruptcy of the ruling party. "The way students expressed their souls' content through graffiti, this should be called the 2024 renaissance. They rewrote history by fighting for their rights, taking a stance against corruption and extremism, and ultimately toppling an autocratic regime. After the initial success, they continued to voice their concerns about reform through graffiti," Mishu said.

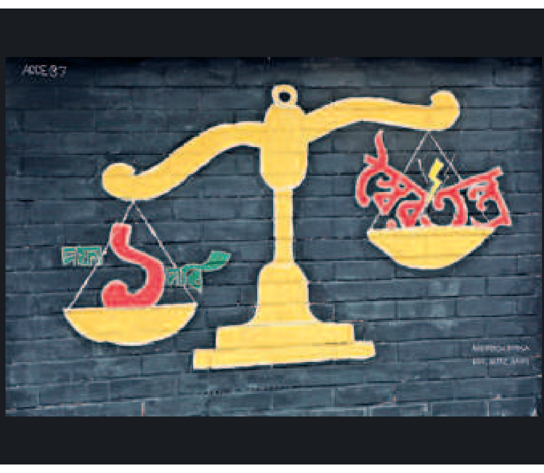
Mishu, who strongly believes that this graffiti should be preserved for documentation, is helping students finish the half-done walls and redo those that were erased with his illustration team. Other teams of artists are doing the same near Dhaka University, Agargaon, Mirpur, and Uttara to preserve the ethos of the movement.

Renowned performance artist Reetu Sattar agreed, noting that anarchism often casts away societal formalities. "Graffiti expresses a particular time and a society's deep feelings. It is a beautiful form of anarchism that captures a society's power, wrath, and humanity. It also helps to build opinions. These graffiti were drawn by the young generation, braving the fear of bullets. They represent a time when we adults chose to remain silent about the corruption and social atrocities committed by the party in power," she said, emphasising that these efforts should be recorded for historical reasons.

However, the younger generation believes it is time to say no to any form of extremism, whether political or religious. Morshed Mishu argues that it is truly the era of citizen journalism, where political cartoons, graffiti, and social media vlogs should become integral to the press.

"Talk about everything -- the good, the bad, and the ugly. Respect all opinions. We have seen enough socio-political tyranny. The current times demand a generational change and reform," Mishu said.





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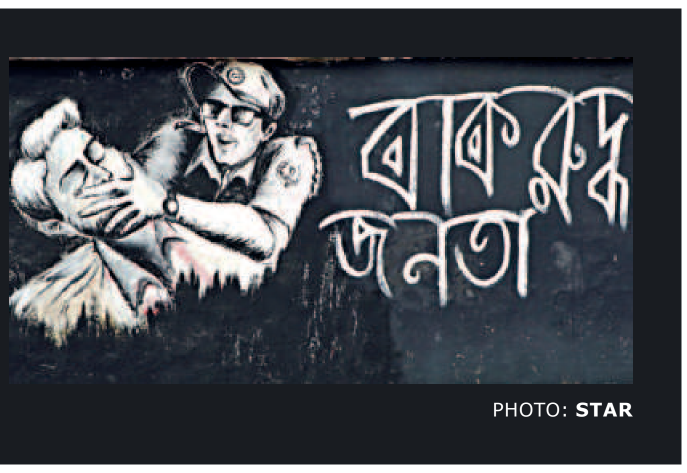

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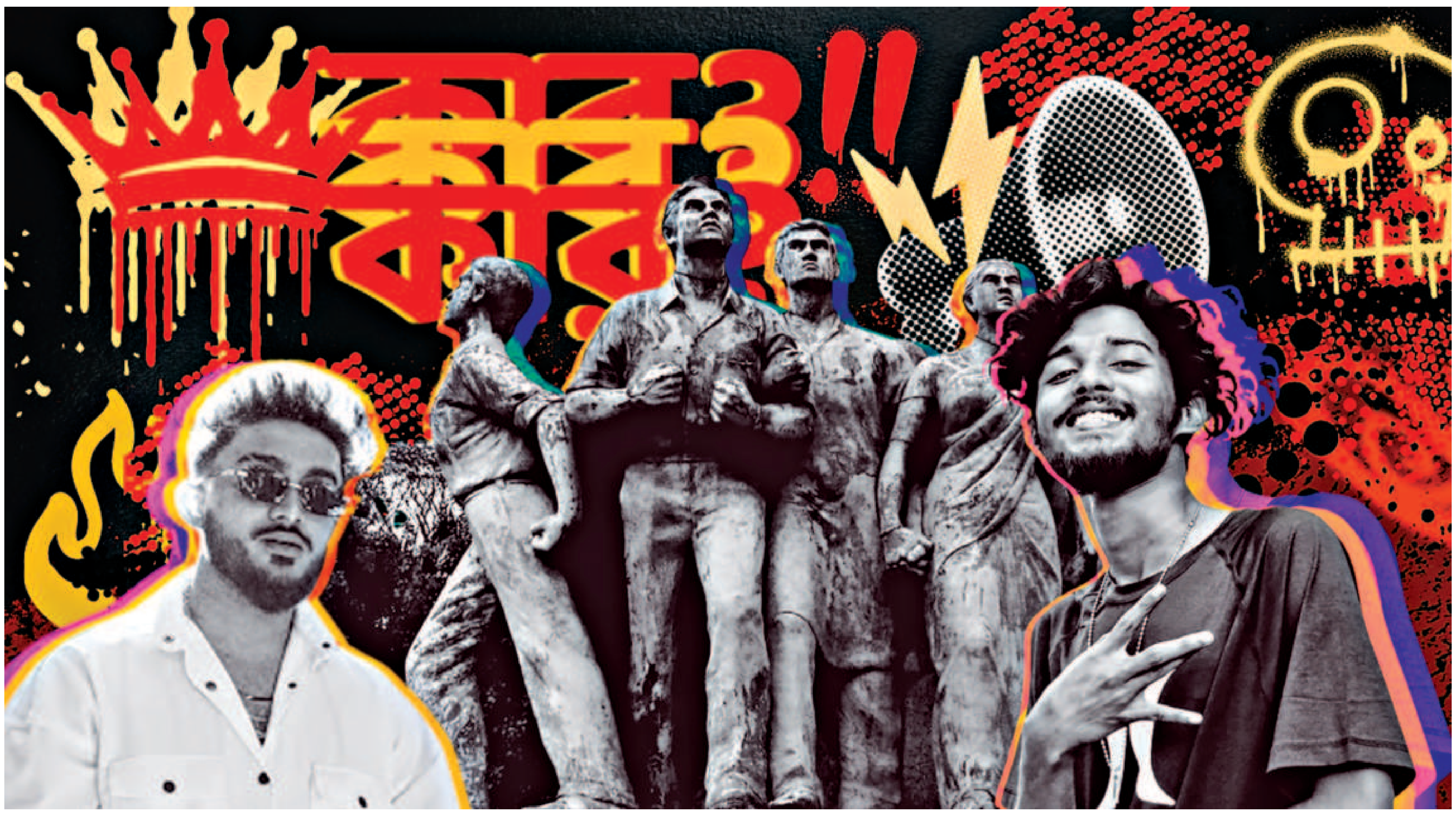


ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

ESSAY

Rhymes, rebellion, and revolution

ABIR HOSSAIN

> **Any tool that has the capacity to unite is a threat to the powers that be. Reducing polarity, after all, allows people to recognise that their suffering is united by one common factor: the oppressor. More so, it is the methods employed by the oppressor that enable hip-hop to be used as a tool for resistance.**

Movements leave an indelible mark on the psyche of the people, and thus, the culture. As people are pushed to the brink of intolerance through oppressive measures, fear eventually evaporates and the sentiments of the people are amplified causing seismic shifts in the zeitgeist. From its humble beginnings in the Bronx in New York City, hip-hop and rap have since transitioned into a global phenomenon. Its inception, however, is a tale of resistance and revolt. In recent times, the spirit of this tradition has been witnessed in Bangladesh during the July uprising.

Following a series of historic changes in legislation that empowered Black communities from the early '60s, the rate of progress they made eventually stagnated after the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This period saw economic and political inequalities widen with reduced investment in Black communities. But the Black Arts Movement was on the rise—seeking to reimagine and expand the horizons of art made by Black Americans. The trait that truly made hip-hop a tool for resistance, however, was its ability to gather people and reinforce a sense of community—one that was marred by the deficiencies of the system.

Any tool that has the capacity to unite is a threat to the powers that be. Reducing polarity, after all, allows people to recognise that their suffering is united by one common factor: the oppressor. More so, it is the methods employed by the oppressor that enable hip-hop to be used as a tool for resistance.

Hip-hop has the potential to shift and dismantle such perceptions, and the music that has come out as a result of the Quota Reform-turned-Students Against Discrimination Movement in Bangladesh sought to do precisely that. The songs reflect the outrage and aggression of the students who initially revolted against an unjust and discriminatory recruitment system and later, called for the fall of the regime. They also commemorated the martyred.

"Kotha Ko" by SHEZAN begins with a high-pitched ring of the flute, evoking an ominous feeling. This short intro comes to an abrupt halt and is drowned by SHEZAN's abrasive delivery. His lyricism is rife with rage as he demands answers to confrontational questions. "Amar bhai-boin more rastay, tor cheshta koi re?" (My brothers and sisters are dying on the streets, where are your efforts [to stop it]?) and "Kalshaap dhorse gola pechay, bair kor shaaper matha ko?" (The black snake has us by the neck, find out where its head is). It is only in the former lyric that SHEZAN refers to the martyred students as his own brothers and sisters. In contrast, when speaking of the snake, he doesn't precisely point out whom it is choking. He doesn't let any one person or group become the victim. Instead, the phrasing insists that everyone is gasping for air. What he isn't subtle about though, is his contempt for the regime which he calls a black snake. The colour black, while synonymous with malice, is perhaps also a reference to the saree the former Prime Minister wore when addressing the nation on July 17.

However, it is the line "Raja johon projar jaan loi, jiga taile raja kaar?" (When the king kills his people, whom does the king belong to?) that resonated with me the most. It is framed as a basic question but the answers are jarring, and encapsulate all that is wrong with the former government. It is also worth noting that the line employs a double entendre through the last two words that sound a lot like Razakaar. It almost feels as though he is asking who the traitors really are. As the track progresses, the imagery becomes more scathing. SHEZAN references a blood-soaked Bangladeshi flag, goons gorging on the flesh of their own brothers, and the battering of the nation's backbone.

While "Kotha Ko" inquires, "Awaaz Utha" by Hannan commands. His delivery encapsulates the full spectrum of rapture that ran rampant throughout the country. As he breaks into flow, the pain he feels is just as palpable as the anger. The track is a call for mobilisation, both of the people and the truth. Hannan shatters the lies that Sheikh Hasina and her party tried to push. Instead, he makes it clear that the students don't represent an agenda or a political party. They are here to stand in solidarity with their fallen comrades, no matter what it takes. He also juxtaposes the courage of the students with the cowardice of authority.

Throughout the fourth stanza of the verse, he grimly illustrates the greed that plagued the regime. The line "Amar boin re maira dili, tor ghorer ta marti tui?" (You killed my sister, would you kill your own?) is evocative. It is a reminder that such brutal and mindless violence would never be inflicted on any of them, as if their lives were of greater value. As a song of resistance, it shatters such notions by commemorating the students.

The journey of "Awaaz Utha" is poetic albeit greatly distressing. In the line, "Kotha hoile murdar deshe, nyayer awaaj tulbi ke?" (Speaking in the nation of dead men, why will you raise the voice of morality?), Hannan speaks of the suppression of justice. This is something the rapper himself fell prey to when he was arrested and placed in remand. He was later released along with all those unjustly arrested during the protests.

For the first time in years, artists have expressed themselves even in the face of adversity with little restraint. What enabled it was the infectious courage of the movement. "Kotha Ko" and "Awaaz Utha" are a testament to that. As history writes itself before our very eyes, these songs will aid in retelling it without any distortions. More importantly, it will serve to remind us that we must wield our tools of expression without fear.

Abir Hossain *is a sub editor at Campus, Rising Stars, and Star Youth.*

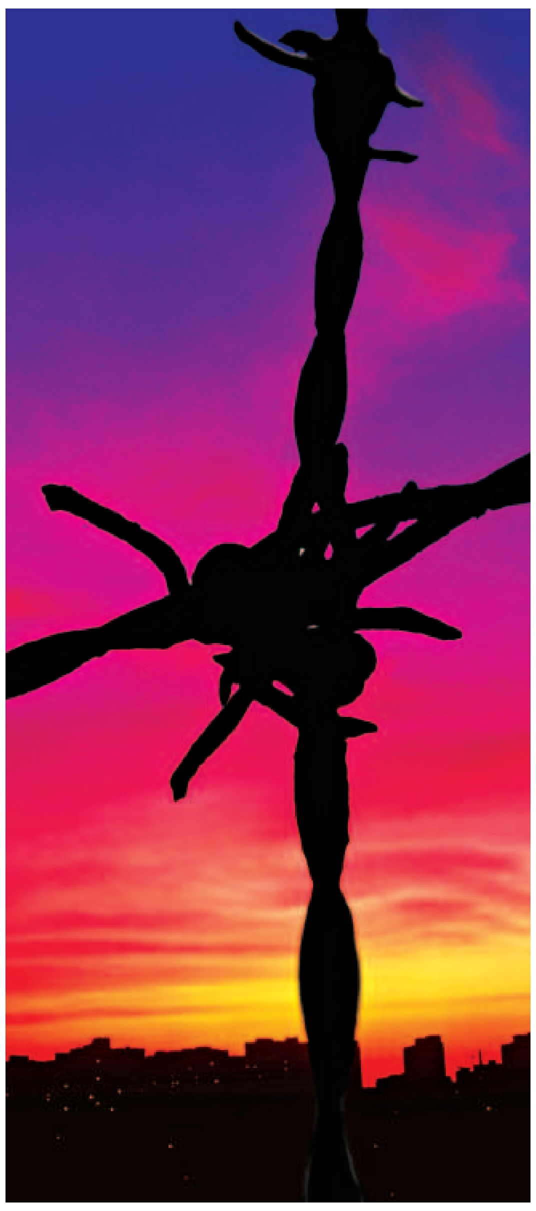
POETRY

Look out the windows

SNATA BASU

In the blanks of muddy moonlight
two happy shards of kill
sing like feathers in a wound,
a child to a milking womb;
tonight there isn't a door that sleeps, and homes
close their blinds and draperies
in fear that there will be more fear; more nights to hide
behind the barbed cables bulleting the sky
sprouting fire and filthy rain that's rotten to the flesh.
Kneeling by the ledgers as the storm clouds gather
in between the umbrellas of bleeding soil and the earth,
bare hands collar a handful of sand, picking up
weapons as deadly as the sea: a pen,
a screaming voice
a paper piece.
I want to be an eagle there
by the tombs freed immovable,
and cradle their carcasses,
rotting and orphaned by flickering street lamps
that glow low like spattered confetti, snow to the angels
hovering by the floating dust. *Don't look out the windows!*
You say,
but how can we keep still?
How can we keep at all,
from clawing out our hearts and laying it
by the songless limbs on the ground
smeared so cold
by the reaper's feeding hand, lost in time
forever
to the sounds of rising arms.

Snata Basu *is a writer based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Her poetry has appeared on numerous literary platforms including* The Opiate, Visual Verse: An Online Anthology of Art and Words*, and* Small World City.



DESIGN: **MAISHA SYEDA**

POETRY

All hail July

AMARYLLIS

The July wind brought in the scent of new beginnings
With the end of summer break and a new term starting
What once began as a bright blue sky soon turned into a furious hailstorm
The black clouds threatening the incessant want to reform
The deafening sound of hail overtook the street
In hopes that soon enough, the masses will retreat
But there are ways to fight the hail
And people will continue to fight without fail
The hailstorm will soon start to clear
But the hails on the ground won't just disappear
The damage done by hails will continue to persist
Because hailstorms like this will never stop to exist
But we'll learn how to fight as we continue to grow
Just because July hailed on us, doesn't mean August won't be a better tomorrow.

Amaryllis *is an occasional contributor to Star Literature.*

POETRY

Magic boys and girls of Bangladesh

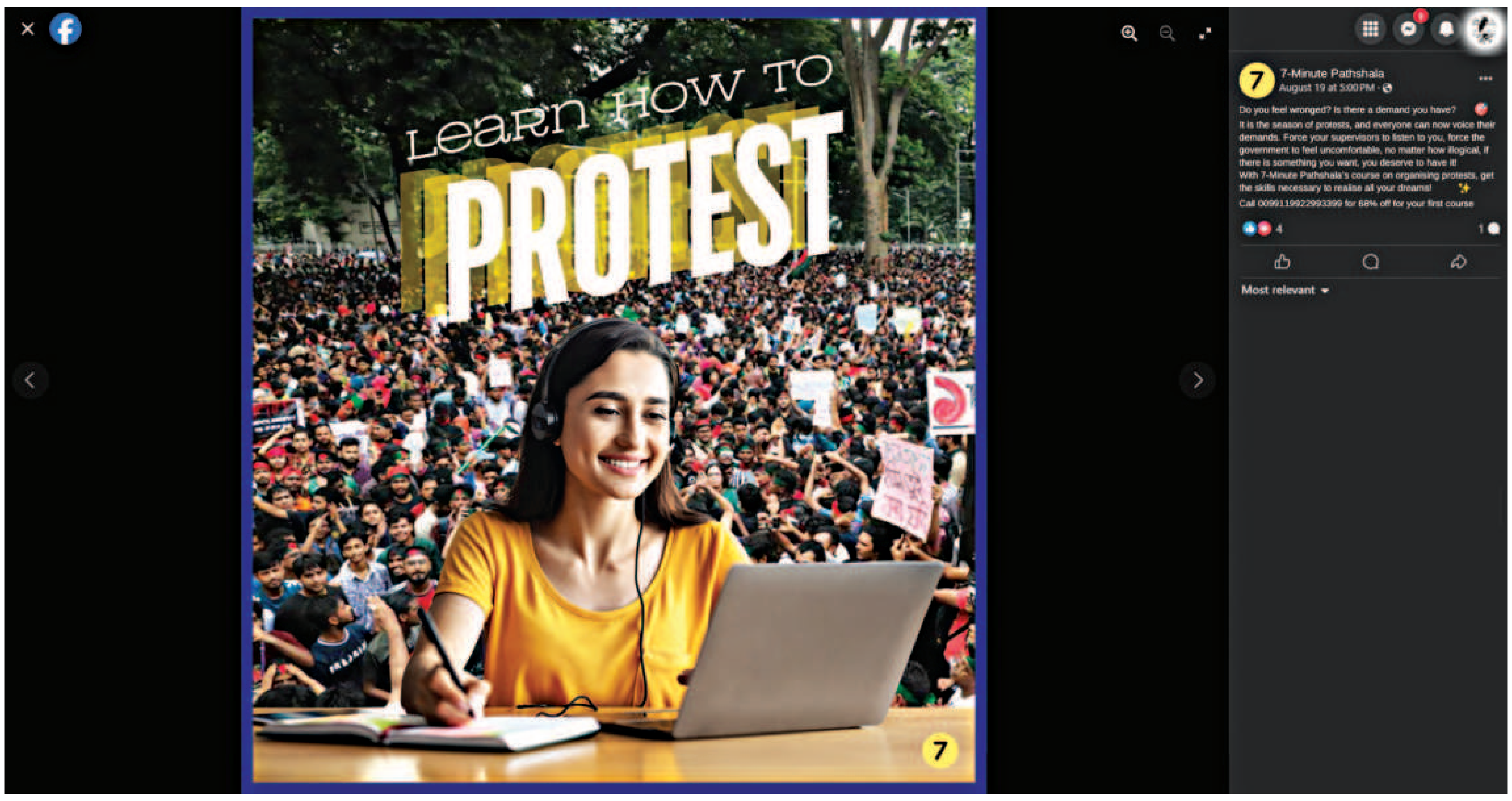
For the students of Bangladesh

DILRUBA Z. ARA

Magic boys and girls of Bangladesh, I love you.
Your brave hearts and your unified voice,
A distinctive bell that rocks the stars above.
Magic boys and girls of Bangladesh, your beautiful minds,
Your daring footprints on the page of history,
Echo the spirit of Abu Sayed—boundless bravery.
Magic boys and girls of Bangladesh,
Your voice carries the outline of caged souls.
Freedom of speech: gagged mouths, batons, and bullet rains.
Magic boys and girls of Bangladesh,
The souls of the martyrs walk with you, assertive in death.
Your blood shines like fluid gold on the streets of Bengal.
Magic boys and girls of Bangladesh,
Amidst mad dogs' barks and chase, you walk with heads high.
Your unified voice for justice is a gigantic cry.
Magic boys and girls of Bangladesh,
Under the clouds of flame and fire, you are ploughing
The dark land and sowing the seeds of a bright future.
No boundaries can contain you; no dogs can stop you.
You are the power, you are the designer, you are the lighthouse
For future magic boys and girls of Bangladesh. You are my Bangladesh!

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

Dilruba Z. Ara *is the author of internationally acclaimed novels* A List of Offences *and* Blame *in addition to a collection of stories titled* Detached Belonging. *Her novels, stories, translated work, and poetry serve as touchstones for scholars worldwide while her visual art adds a multifaceted view into the depths of her creative soul. She is multilingual and adept in writing three languages, with her works published internationally. Currently residing in Sweden, Ara imparts her expertise in both Swedish and English.*



7-Minute Pathshala
August 19 at 5:00 PM

Do you feel wronged? Is there a demand you have?
It is the season of protests, and everyone can now voice their demands. Force your supervisors to listen to you, force the government to feel uncomfortable, no matter how illogical, if there is something you want, you deserve to have it!
With 7-Minute Pathshala's course on organising protests, get the skills necessary to realise all your dreams!
Call 0099119922993399 for 68% off for your first course

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Most relevant

EdTech platforms offer courses on PROTESTS AND MARCHING

'We're just responding to market demands,' says 7-minute pathshala founder Bebshachandra Biddapukur

JEAN PAUL SATIRE

In a move that has left both educators and politicians scratching their heads, EdTech platform 7-Minute Pathshala has launched a new course on organising protests and marches. The course, launched by Bebshachandra Biddapukur, a business graduate turned EdTech mogul, promises to revolutionise the way citizens engage in democratic demonstrations.

Biddapukur, known for his previous ventures into short-term educational content, claims that his new course will offer "quick and effective" strategies for organising protests.

"In just seven minutes, students will learn everything they need to know about rallying support, planning routes, and crafting the perfect slogan," said Biddapukur. "After all, who has time for long lectures when there's a government to topple?"

> **"In just seven minutes, students will learn everything they need to know about rallying support, planning routes, and crafting the perfect slogan," said Biddapukur. "After all, who has time for long lectures when there's a government to topple?"**

The course comes at an ironic time for Bangladesh, where protests have been frequent and intense since the government was recently ousted, causing chaos and confusion throughout the country. Critics argue that Biddapukur's timing might be a tad too opportunistic, but the platform's supporters believe it's a necessary innovation.

Biddapukur is not alone in this new educational endeavour.

Competitor Laser, a platform known for its "intense and immersive" 5-minute modules, has also jumped on the bandwagon. Laser's latest offering, "Protest Planning in a Pinch", promises to teach users how to stage effective demonstrations in a format even more condensed than 7MP's.

"We believe in efficiency," said Laser's founder Olposhikkha Ohonkari, yet another business graduate.

"Why spend 7 minutes when you can do it in 5?" he asked, winking.

Meanwhile, Shikhbi na, mane? (which translates to "What do you mean you won't learn?") has introduced their own course titled "Protest 101: The Essentials". This course prides itself on its no-nonsense approach, focusing on the bare basics of protest organisation and emphasising "learning by doing".

"We've cut out the fluff," said their founder Pikachu Electra, "and provide actionable strategies that you can apply immediately. Perfect for when your country is in turmoil and you're fresh out of ideas."

Despite the proliferation of protest-focused courses, not everyone is convinced of their value.

"It's a troubling trend," said Dr Jawaharlal Jinnah, a political science professor. "While these platforms might be tapping into current events, they're reducing complex social movements to mere checklists. Protests are about much more than efficient planning -- they're deeply rooted in societal issues that these courses overlook, and they're also about going viral on Facebook."

In response to the criticism, Bebshachandra Biddapukur defended his course, arguing that it was not meant to replace in-depth political education but to offer practical, immediate solutions for a highly volatile situation.

""We're just responding to market demands. Our course doesn't pretend to solve all the problems," he said. "It just helps people get out there and make their voices heard quickly. We even have a vibrant digital marketing course to help young budding politicians, and everyone knows how useful those are. We want to help create a whole new category of politicians who are entrepreneurs. Politipreneurs, if you will."

As Bangladesh navigates its political upheaval, the surge in protest-oriented EdTech courses underscores a curious convergence of technology and activism. Whether these short-form educational tools will genuinely impact the country's tumultuous landscape remains to be seen, but for now, they provide a snapshot of how modern technology intersects with age-old struggles for democratic change, and how some people will do anything to sell a course.

Hibernating influencers awaken as flood visits Bangladesh

MAHBUB ALAM MUNNA

"Please send money to my bKash and Nagad accounts (bKash 01*******, Nagad 01*******)," was how Superstar Kumon, one of the country's unrivalled social media legends, finally broke his silence on social media since the student movement began.

"I have 14 cows. If needed, I won't hesitate to sell them and stand by the flood-affected people. Remember, it is what I do," Superstar Kumon posted again after realising that his previous plea went in vain as people weren't responding and the accounts were yet to hit the Tk 1,000 mark.

Like Kumon, hundreds of other influencers stormed the internet as the flood hit the country. They were previously thought to have retired from social media and helping people in front of a camera, as their presence for the past few weeks was as rare as an Olympic medal in Bangladesh's trophy cabinet.

Naaraaz Cream Bahaduri, a prominent influencer who likes to work in water, took it to heart and raised his voice against all odds.

"Listen, you might think I am just a regular human being, but deep down, I am a fish. I cannot function unless there's enough water to paddle around in a boat. Flood is a wonderful phenomenon that finally lets me do something for the people I love," he said.

> **"Listen, you might think I am just a regular human being, but deep down, I am a fish. I cannot function unless there's enough water to paddle around in a boat. Flood is a wonderful phenomenon that finally lets me do something for the people I love."**

Speaking on condition of anonymity, some bankers from several banks reported a sudden influx of influencers rushing to open new bank accounts.

"I have opened five such influencers' accounts today," one of the bankers said. The account names were something else -- Manobotar Feriwala, Humanity First, Bonna Ebong Bonna, Mayer Doaa Fund and my personal favourite was Bonna Hole Amake Daiken. It's more of a naming competition to tug at heartstrings than actual bank accounts."

"Today Slowman Dukhon showed up at my branch to open a charity account. I asked him where he had been since I had been missing his life-changing words so much on social media, especially during the recent protests. He smiled and said he was enjoying a gadget-free life and preparing for a motivational session on that. So, he couldn't say anything on social media regarding the ongoing issues, but he outcome of the protests were exactly what he wanted," another banker said.

Our Satireday correspondent wanted to collect at least one such influencer's opinion. We confronted the country's veteran influencer Noheed Zafridi about how he managed to end his hibernation. "Water! Yes, water is life. See how these waters brought me as well as my other fund-seeking brothers to life from a deep hibernation."

Email your satire pieces to
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Salman caught while pretending to be garden gnome

AAQIB HASIB

Following another escape attempt, Salman F Rahman was once again foiled from fleeing the country while still on remand. He was caught while pretending to be a garden gnome on the lawn of a residential house in Gulshan.

This was his sixth escape attempt after he was originally arrested from a boat in Sadarghat on August 13, while attempting to flee the country and simultaneously participate in a photoshoot dressed as a fisherman.

Unlike the previous five jailbreak attempts, Salman was caught within a matter of only a few hours and did not immediately soil himself upon being captured.

Speaking to The Daily Star, police personnel at the scene said, "Our efficiency is through the roof. This time we only took three hours to catch the rat. I think we should be given an award for this record."

Asked how Salman had managed to flee police custody in the first place, one officer spilled the beans, saying, "We believe some corrupt officials aided him in the escape. Currently, we believe there is some spiritual aura left over from when Harun bhai was chief, so you cannot stay in that building for too long without engaging in some kind of corruption."

> **"Even after we captured him, he kept asking us for a loan. He was desperately trying to reach into our pockets and take out our wallets."**

Another officer echoed him, saying that he too felt the urge to start taking bribes whenever he was in the building.

"That is why I avoid staying there for too long. It's real spooky how Harun bhai's spirit just lurks there in that building," he said.

The first officer on the scene explained that they received a tip-off via 999 that Salman was originally asking passersby for loans near Shahabuddin park, which is when they rushed to the area.

"Even after we captured him, he kept asking us for a loan. He was desperately trying to reach into our pockets and take out our wallets," he explained.

Speaking to the officers in charge of prisoners at the interrogation centre regarding the jailbreak, they proudly exclaimed, "Well Salman sir offered us around Tk 2 crore each to allow him to escape. We thought we should take the offer and keep his money within the country's economy."

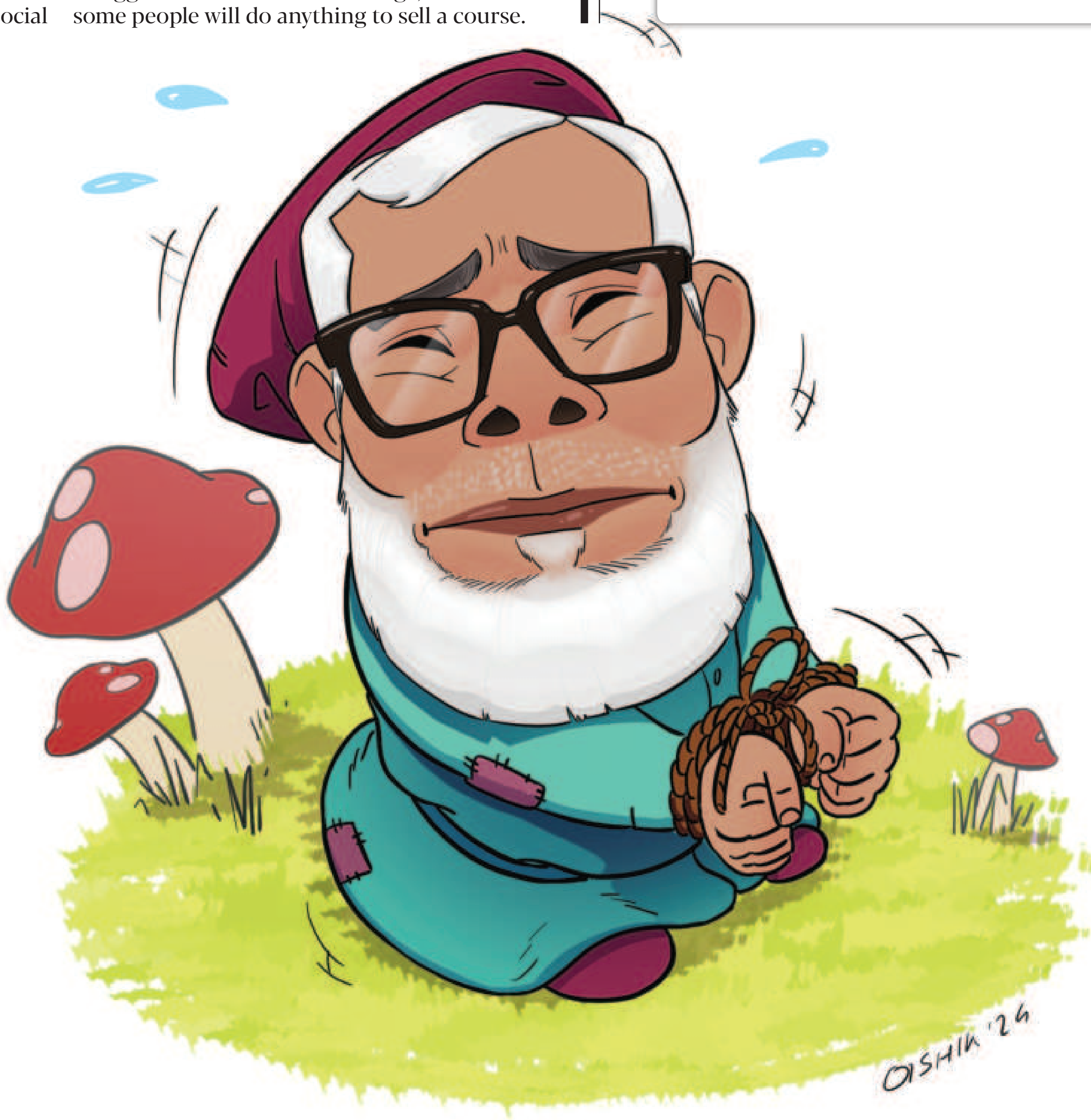

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PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Export diversification STILL A FAR CRY

Experts identified that policy and financing barriers and a lack of infrastructure development in the non-RMG sector have slowed export diversification

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Although the need to diversify Bangladesh's export basket has been a subject of great discussion for more than two decades, there has been little progress in this regard.

In fact, there has been no reflection of diversification in exports. On the contrary, readymade garments (RMG) continue to dominate, accounting for around four-fifths of all of Bangladesh's exports.

Though garment exports surged from $1.18 billion in the early 1990s to $47 billion by 2023, non-RMG exports grew from $811 million to just over $8 billion.

Between FY02 and FY23, exports soared by 828 percent from $5.9 billion to $55.55 billion, buoyed by a 925 percent rise in apparel exports.

However, despite the overall growth, the ratio of non-RMG exports to total exports declined from 24.86 percent in FY02 to 15.42 percent in FY23.

At present, Bangladesh's exports are largely made up of knitwear (44.6 percent) and woven garments (37.2 percent), with home textile (3.3 percent), footwear (2.3 percent), jute products (1.9 percent), and fish (1 percent) being other notable products.

Bangladesh's overwhelming dependence on RMG means that its export basket is among the world's least diversified.

Bangladesh's export basket is four times more concentrated than the developing-country average, according to a report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) titled "Fostering Export Diversification in Bangladesh".

Along with product concentration, Bangladesh also suffers from a lack of export market diversification.

More than four-fifths of its exports are destined for North American and EU markets. Furthermore, Bangladesh's top-10 export destinations account for 72 percent of its total exports, while the corresponding figures for India and Sri Lanka are 52 percent and 64 percent.

Experts identified that policy and financing barriers and a lack of infrastructure development in the non-RMG sector had slowed export diversification.

"There were four major barriers in expansion of export diversification -- policy issues, financing barriers, lack of infrastructure, and weak bargaining power of non-RMG exporters," said Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM).

He also said that non-RMG and RMG exporters cannot practically avail the same benefits.

As an example, he said RMG exporters can import capital machinery at zero duty while non-RMG exporters have to pay high tariffs to import necessary equipment.

Non-RMG exporters cannot even avail bonded warehouse facilities as easily as RMG exporters, which is a significant barrier to expediting export diversity, he said.

He also said the agro-processing sector had been failing to live up to its potential to increase exports due to a lack of infrastructure and proper government support.

Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO of Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD), said: "Export diversification has not happened because of several reasons. Even within the RMG sector, little diversification has happened."

Bangladesh exports only four to five products in the RMG sector, which has given buyers the chance to bargain for the prices of cotton garments, she said, adding: "Prices are falling lower and lower."

The need is to invest in manmade fibre, which requires huge investment and utility support, she said.

She added that the gas crisis, which has been affecting industries in recent years, was preventing industries from running operations smoothly. This poses a significant barrier to large investments in the country.

According to her, financing support is another issue as the export development fund is used by limited entrepreneurs.

CHALLENGES FROM LDC GRADUATION

Intensifying its diversification initiatives in preparation for the country's graduation from least-developed country (LDC) status in 2026 is imperative for a smooth transition.

As an LDC, Bangladesh enjoys unilateral trade preferences in markets in Canada, the EU and the UK. Such duty-free market access has endowed Bangladesh with a significant competitive edge.

In fact, more than 70 percent of the country's merchandise exports enjoy some LDC-specific trade preferences, which is far higher than other LDCs in Asia and the Pacific.

However, these benefits will cease after graduation unless they are extended.

For example, Bangladesh's duty-free access to the EU is set to expire in 2029 given the EU's additional 3-year transition period for graduating LDCs.

Post-graduation market access provisions in the EU are not yet settled, but under currently proposed terms, the average tariff rate facing Bangladesh's garment exports to the EU would increase from zero percent to about 12 percent.

At the same time, Bangladesh's exporters could see average tariffs on exports rising from zero to 17 percent in Canada, 16 percent in China, 8.7 percent in Japan, and 8.6 percent in India.

"The post-LDC scenario will be grave. After the reduction of cash incentives, exports of almost all sectors will decline," Ferdaus Ara cautioned.

A mismatch in export figures between the Bangladesh Bank, Export Promotion Bureau, and National Board of Revenue has worsened the situation, she added.

She said large investment in the export sector as well as utility, financing and tax policy support must be extended for export diversification.

"RMG is our success. We need to diversify the RMG products with a view to achieving at least $150 billion in exports from this sector by the next 5 years, which is possible," she said.

"We also need a clear sector-specific strategy."

Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the RMG sector's faster rate of growth led to its dominance in Bangladesh's export basket.

However, he added that the growth of non-RMG sectors was very slow and, in some cases, even witnessed degrowth.

Rahman added that Bangladesh had received very little export-oriented foreign direct investment (FDI), which is one of the factors holding back export diversification. Another reason is that export-centric special economic zones are yet to be implemented.

He suggested mobilising export-oriented FDI and ensuring proper one-stop services would help export diversification efforts.

He added that a lack of technology and skilled human resources, particularly at the managerial level, was also restraining non-RMG sectors.

Although many studies have been conducted to identify the sectors with export diversification potential, practically the same sectors have been identified over time.

"The strategy of "picking winners" or targeting specific sectors for growth, such as the leather sector and information technology and IT-enabled services sector, has not succeeded as export targets have been consistently unmet," the ADB said.

"For the leather sector, the government had set an ambitious export target of $5 billion by 2021. Despite this focus and support, the sector's current exports are just above $1 billion, demonstrating the inability of the 'picking winners' strategy to produce the expected results."

M Masrur Reaz, chairman of the Policy Exchange of Bangladesh, said non-RMGs' share in Bangladesh's export basket had declined due to a lack of policy reforms.

"We need to bring the right support for those sectors to build up efficiency, including logistical support and adoption of technology," he said.

He also said an initiative to bring in export-oriented FDI is imperative because it is very difficult to diversify exports without foreign investment.

Another barrier to export diversification was posed by significant differences in the income tax rates between the RMG and non-RMG sectors.

The RMG sector has historically benefitted from a relatively lower corporate tax rate, ranging from 10 percent to 12 percent.

In contrast, non-RMG sectors, such as textiles, leather and leather goods, agro-processing and home textiles, have faced higher tax rates ranging from 15 percent to 30 percent.

Only recently, in FY23, a uniform income tax rate of 12 percent for both services and goods exports was introduced. This move is expected to rectify the existing bias in income tax rates for export-oriented industries.

In its paper, the ADB recommended addressing policy-induced disincentives against exports, boosting export market responsiveness and accelerating diversification.

'End facility bias favouring RMG'

JAGARAN CHAKMA

The interim government's first task should be to address the disparity in government facilities between readymade garment (RMG) and non-RMG sectors to facilitate export diversification, according to one of the leading exporters of leather shoes.

"Eliminating inequal facilities for the RMG and non-RMG sectors will automatically lead to export diversification," said Nasir Khan, managing director of Jennys Shoes.

In an interview with The Daily Star recently, he said the former government had been all talk and no show over the last 15 years.

It offered unique facilities for the RMG sector while the latter was deprived of many benefits, resulting in poor export diversification, he said.

"We, who are non-RMG goods exporters, have been demanding for a long time to introduce the same rules for both RMG and non-RMG sectors but the government never listened to us. Instead, it gave more priority to the RMG sector," Khan said.

According to him, businesses should need only five licences, as is the case in Vietnam, so that entrepreneurs can run their operations smoothly.

The five licences are certifications for industry, fire safety, environment clearance, export and import.

He added that these licences should remain valid until the companies cease to function.

If the government introduces this system, entrepreneurs will not need to spend time in government offices to renew their licences every year, said Khan.

However, the licence providers must regularly monitor the businesses to ensure their compliance with regulations, he said.

Khan, also vice president of the Leather Goods and Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh, alleged that government entities often harass businesspeople over the smallest of errors to eventually blackmail and extort money from them.

Export-oriented factories need not be monitored very closely as their buyers ensure that they meet certain production standards, he said.

"If they find any faults, they instantly raise questions and postpone their work orders. For this reason, exporters have to strictly maintain compliance with regulations," Khan said.

He pointed out that entrepreneurs currently need to collect 30 licences and 153 documents to set up a business, which was one kind of harassment on its own.

He also alleged that businesspeople face harassment when trying to avail services from government offices and ultimately have to give in to extortion demands.

Officers of the value added tax and customs offices extort entrepreneurs to benefit from their exports even after they meet all the necessary rules and pay all fees, Khan said.

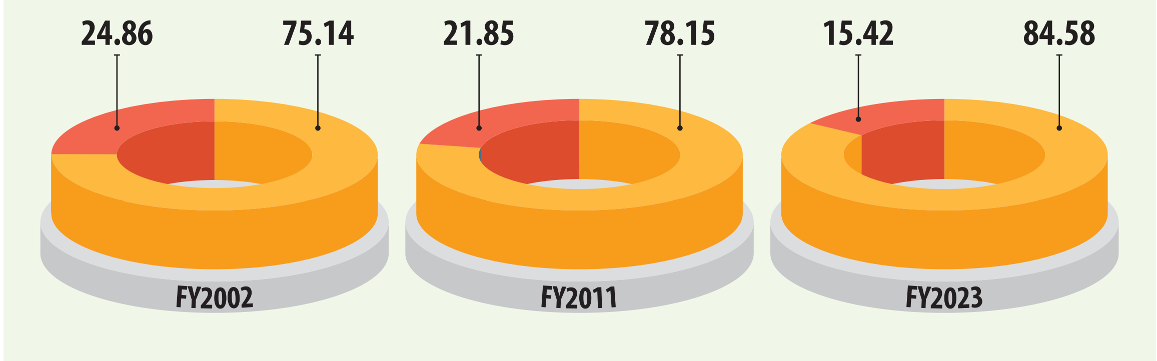
Due to all these irregularities, it is very difficult to keep the price of products competitive in the international market, which is a big obstacle for export diversification, he said.

"Eliminating these problems should be a priority for the interim government and if it can be solved, exports will be diversified," Khan added.

Bangladesh earned around US$1,224 million through the export of leather and leather products in fiscal year 2022-23.

SHARES OF RMG AND NON-RMG IN EXPORTS

In %; SOURCE: BGMEA



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DHAKA SUNDAY AUGUST 25, 2024
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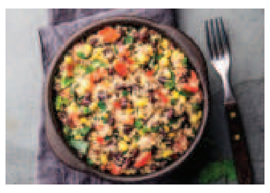
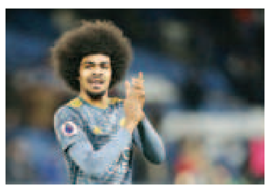
Sea of relief supplies fills DU campus
P3

Regain the land and regain its soul too
P8


High-carb foods that are actually healthy
P10


'Hamza will be a great addition'
P11

Millions cut off without food, power

Situation dire in Feni, Noakhali, Cumilla; many flood shelters overcrowded

MD ABBAS *and* **ANWARUL HAIDER**

Millions of people were still left without electricity and any means of communication, and relief materials had not reached many remote areas where families were stranded in flooded villages for days.

Even the shelters opened by the government in the affected districts have become overcrowded yesterday, locals said.

The situation was particularly dire in Feni, Noakhali and Cumilla where relief materials had not reached many remote areas.

Five upazilas of Feni still remained inaccessible by road yesterday even as the waters were receding.

Family members could not reach each other over the phone as almost every cell phone tower in the district was offline.

> **"We only had time to go to the roof of a neighbour's house. The water gushed in very fast. The walls of the corrugated iron sheet of our hut fell apart within a short time. Soon, the water was as high as the tin roof of our house."**
>
> **Aleya Begum** of Chhagalnaiya, Feni.

Locals said there were severe crises of drinking water and food in many areas of the district.

"Our house was submerged. We only had time to go to the roof of a neighbour's house. The water gushed in very fast. The walls of the corrugated iron sheet of our hut fell apart within a short time. Soon, the water was as high as the tin roof of our house," said 45-year-old Aleya Begum, a resident of Khopal area of Chhagalnaiya upazila.

She, her 70-year-old mother-in-law Saleha Begum, and six others of the area had spent three days on the roof of their neighbour's one-storey building.

Saleha said, "I have never fought such a battle with water. I thought I was dying. We cannot contact anyone. My husband and sons had not returned home. We survived only on some dry food and little drinking water."

Officials said three people drowned in the flood-affected districts yesterday, taking the toll from the floods to 18.

According to a statement from the chief adviser's office, almost 9.8 lakh people were marooned in 11 districts. They were in desperate need of drinking water, oral saline, and food.

About 50.94 lakh people in 77 upazilas of 12 districts have been affected by the floods so far.

Over 3 lakh people took shelter at the 3,513 shelters opened by the government.

As the downpour stopped, the situation improved in Cumilla, Noakhali, Brahmanbaria, Laxmipur, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Khagrachhari, Rangamati, Chattogram, and Cox's Bazar, said the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre.

However, more areas were flooded in Senbagh upazila

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

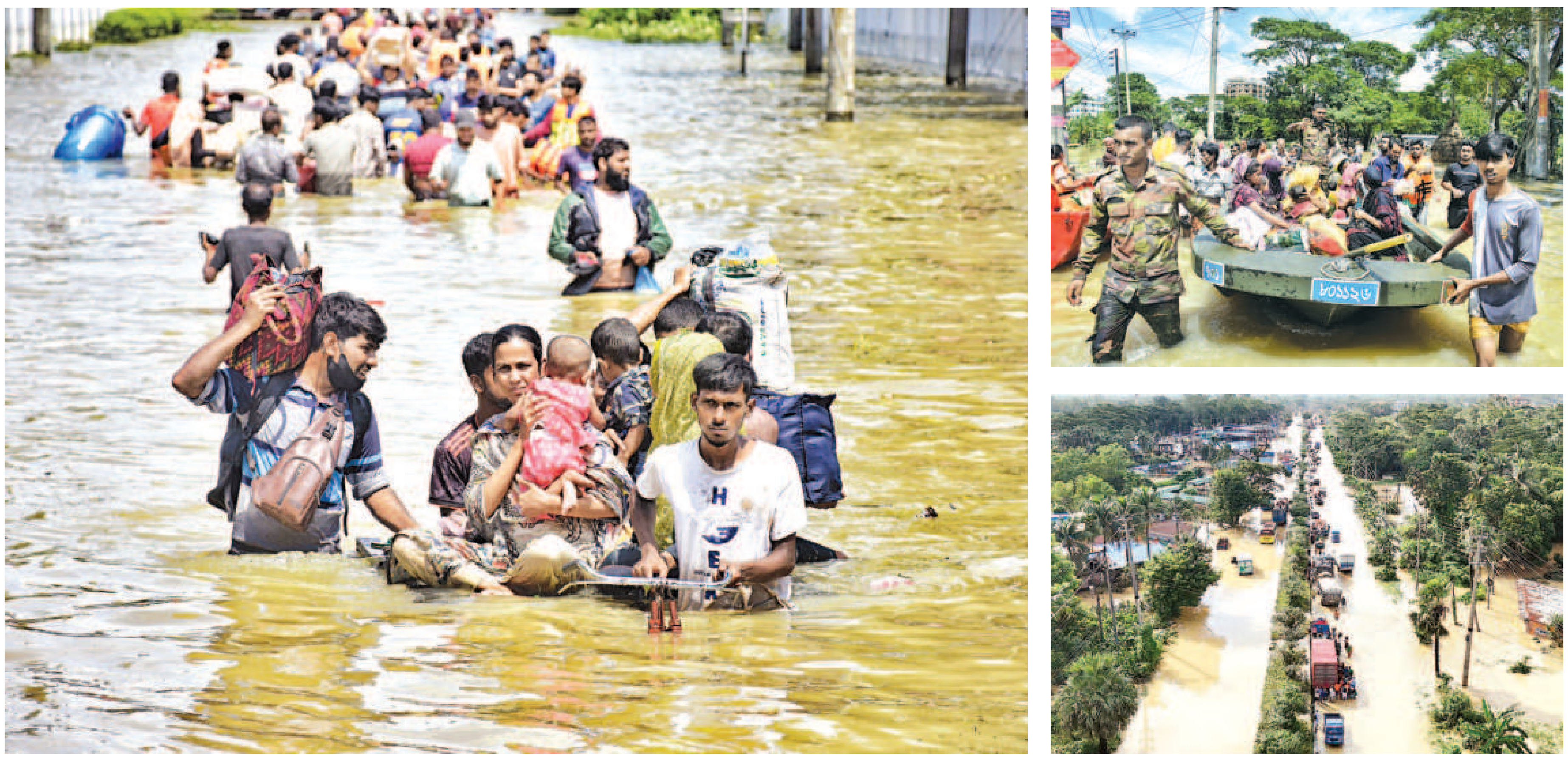

Riding a rickshaw van, a family negotiates a flooded road near Feni Girls' Cadet College on their way to a shelter in Feni town yesterday. In the distance, other flood victims are also seen moving to safety. *Top right*, an army boat carries people to a shelter. *Bottom right*, a section of the Dhaka-Chattogram highway submerged in floodwaters in Feni's Lalpol area.

PHOTO: **NAHID MAZHAR, NAIMUR RAHMAN**

Flood causes 50km jam on Dhaka-Ctg highway

People stranded for days now worry about robberies too

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

The economic lifeline of the country, the Dhaka-Chattogram highway, remains flooded in Feni.

Police and highway officials have reported that the flooding of around five to six kilometres of the highway in Feni's Lalpol area caused a nearly 50km tailback.

Passengers and cargo vehicles have been stranded for days. Those rushing to Feni and Chattogram's Mirsarai to help the flood affected people with relief materials are also facing difficulties.

Many drivers told this correspondent that they have been stuck in Feni for the last three days.

Khairul Islam, Superintendent of Highway Police Cumilla Region, told The Daily Star over phone, "Due to floodwater on the highway, vehicles have remained stranded for the last three days. The

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Star INTERVIEW

Reshuffle of officials for ensuring reforms

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul tells Star, says efforts on for withdrawing false cases

GOLAM MORTOZA

The interim government aims to reform the administration in order to make it people-oriented, inclusive, transparent, and accountable, says Law Adviser Asif Nazrul.

"Reforms involve more than just appointing qualified individuals. Competent people are being placed in positions to ensure that no one can obstruct the reform process. Reforms signify a shift towards a more people-oriented, inclusive, transparent, and accountable administration. We must make that happen," he said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star.

Before the reforms, the administration, the judiciary and the police must get rid of those who helped an autocratic government sustain for over one and a half decades, he said, replying to a query on the massive reshuffle in different tiers of the administration and other bodies.

"Is it possible to bring reforms keeping in place the people committing extrajudicial killings? Is it possible to reform the police administration with Harun [Harunor Rashid, former chief of DMP's DB] still in the force? These people should be replaced by honest and competent ones," Asif said.

After bringing in these people, he said, reforms will be done in the institutions, laws and policies. Efforts were already made to withdraw false cases filed over the killings during the uprising in July and early August. "Now we will try to change the policy and laws

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Immediately unveil roadmap for elections

Fakhrul asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday urged the interim government to place immediately a roadmap to the next general election.

He also called for an urgent dialogue on the national polls between the new government headed by Professor Muhammad Yunus and the political parties.

Fakhrul made the call at a discussion organised by the Bhasani Anusari Parishad at the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka to mark the ninth death anniversary of former prime minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

"We have a lot of expectations from the interim government. We think they will hold the elections within a reasonable time," he said, voicing the party's confidence in the Yunus-led government. "But it [election] must be done within a specific, limited and reasonable time."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Hasina, 7 journos sued for murder

BJC concerned over arrest of newspersons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A murder case has been filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 192 others, including seven journalists, over the death of a student during protests in Dhaka's Jatrabari on July 19.

The journalists are Mozammel Haque Babu, managing director and editor-in-chief of Ekattor TV; Syed Ishtiaque Reza, former chief news editor (CNE) of Ekattor TV; Ahmed Jobaer, a director of Somoy TV; Munni Saha, former CNE of ATN News; Farzana Rupa, former principal correspondent of Ekattor TV; Shakil Ahmed, former head of news at Ekattor TV; and Nayeemul Islam Khan, Hasina's press secretary.

Among them, couple Shakil and Farzana are on remand for four days

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Vehicles are caught in a long tailback on and under the Babubazar Bridge in Old Dhaka's Nayabazar area, causing suffering to the road users. The photo was taken around 2:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

EAVESDROPPING TECH

Release white paper on its use against dissent

Civil society members urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

PREMIER cement
ঢালাইয়ের রাজা

Civil society members yesterday called upon the government to publish a white paper on the recent use of software and technology to suppress dissent and civil rights in the country.

They made the call at a dialogue organised by Civil Reform Group Bangladesh 2.0 at the capital's BASIS auditorium.

Speakers at the event highlighted that thousands of crores of taka was spent on purchasing advanced software and technology from Israel and some other countries over the past decade.

Citizens have the right to know about those technologies and their applications, they observed.

Although the authorities claimed to have bought those expensive technologies for national security, those have mainly been used for political purposes to stifle dissent, the speakers said.

The dialogue titled "Surveillance, the Right to Privacy,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Residents of nearby villages join hands to rebuild the embankment along the Bhadra river in Khulna, which was breached by strong currents on Thursday morning, flooding villages in Deluti union under Paikgasa upazila. *Top right*, a couple, clutching their possessions in a floating container, navigates the chest-deep floodwater in search of a safer place. The photo was taken at Ali Nagar Bus Stand area in Fazilpur, Feni. *Bottom right*, passengers are having to walk to their destinations because of standstill traffic on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway for the third consecutive day as the flood situation did not improve in Feni. This photo was also taken at Ali Nagar Bus Stand area. PHOTO: **HABIBUR RAHMAN, RAJIB RAIHAN**

Hasina, 7 journos sued for murder

FROM PAGE 1

in another murder case filed at Uttara East Police Station. They were arrested at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Wednesday.

An organisation of broadcast journalists has expressed concerns over their arrest.

The case accusing Hasina and the seven journalists was filed over the death of Nayeem Howlader, 17, an HSC student at Shanarpar Rowshan Ara Degree College. He was shot dead in Jatrabari during the anti-quota protests that culminated in an uprising. His father Kamrul Islam filed the case at Jatrabari Police Station on Thursday.

Multiple former ministers and MPs, mayors, police officers, Awami League leaders, Jubo League and Chhatra League members, as well as Rapid Action Battalion officials, 80-90 police officers and members assigned to the Wari Zone on the day of the incident, and 250-300 unidentified individuals, were also accused in the case.

Dozens of cases have so far been filed against Hasina, her party members and law enforcement officers over the killings during the protests.

Journalists have also been named in some of the cases, a feature of the previous Awami League government.

Asked why such cases are still occurring, Asif Nazrul, the law adviser to the interim government, said: "We cannot prevent a parent of a slain student from filing a case based on their judgment."

The previous government had institutionalised the practice of filing such broad cases, he said.

"Perhaps we are witnessing the aftermath now. However, we will ensure that no one is harassed without a proper investigation," the adviser added.

In the case filed at Jatrabari Police Station, the father said some "reckless, corrupt, self-serving and overly enthusiastic officers" of the police, Rab and BGB indiscriminately opened fire on the protesting students and civilians on direct and indirect orders from Hasina and 14-Party Alliance leaders.

The accused, armed and intending to launch an armed assault on the peaceful protesters, recklessly fired shots at the innocent students, the plaintiff said.

This resulted in the deaths of over a thousand people including his son Nayeem, with countless others injured, according to the first information report.

The other accused include Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, daughter Saima Wazed Putul, currently serving as the South East Asian regional director for the World Health Organisation, Hasina's cousin and former MP Sheikh Helal Uddin, and his son and ex-lawmaker Sheikh Sarhan Naser Tonmoy.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Anisul Haque, Dipu Moni, Tajul Islam, Mohammad A Arafat, SM Rezaul Karim, Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, AFM Bahauddin Nasim, Hasan Mahmud, Shajahan Khan, Mohibul Hassan Chowdhoury, and Zunaid Ahmed Palak were accused too. The allies of Hasina who were named in the case include Anwar Hossain Manju, Hasanul Haq Inu and Rashed Khan Menon.

Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, former mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation, Atiqul Islam, former mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation, former MP Haji Mohammad Salim, former BCL president Badiuzzaman Sohag, its former general secretaries Zakir Hossain and Siddique Nazmul Alam, Jubo League Chairman Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash, General Secretary Mainul Hossain Khan Nikhil, former MP and actor Ferdous Ahmed, and Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee president Shahriar Kabir are also among the accused.

The police officers accused in the case include former IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, former DB chief Harunor Rashid, DMP's Wari Division Deputy Commissioner (DC) Iqbal Hossain, former Special Branch chief Monirul Islam, former DMP joint commissioners Biplob Kumar Sarkar and SM Mehedi Hasan, and assistant commissioner of Lalbagh Zone Nazrul Islam.

BJC EXPRESSES CONCERN

The Broadcast Journalist Center (BJC) has expressed concern over the arrests of journalist couple Shakil and Farzana.

Television journalism was hampered and questioned due to repressive laws, authoritarian behaviour, and ownership patterns during the previous regime, BJC said in a statement yesterday.

The recent mass uprising of students and people has raised hopes of creating a field of independent journalism, the statement said.

But a series of events have revived old concerns about TV journalism recently, it said.

The BJC has urged all stakeholders, including the interim government, to play their role in ensuring the safety of journalists and a conducive working environment.

They demanded legal aid for Shakil and Rupa, and justice for another journalist couple, Sagar Sarwoar and Meherun Runi, who had been murdered in 2012.

Release white paper

FROM PAGE 1

and Freedom of Speech," brought together politicians, lawyers, human rights activists, journalists, and IT experts. The event was moderated by former BASIS president Fahim Mashroor.

The discussants said that Article 43 of the country's constitution guarantees every citizen's right to privacy. Despite this, the ordinary citizens' phones have frequently been tapped in recent years through telecom networks, supposedly under certain "unconstitutional provisions" of the Telecommunications Act.

This surveillance, carried out at the discretion of a select group of people without any regulatory oversight, has raised serious concerns. Alarmingly, the ousted government of Sheikh Hasina had acquired technologies that can hack smartphones and recording private calls, messages, photos, and videos without needing to access telecom networks.

The speakers termed such activities "illegal and a blatant violation of human rights".

Fahim said the interim government should publish a white paper detailing the surveillance activities conducted by the Hasina government.

He said the current advisory council of the interim government includes four human right activists who had been subjected to privacy breaches and harassment by the former authoritarian government. The advisers should understand the importance of this issue.

"We don't want the next political government to employ the same surveillance tools and technology to oppress the opponents. Full transparency is needed regarding how government agencies keep an eye on us and for what purpose. If surveillance is necessary for national security, it should be regulated by specific rules instead of being at the discretion of a few individuals," he observed.

Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said the surveillance-based state structure has been established mainly to cling to power.

Mentioning that surveillance has been used as a tool to suppress dissent and retain control of power, he said there is no need for organisations like National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC) and Department of Telecommunications.

He called for a complete overhaul of the current surveillance of digital communications.

Sara Hossain, honorary executive director at Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, said irrelevant and unsubstantiated cases are being filed and statements made by some accused on remand are being published by the media even during the tenure of the interim government, raising serious ethical concerns.

She said discussions should be held on how the process of surveillance should be handled keeping in mind the international standards.

Journalist Zulkarnain Saer Khan Sami, who joined the event virtually, said surveillance practices are not unique to Bangladesh as similar measures exist in almost all countries, including the United Kingdom.

However, the governments in other countries exercise their powers without invading citizens' privacy, and they gather information to fight terrorism and ensure security. But the surveillance tools were used in Bangladesh against those who were critical of the Awami League government.

"After Sheikh Hasina left the Gono Bhaban [on August 5], numerous CDs were recovered from its premises. I have obtained copies of them. The contents of those CDs are so damaging that, if made public, they could potentially destroy the careers of many politicians. So it is quite clear that Sheikh Hasina used this disturbing information to manipulate others, keeping it in her possession as a tool for blackmailing others and create a political narrative."

Golam Mortoza, editor of The Daily Star Bangla, demanded full transparency from the interim government regarding the information on Israeli technologies acquired by Bangladesh, including Pegasus, and the illegal activities involving their procurement.

"As citizens, we want to know from the government on whose orders and under what processes those purchases were made, and how the money was spent. We want to know whether the truth is what we know, or if there are truths beyond our knowledge," he said.

Millions cut off without food, power

FROM PAGE 1

of Noakhali yesterday and there was a severe crisis of drinking water and food in eight upazilas.

Sobhan Miah, a 68-year-old farmer in Char Elahi village of Companiganj, said he had not drank safe water in a week.

"The water is receding, but there is still two foot deep water in my house. There is no rice and the stove is submerged. We are starving," he said, requesting a correspondent of this newspaper to send some relief materials.

Many residents of the area could not go to a shelter because they did not have boats.

Muhammad Yusuf, his 58-year-old neighbour, said, "There are no means to go anywhere. We are forced to sit on the cot the whole time."

The water levels of the Khowai dropped below the danger level in Habiganj town, the Manu in Kulaura, the Gumti in Debidwar, and the Halda in Fatikchhari.

Several rivers were still flowing above the danger mark in Cumilla, Sylhet, and Moulvibazar.

Officials said another bout of downpour is not likely in affected districts and the upstream regions of India today and the situation would improve in Feni, Cumilla, and Chattogram.

Meanwhile, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday urged the government agencies, NGOs, student organisers, volunteers and expatriates to work in a coordinated manner to help the people in distress.

He made the call at a meeting with 44 NGOs at the state guest house Jamuna, said his Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam.

After the meeting, BRAC Executive Director Asif Saleh said he told the chief adviser that post-flood management should be done through coordinated efforts, zone-wise activities, and relief collection as per demand.

Representative of an NGO told Prof Yunus that Tk 1,000 crore may be needed for the post-flood management.

Officials in Chattogram said 2.7 lakh people were stranded in the district.

The authorities were scheduled to release water from the Kaptai dam in Rangamati today. Officials said it would have no effect on the floods.

RELIEF EFFORTS

Medical teams, army, navy, coast guard, fire fighters, border guards, and student organisers are working in Feni, Noakhali, Chattogram, Brahmanbaria, Cumilla, Habiganj, and Lakshmipur along with local administration.

According to the chief adviser's office, 769 medical teams are working in 11 districts.

[Nazrul Islam and Arun Bikash Dey from Chattogram contributed to this report].

Reshuffle of officials for ensuring reforms

FROM PAGE 1

so that this does not happen again in the future."

He said a lot of work had been done on reforms in Bangladesh in the past – the framework of the three alliances in 1991, constitutional reforms proposed by Serajul Alam Khan in the early 80s, and by many civil society organisations in different times.

"What was absent then was a lack of goodwill. Now, I believe we can deliver some good work because we have a leader [Prof Muhammad Yunus]," he added.

Speaking of reforms in the judiciary, the law adviser said a popular opinion about judicial reform is that the lower courts should be reformed first. However, to get an independent judiciary, the higher courts must be reformed first, according to him.

"Ensuring an independent lower court is to ensure the higher court's full authority on it. The higher court will govern and control the lower court, and the government will not intervene here. What's the point of giving [the control of] lower courts to the higher court if the higher court functions as a subordinate to the government?"

"So, we have to reform the higher court," he said.

Asif said the interim government has been working to this end as there was "anarchy" in the appointment of higher court judges during both Awami League and BNP governments with "incompetent, corrupt and partisan" people.

Steps for higher court reform will include amending the recruitment act and policy, rationalising the chief justice's sole authority over the entire judiciary, reforming the general administration committee of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division and the High Court Division, establishing an independent and dedicated secretariat for the higher court, and putting an end to recruiting retired judges in any post, he said.

Asked if the spree of filing cases against top Awami League leaders and their arrests on various charges are ridiculous, as seen by many, Asif said questions could be raised against these cases but those are not ridiculous.

"Many people have filed cases as they have lost their children during the July massacre. They filed the cases after losing their children, and if they think that the former prime minister was responsible for the murders, will the cases be controversial?"

He said filing a case against someone does not mean they are already punished.

"Even after taking the case into cognisance, there can be an investigation and the accused person can be out on bail. But things will not be like what they used to be during the Awami League regime, whose target was to keep people behind bars by filing cases without granting bail."

Asked whether the cases would hinder the judicial process, Asif said no one has the right to prevent a father who lost his children from filing a case.

He said the July mayhem not only saw people killed but thousands of others were hurt to different degrees, such as loss of eyesight.

"If the people file cases accusing Sheikh Hasina or her former ministers as instigators, we cannot prevent them from doing it.

"We are not encouraging anyone to file cases either. People are filing cases spontaneously. We will only ensure that justice is done," he added.

Commenting on the harassment of some arrested AL leaders, including former social welfare minister Dipu Moni, on the court premises, Asif said, "I felt bad about such incidents, especially about what happened with Dipu Moni. But isn't the recently ousted regime responsible for the situation that unfolded on the court premises?"

It is not proper to expect people to be humble after the anarchy the ousted regime had created in the name of justice and snatched the people's voting rights for the last 15 years, he added.

Speaking of the interim government's tenure and the next parliamentary election, he said the people of Bangladesh will decide how long the government will continue.

If the people want reform and the next election to be fair, then this government should be given time, he said.

BNP, one of the country's biggest political parties, said it will wait as long as it takes, Asif said. "At this moment, we need to do the 'urgent things' first."

The law adviser also said the interim government is trying to learn from its mistakes.

"Many of us don't have the experience of running a government. If any person goes to work with little experience, s/he will make some mistakes. But one should consider whether I have the will to do something good, whether I am working hard and trying to learn from the mistakes," he said.

Asked if a "judicial coup" was going to take place as a counter-revolution, the adviser said, "Since it didn't happen, we don't know what the truth is. However, there was an apprehension that such a thing would happen."

About the student-led movement, he said although six student coordinators are often referred to when it comes to the movement, many others played major roles.

He praised their maturity and sense of consciousness, urging them to be patient so that the revolution, which came in exchange for many people's supreme sacrifice, does not become futile.

Asked about their steps on repressive laws against the media, he said his stance on the issue is nothing different from that of the journalist community.

"I can tell you that the application of these laws will not be the same as before. We will review them very seriously. We will take the stakeholders' views and then see which sections could be scrapped and which are amendable. We will try to give a good news in a month," he added.

About the seven journalists accused in a murder case yesterday, Asif reiterated they cannot prevent a parent of a slain student from filing a case.

"The previous government had made it an established culture to file such cases. Perhaps, we're seeing a continuation of it. However, we will look into the matter so that no one is harassed without proper investigation," he added.

Log on to thedailystar.net for the full interview

Immediately unveil roadmap for elections

FROM PAGE 1

The BNP leader said his party expects the interim government to work to meet the needs of the people as soon as possible. To do this, the government has to hold discussions with the political parties about ways to speed up an election and implement the necessary reforms, he said.

"I want to emphasise the election. Elections are crucial for reforms that have come to the forefront. Because [without elections] how will the reforms be completed? These will be done through an elected parliament. There is no alternative.

"I don't believe that a few people will be able to make reforms. I believe that reforms should come through people's participation," he added.

Fakhrul then called upon the interim government for a roadmap for the election. "We believe those in the government are sincere and qualified people. But we want their work to be more visible.

"We want to see that the chief adviser will soon present to the people what he wants to do – give a roadmap on how he will organise elections very soon, how he will bring about the necessary reforms and give relief to the people and move forward for elections."

Fakhrul stressed the need for dialogue and said, "So far, there has been no real agenda-based discussion between the political parties and this government. Opinions of the political parties should be taken."

Regarding the appointment of vice-chancellors to the universities, he said, "No vice-chancellor has been appointed to the universities so far although the previous vice-chancellors have resigned. We want to see people acceptable to all as vice-chancellors."

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Chief Adviser to the interim government Dr Muhammad Yunus meets leaders from various NGOs to discuss the recent flood situation in the country. The meeting took place at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: **PIB**

DEALING WITH FLOOD

Chief adviser calls for utilising NGOs expertise

UNB, *Dhaka*

Interim government Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday emphasised utilising local knowledge and NGO expertise to efficiently manage the flood situation and post-flood activities.

"NGOs are a power of Bangladesh. We need to materialise the dream of the youth. We can do that. We need to tackle the flood together in a coordinated way," Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam quoted Prof Yunus as saying.

Alam briefed reporters at state guesthouse Jamuna following a meeting between Prof Yunus and NGO representatives.

The meeting, which lasted about two hours, included NGOs collaborating with the government to address the ongoing flood crisis. Around 44 NGOs, including small and community-level organisations, were invited.

The press secretary said the meeting stressed the importance of coordination among all partners and discussed strategies for conducting rehabilitation and relief distribution efforts in a unified manner.

"We are impressed by how people have engaged with the same spirit we saw during the student movement," Alam quoted Prof Yunus, also noting the remarkable relief distribution efforts at TSC, Dhaka.

The discussion also touched on post-flood challenges, including restoring telecom connectivity and electricity supply. Alam highlighted the vital role NGOs have consistently played in Bangladesh's development, dating back to 1971.

Adviser Ali Imam Majumder, SDG Coordinator Lamiya Morshed, economist Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Executive Director of Manusher Jonno Foundation Shaheen Anam, Executive Director of Campaign for Popular Education Rasheda K Choudhury, ActionAid Bangladesh chief Farah Kabir, and Brac Executive Director Asif Saleh were among those present. In response to a question from UNB, Asif Saleh stressed the need for mobilising international funds to address the flood situation.

FROM TSC to flood zones

Sea of relief supplies fills DU campus

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Sacks and sacks of relief materials are being lined up inside the TSC complex of Dhaka University. They are then sorted, packaged and loaded on trucks, to be carried to flood affected areas.

The TSC cafeteria and games room have been completely filled with these materials—everything from dry food and medicine to clothing and drinking water.

With no more room inside, students have started placing the sacks in front of the auditorium, and even on the TSC field.

From a bird's eye view, half of the field now resembles a sea of relief packages, a powerful symbol of collective effort.

The atmosphere at Dhaka University is electric with unity and purpose.

People from all walks of life, from corporate workers to day labourers, continue to pour into the campus for the third day in a row, each bringing what they can to support the flood-affected communities.

One such contributor, Aslam Hossain, a rickshaw-van driver, even refused to take fare from a group of students carrying relief supplies.

"I too wanted to contribute from my end. This group of students was working for the flood-affected people, who have been going through indescribable sufferings. I have just done my part," Aslam said.

At the entrance of TSC, a public relief booth has been set up, where donations are carefully registered before being moved to the indoor sports room for packaging.

With the influx of contributions, the entire DU campus has transformed into a center of hope, a place where the unified willpower of the nation is on full display.

Some bring their relief in private cars, some in vans, and others in small trucks.

But regardless of how they arrive, each donation adds to the growing mountain of supplies that promises to bring comfort to the flood victims.

"We as students have to stand by the people. It's our responsibility to help when our people are facing a crisis," said Farid Uddin, a former DU student.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

FLASH FLOOD

290 medical teams deployed in Chattogram

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

The Chattogram Civil Surgeon yesterday said they have formed 290 medical teams to combat the flood situation.

"Our medical teams are ready to combat any situation in the aftermath of flood," said Dr Ilias Chowdhury, Chattogram civil surgeon.

People stranded in different upazilas -- including Fatikchhari, Hathazari, Rangunia and Raozan in Chattogram district - urgently need purified water, as almost all the tube wells and other sources of drinking water have been submerged.

Although flood water started receding in several areas after rainfall stopped

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Student volunteers stocking, sorting and packaging relief materials inside TSC complex of DU for the third day in a row, to be sent to flood affected victims across the country. The photo was taken yesterday.

More than just NUMBERS

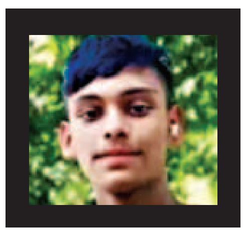
A 15-year-old shot fatally through the side of his head in Dhaka. Another 17-year-old shot to death in a similar manner in the capital. And a teacher from Bogura hacked to death by AL activists for trying to support his students. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

'I realised how good my son was only after his death'

Keeps telling father of 15-yr old shot dead in Mirpur

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* **SHARIFUL ISLAM**

Fifteen-year-old Mahfuzur Rahman took to the streets of Mirpur on July 19 for two reasons -- to stand against the discriminatory quota system in government jobs and to protest the government's crackdown on students.



As the students protested, suddenly law enforcers, along with ruling party members, opened fire on the crowd.

As bullets flew, one found its mark in Mahfuzur's head. Within moments, the young boy collapsed, his life cruelly cut short.

"I realised how good my son was only after his death," said Abdul Mannan, his father.

A rickshaw van puller by profession, Mannan had always worried that his son, who spent much of his free time playing with friends, might go astray. But his fears were misplaced.

"My son sacrificed his life to free the people from an autocratic government," he said, the pain in his voice was palpable.

He added, "My innocent son was killed heinously. I want justice."

This correspondent met the grieving family in their small, rented home in Madina Nagar, Mirpur 11.

Mahfuzur's mother, Mussammad Begum, is inconsolable.

She fainted halfway through Mannan recounting the horrors of that fateful day, only to wake up to the same, unbearable reality.

"My heart continues to bleed since I lost my son," she cried.

Mahfuzur was the only son of Mannan and Begum, born after three daughters. He was the apple of their eyes.

The family had pinned their dreams on Mahfuzur's shoulders. After passing his HSC exams, they hoped Mahfuzur would join the Bangladesh Army, a dream that held the promise of lifting them out of poverty.

But now, those dreams lie shattered, thanks to law enforcers' bullets.

"Initially I was worried and decided not to let him go out. But he deceived me, saying he would just go to Friday

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'Police killed my son on Jul 18'

Says father of 17-year old shot dead in Badda

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

"Of our four sons, Ahadun was the most meritorious. Police took his life on July 18."

This is what Mujibur Rahman, a shopkeeper in Dhaka's Purba Badda area, told this correspondent recounting the day he was killed.

His son, Md Ahadun Kabir, 17, was an SSC equivalent examination candidate for next year from Hazi Sekander Ali Technical School in the area.

Besides studying, Ahadun used to help his father in their grocery shop at Badda area of Dhaka.

"On July 18, Ahadun left the shop for home in the evening. He reached home and shared mangoes with his younger brother Utsob, then went out again. Later, as he did not return even after a long time, we got worried," Mujibur said.

"Meanwhile, serious clashes between protesters and police involving firing of bullets ensued in Badda and adjacent areas. Amid this, I went out to search for my son, but did not find him that night," he said.

Mujibur said on July 19 they came to know from TV channels about two unidentified bodies at Dhaka Medical College morgue, and went there.

"We found our Ahadun's lifeless body lying at the morgue. He was hit by two bullets in his head near right ear, and his waist. However, we faced a lot of difficulty to receive his body

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'My husband was hacked by Awami League men'

Says wife of Selim, a school teacher killed in Bogura protests

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, *Bogura*

Selim Hossain, an assistant teacher of Muril Light High School in Bogura's Kahaloo upazila, stood by his students during the quota reform protest.

He couldn't just stay silent while the streets of the country were painted red with the blood of students, said his wife.

For this 'crime', he was hacked to death by Awami League activists on August 4.

Selim has been living in Telipukur area of Bogura town for past nine years with his family.

"My husband loved his students. He loved this country. As the students' protests intensified, he said he could no longer remain home, and joined the protests. He sacrificed his life for the students," said his wife Jasmine Akhter.

She held her one and half-year-old son on her lap as she spoke to this correspondent.

Uzzal Hossain, his younger brother, said, "Bhaia was not involved in politics. He never went to any meeting, rally or demonstration. But the inhumane violence inflicted on the protesting students made him wary. He felt restless at home, watching news channels and surfing the internet to know what was going on. Eventually,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

A human chain was formed by Shujan demanding reforms to the state to make the country more democratic, secular and humanitarian. The photo was taken on Manik Mia Avenue in front of the parliament building yesterday.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

I realised how good my son

FROM PAGE 3

prayers and have lunch with me afterwards. He even asked me to keep the food ready," Begum recalled.

When Mahfuzur did not return, Mannan, along with his son-in-law and some of Mahfuzur's classmates, went searching in the Mirpur 10 area. They eventually learned from a student who knew Mahfuzur that he had likely been shot around 4:00pm, when police and ruling party members fired indiscriminately at a procession Mahfuzur had participated in.

Desperate and anxious, Mannan and his relatives searched various hospitals throughout the night and the next morning.

At around 10:30am on July 20, their worst fears were confirmed.

A morgue assistant at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College identified Mahfuzur from a photograph on Mannan's cellphone and informed him that his son's body was in the morgue.

When Mannan went to the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police station to request the return of his son's body, the police agreed on the condition that the body be taken directly to their village in Morelganj, Bagerhat, for burial.

However, students from Mirpur, who had gathered at the hospital, took the vehicle carrying Mahfuzur's body to Mirpur for a funeral prayer (janaza).

There, members of the Awami League and Jubo League prevented the vehicle from entering Madina Nagar.

So, students hastily conducted a brief janaza before transporting the body to Mahfuzur's village, where he was buried around midnight that day.

"While I was attending my son's janaza, I received several phone calls, urging me to flee to avoid going to jail, as police were planning to arrest me," Mannan said.

After his son's death, local members of the Awami League and Jubo League pressured his landlord to evict the family, labeling them "razakars".

Fearing for their safety, Mannan did not return to Dhaka until Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was forced to step down and flee the country.

Mahfuzur's classmate, Atiq Raihan, remembered him as an individual driven by a sense of justice. "Mahfuzur joined the protest to stand against injustice," Atiq said, adding that he and other students demanded that a playground in their area be named after Mahfuzur to honour his memory.

Reform the state, punish criminals

Say speakers at Shujan event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), a civil society platform, yesterday demanded that the interim government build a democratic, non-communal and human state through reforms.

In a human chain at the capital's Manik Mia Avenue, they urged that steps be taken against those involved in the recent attacks on minority communities across the country.

They also demanded that compensation be provided to the families of those who died during the recent protests and that medical expenses be given to the injured.

Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shujan, said, "The interim government has to work with two issues simultaneously. One is to bring those who were involved in corruption, mischief, killings and other criminal activities in the past to justice, while the second is to take necessary steps for reforming the state."

He said the current opportunity to reform the state shouldn't be wasted.

In the programme, Robaet Ferdous, a professor of Dhaka University, said, "Proper steps must be taken to bring back all the money laundered out of the country."

victims of the ongoing flood and donate to the Chief Adviser's relief fund," said Dr Tofail Ahmed, Shujan's executive member, said, "Everyone, particularly those who are well-off, should extend their hands to the victims of the ongoing flood and donate to the Chief Adviser's relief fund."

He also urged everyone to remain cautious of propagandas regarding Bangladesh from foreign media outlets.

In a press release, Shujan also urged that the election commission be reformed with honest, eligibe and impartial individuals, and that repressive laws like the Cyber Security Act should be removed. They also recommended holding students' union elections at the educational institutions.

They also urged for political unity to amend the constituion and setting term limits for future prime ministers.

NSU chairman urges govt to uphold current board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Javed Muneer Ahmad, chairman of the reconstituted North South University trustee board, urged the government to protect the current management of NSU.

His statement comes as tensions rise due to a conflict among trustees after the High Court ordered the reinstatement of the previous board on August 21.

Javed criticised the High Court's decision, calling it "highly abnormal" as the order was issued without hearing the respondents and without representation from the Attorney General's office. He urged the Attorney General to be present at the August 27 hearing in the Chief Justice's court.

The previous board included five trustees facing an Anti-Corruption Commission case involving Tk 304 crore in alleged irregularities.

They are: Azim Uddin Ahmed, Mohammed Shajahan, Benajir Ahmed, MA Kashem and Rehana Rahman.

In 2022, President Hamid reconstituted the board, reducing its members from 16 to 12 after a UGC probe found some members involved in anti-state activities, militancy sponsorship, and corruption.

Sadek Khan arrested over murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested former Dhaka-13 Awami League lawmaker Sadek Khan in the West Nakhalpara area of the capital yesterday, in a case filed for killing a trucker Sujan, 24, on July 20 during the student movement.

Victim's brother Rafiqul Islam filed the case with Mohammadpur Police Station on August 22.

Sadek was arrested in the case, according to a text message sent by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

In the FIR, Sadek Khan was named as the 21st accused out of 79 named including the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

DMP chief pledges

FROM PAGE 5

officials still remain in the posts, he said adding, "How the trust can be brought back by keeping these officials in the chair."

"This is an ongoing process. It may take some time. But you [addressing journalists] will see clean policing. Those [unprofessional officials] will not be in posts, who create a crisis on trust," he added.

"The issue of departmental action is ongoing," he said.

"We want to create a well-disciplined police force... where all policemen will work professionally," he said.

Asked about the unprofessional officers who might be evading accountability, the commissioner noted that their whereabouts are currently unknown but efforts are being made to address these issues.

He also refuted claims that favouritism based on district affiliations influences police appointments, asserting that professionalism should be the sole criterion for police roles.

Regarding "corruption" within the police force, Mainul pledged to form a professional police service devoid of corruption, irregularities, and injustice. He acknowledged the challenge of rebuilding trust and called for public support in overcoming the current crisis.

290 medical teams deployed

FROM PAGE 3

for 24 hours, around 2.6 lakh people in Chattogram district were stranded in flood water, according to officials of Chattogram District Administration.

According to local sources, the district health staffers were supplying water purification tablets (WPT) and oral saline (ORS) to the people affected by flood in the upazilas, but many of them feared that these supplies would run out due to high demand.

"Almost all the tube wells in Narayanhat union in Fatickchhari upazila have gone under water, while most of the ponds were also submerged by flood water," said Abdul Halim, a resident in the union, adding, "We have received oral saline and water purification tablets from the relief teams."

However, officials of the district civil surgeon office assured that there was sufficient stock of WPT and ORS, so people should not panic.

Chattogram District Civil Surgeon Dr Ilias Chowdhury said, "We have sufficient stock of WPT and ORS to combat the present situation and we have already sent requisition for more supplies."

Asked about the stock, he said at present there are 1.11 lakh pieces of WPT and 3.48 lakh packets of ORS in stock in the district.

According to experts, many of the flood affected people would likely suffer from various water-borne diseases -- including diarrhoea, cholera, dysentery and jaundice.

Contacted, Dr Aniruddha Ghosh, professor of Medicine at Chittagong Medical College, said people in the flood affected areas are vulnerable to many diseases. Infants, young children and elderly people are the most vulnerable groups.

"So, they will need immediate medical care," he also said.

"Their drinking water and water for cooking and washing hands and mouth must be purified," he added.

Salman, Anisul, Dipu Moni

FROM PAGE 5

His name was not included in FIR, but he was shown arrested in the case.

On August 20, the victim's father filed the case against Hasina and 90 others with Bhatara Police Station.

On August 14, Salman and Anisul were placed on a 10-day remand in a case filed over the death of shop employee Shahjahan Ali, 24, in the New Market area on July 16.

They were arrested in Dhaka's Sadarghat in the case on August 13.

On August 16, Ziaul was placed on an eight-day remand in the same case. He was arrested in Dhaka's Khilkhet on August 15.

On July 17, Ayesha Begum, mother of the victim Shahjahan, filed the case with New Market Police Station against some unnamed miscreants.

On August 20, Dipu Moni was placed on a four-day remand in the case filed over the death of a grocery shop owner, Abu Saeed, in Mohammadpur on July 19.

She was arrested from the capital's Baridhara DOHS area on August 19.

On August 13, Amir Hamza Shatil of Mohammadpur filed the murder case against Hasina and six others with a court.

In this case, the name of Dipu Moni was not included in FIR, but she was shown arrested.

From TSC to flood zones

FROM PAGE 3

Students were packaging relief goods at Dhaka University Central Students Union's Cafeteria as well as TSC.

Not only were current students of DU working as volunteers, but former DU students and many school and college-going students were also participating as volunteers.

"We volunteers have been working in shifts. When we become tired, another group replaces us," said Amjad Hossain, another former DU student.

From 10 AM to 5 PM, students have collected a total of 1 crore 24 lakh 48 thousand taka in cash at TSC. The collection and counting process is still ongoing, said Saud Ashrefa, a DU student.

Police killed

FROM PAGE 3

from the hospital. On July 21, we got his body after collecting necessary papers," he added.

Ahadun's body was taken to the family's village home and was buried at the family graveyard on the next day. The family returned to Dhaka later on.

"I still cannot believe my son is no more. I demand proper investigation into my son's killing to bring the killers to book," said Kalpana Akter, Ahadun's mother.

98pc work of third

FROM PAGE 5

completion of work with the officers and employees concerned with the work.

Monjur Kabir said this terminal has special importance as a gateway for the economic growth of the country and global communication.

He emphasised completing the remaining work of the terminal-3 at the earliest.

The CAAB chairman expressed his satisfaction with the progress of the overall work and thanked all those involved in the project.

The third terminal project, costing Tk 21,300 crore, commenced on December 28, 2019. The government contributed Tk 5,000 crore, while the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) provided the remaining funds.

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina made the soft launch of the much anticipated third terminal on October 6 the last year.

My husband was hacked

FROM PAGE 3

he could no longer stay home and joined the protest with us."

"On August 4, bhaia joined the protest at Bogura's Satmatha area. I was also there. Police hurled tear shells at the protesters while Awami League and Chhatra League activists also attacked them. I returned home around 2:00pm after sustaining injuries," he said.

"Around 3:00pm, facing two-pronged attacks by police and AL-BCL men, the protesters at Satmatha fled from the spot but bhaia took shelter on the Dak Bungalow premises. The AL-BCL goons swooped on him and stabbed and hacked him numerous times, leaving him dead," Uzzal alleged citing witnesses.

Some student protesters informed Uzzal about Selim's death around 3:30pm.

Selim's father, Sikandar Hossain, filed a murder case against Sheikh Hasina, Obaidul Quader, and 99 other local AL leaders and activists with Bogura Sadar Police Station on August 16, said Saihan Oliullah, OC of the police station.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Commerce
Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms
1, Kawran Bazar, TCB Bhabhan (6th Floor)
Dhaka-1215
www.roc.gov.bd

Memo No. 26.06.0000.007.07.001-24/996 Date: 22.08.2024

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender have published through e-GP portal.

Tender ID	Name of Goods	Publication Date & Time	Last Selling Date & Time	Last Closing Date & Time
1009893	Purchas of Computer/Printer/Offline UPS/Scanner/Mouse/Keyboard/monitor/HDD	25.08.2024 & 09:30	08.09.2024 & 12:30	08.09.2024; & 13:30
1010148	Installation, Configuration & Maintenance support of security software (firewall and OS, MS Office, Other Application Software	27.08.2024 & 15:00	18.09.2024 & 11:00	18.09.2024; & 13:00

The interested persons/firms may visit the website **www.eprocure.gov.bd** to get the details of the tender. This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hardcopies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP portal (**http://www.eprocure.gov.bd**) is required.

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (**helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd**).

The Procurement entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or tenders.

(Md. Mizanur Rahman, ndc)
Registrar
Joint Stock Companies and Firms

GD- 247

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ই-মেইল: registrar@bsmru.ac.bd
www.bsmru.ac.bd

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for procurement of the following equipment.

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description	Online Tender Notice Publiction Date	Online Tender Closing Date
1010129	BSMRU/2024-2025/G1	Supply and Installation of Computer, Laptop and UPS	August 25, 2024 3:00pm	September 09, 2024 12:00pm

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. In order to submit the e-Tender, please register in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from the e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

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General Manager

DHAKA AIRPORT

98pc work of third terminal completed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ninety-eight percent construction work of the third terminal at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport have been completed so far, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) Chairman Air Vice Marshal Monjur Kabir Bhuiyan said yesterday.

The CAAB chairman said this while visiting the ongoing construction work of the third terminal at the HSIA.

During the visit, the CAAB boss inspected the newly constructed check-in counter, immigration, scanner, boarding bridge, arrival, departure and aircraft parking apron and road network at terminal-3 and other facilities constructed under this project.

The CAAB chairman discussed the progress of terminal work, quality of work and timely

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Youth sent to jail for vandalising temples

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

A Rajshahi court has sent an 18-year-old youth to jail on charges of vandalising three temples in Bagha upazila, Rajshahi, on Friday.

Bagha Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abu Siddique said Rabbi Hossain, of Kaligram Miapara, was caught red-handed by villagers while damaging idols and equipment at Kaligram Pundaripara Temple.

Rabbi confessed that his actions were driven by anger over several Facebook posts regarding the flash floods in Bangladesh, which he blamed on India's decision to open several dams.

A case was filed against Rabbi, a local madrasa student, by Arun Sarkar, the president of Kaligram Pundaripara Temple.

Sujit Kumar Panday, president of the Bagha Upazila Puja Udjapan Committee, confirmed that Rabbi also broke into and vandalised equipment at the Palapara and Ghospara temples earlier that day.

This rickshaw puller donates a portion of his daily earnings to students who were collecting relief for victims of the ongoing flood situation. Despite his own financial struggles, the man wants to stand by his countrymen in this moment of crisis. The photo was taken from the Sadar road in Barishal city yesterday.

PHOTO: **TITU DAS**

Tk 50cr embankment sinks under sand in a month

Locals allege use of low quality concrete blocks, geo-bags

S DILIP ROY, *Lalmonirhat*

Construction of an embankment on Teesta river was completed on June 30 in Gobordhan area of Mahishkhocha union under Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat.

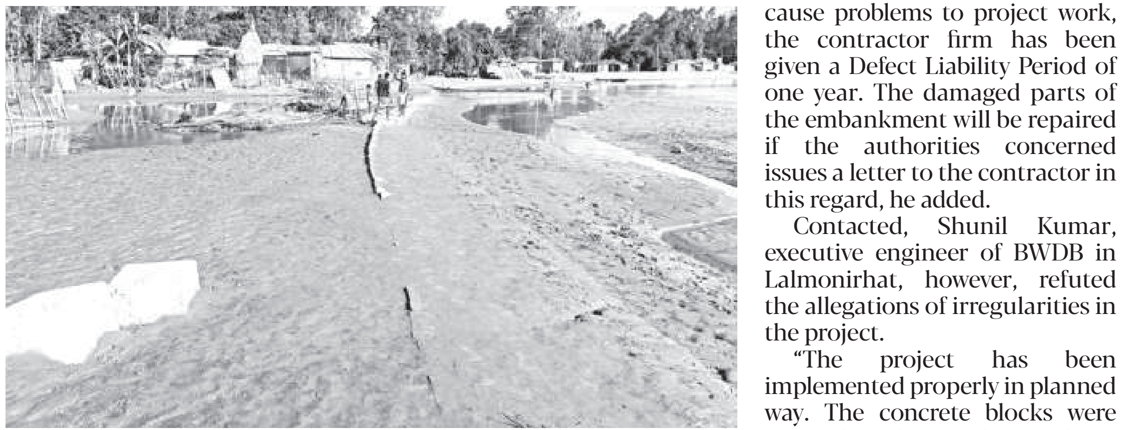
Bangladesh Water Development Board implemented the project, aimed at enhancing protection to the people on a 2,450-metre stretch of the riverbank from erosion, at a cost of Tk 49,34,95,000 in eight phases.

However, within just a month after completion, the embankment sank under sand.

Locals alleged of gross irregularities in implementation of the project.

Wishing anonymity, some locals alleged that the contractors had not only used inferior quality concrete blocks and geo-bags for the project, but also illegally lifted sand from the project area and sold it for around Tk 7 crore, which in turn made the embankment area vulnerable and eventually led it to sink under sand after a flash flood hit the area a few days after the project's completion.

"Earlier, in case of flash floods, water would recede in a couple of days. This time, the water is not receding even in two weeks. The embankment has become a curse to the riverside people instead of a boon as it was not implemented in a planned way," said Mafizul Islam, a local farmer.



According to sources at BWDB in Lalmonirhat, four contracting companies -- M/s Rupantar, Techbay International, M/s Mostafa and Sons and MC-BC JV – were tasked with the project and a total 4,55,284 concrete blocks and 1.30 lakh sand-filled geo-bags weighing 250 kilogrammes were used to construct the embankment in eight packages.

Wishing anonymity, a BWDB official in Lalmonirhat said five of the eight packages of the project were controlled by Ershad Hossain, younger brother of Mizanur Rahman, APS of former social welfare minister.

Due to Ershad's political influence, the BWDB officials could not supervise the project work properly, he added.

Contacted, Ershad Hossain declined to comment in this regard.

Farhad Hossain, proprietor of the contracting firm M/s Rupantar, said he did not visit the project site as the site manager took care of everything.

Since a natural calamity may cause problems to project work, the contractor firm has been given a Defect Liability Period of one year. The damaged parts of the embankment will be repaired if the authorities concerned issues a letter to the contractor in this regard, he added.

Contacted, Shunil Kumar, executive engineer of BWDB in Lalmonirhat, however, refuted the allegations of irregularities in the project.

"The project has been implemented properly in planned way. The concrete blocks were covered under sand as a huge amount of sediment was brought by the flash flood. The BWDB team tasked with the Project Completion Report will visit the project area very soon. If any defect is found, the contractor will rectify it during the DLP period," he said.

Salman, Anisul, Dipu Moni on fresh remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Salman F Rahman, private industry affairs adviser to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, former law minister Anisul Huq, former social welfare minister Dipu Moni, former chief whip ASM Feroz and former army officer Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan on different terms of remand for interrogation in murder cases.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Jashim passed separate orders in the cases, a sub-inspector working in the court told The Daily Star.

Salman, Anisul and Ziaul were placed on a fresh 10-day remand in two cases filed over deaths of a honurs forth-year student, Sabuj Ali, 26, in the New Market area and a 11-grader, Khalid Hasan Saifullah, in the Lalbagh area of Dhaka during quota reform protests on July 16 and 18.

The three were produced before the court with a 20-day remand prayer in the cases on completion of their first phase remand.

On July 17, Nur Nabi, brother of Sabuj, filed a case with New Market Police Station against some unnamed miscreants.

In this case, the names of Salman, Anisul and Ziaul were not included in the FIR, but they were shown arrested.

On August 19, Kamrul Hasan, father of Saifullah, filed a case with Lalbagh Police Station against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Salman, Anisul and 49 others.

In addition, Dipu Moni was placed on a fresh four-day remand yesterday in a case filed over the death of Suman Sikdar in the city's Badda on July 19.

She was produced before the court with a fresh 10-day remand prayer in the case on completion of her first phase remand.

On August 20, Masuma, mother of the victim, filed the case with Badda Police Station against Hasina, Dipu Moni and 178 others.

Yesterday, Feroz was placed on a seven-day remand in a case filed over the death of Sohag Miah, 16, in Bhatara on July 19.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Shama Obaid sued over murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Faridpur*

A murder case was filed yesterday against Shama Obaid, the suspended BNP central organising secretary (Faridpur division), along with 95 others, including 35 named individuals, in Faridpur.

The case was registered at Nagarkanda Police Station around 1:00am in connection with the death of Kabir Bhuiya, who was killed during a clash between supporters of Shama Obaid and those of Shahidul Islam Babul, the suspended general secretary of the Krishak Dal's central committee, on August 21.

Monzilla Begum, 44, the wife of the deceased, filed the case, according to Aminur Rahman, officer-in-charge of the police station.

As per the case statement, Shama Obaid had allegedly instructed her supporters to disrupt a road meeting organised by Babul in the Nagarakanda petrol pump area around 11:00am on August 21. Shama's supporters reportedly hacked and beat Kabir Bhuiya to death near Nagarkanda Bazar that day. Several others were also injured in the clash.

No arrests have been made yet, the OC said, adding that efforts are underway to arrest the accused.

Implement CHT accord fully

Demands CHT Accord Implementation Movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord Implementation Movement has called on the interim government to develop a clear and actionable plan with specific deadlines and mechanisms to ensure accountability in order to fully implement the CHT Accord.

Representatives of the movement made the call at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday, stressing that it was essential to implement the core elements of the accord, which remained largely unfulfilled for 26 years, to establish peace and stability in the CHT region.

They presented a seven-point demand in this regard.

The demands also include: ending military supervision in CHT region; empowering the regional councils and the CHT three district councils under the Accord, ensuring democratic, representative, and effective local governance; ensuring land rights and rehabilitation for people of CHT; integrating them into the country's mainstream economic progress; reserving special seats for indigenous people in all local government bodies in the plainland districts; and establishing a separate land commission for the indigenous people of plainlands to address their specific needs and challenges.

Khairul Chowdhury, a teacher of sociology department at Dhaka University and also joint coordinator of the movement, presented the demands.

To implement these demands, the movement proposed five immediate actions to the government, including reconstitution of the CHT Accord Implementation Committee, urgent reform of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission, initiating dialogue with the Regional Council, and reconstitution of the advisory council to the CHT affairs ministry.

The demands include ending military supervision, empowering regional councils, ensuring land rights, rehabilitation, special seats for indigenous people, and a separate land commission for plainland indigenous communities.

Prof Robaet Ferdous of DU's mass communication and journalism department, said it was time to address the oppression faced by indigenous communities in the hills.

"For the past 50 years, people in the hill areas have been living under harsh military rule. If the country's 61 other districts have democratic governance, why should three remaining districts be under military control?" he asked.

Dipayan Khisa of the Adivasi Forum and Myentthein Promila of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum also spoke, while Jakir Hossain, joint coordinator of the movement, moderated the event.

DMP chief pledges to restore public trust

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police interrogated the arrested VIPs to know about those, who provided money, advice, and statements against the students' movement, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Md Mainul Hasan yesterday.

He was replying to a reporter's query at the "Commissioner's Meet the Press" at the media centre in the capital's Minto Road.

Mainul provided updates on the investigation against several high-profile arrestees, including former ministers, a state minister, and an adviser from the previous government.

The commissioner also addressed the issue of unprofessional behaviour of law enforcers, which he attributed to a loss of public trust.

The unprofessional

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 25

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

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Ref No: RAKUB/HO/ICTD-140/2024-2025/210 Date: 22.08.2024

e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tenders are invited in the e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for procurement Computer Hardware, Software, Database, Backup systems, Network Devices, Firewall, Security Systems and its related all other services:

SL No	e-Tender ID No	Tender Reference No.	Description of Work	Last selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
01	1009846	RAKUB/HO/ICTD-140/2024-2025/205 Date: 22-08-2024	Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of Server, Storage, Backup system, Operating System and related services for Core Banking Solution in Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Banks' Near Data Center (NDC).	23-Sep-2024 14:00	23-Sep-2024 16:00
02	1009842	RAKUB/HO/ICTD-141/2024-2025/209 Date: 22-08-2024	Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of Oracle Database and its related services for Core Banking Solution in Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Banks Near Data Center (NDC).	26-Sep-2024 12:00	26-Sep-2024 17:00
03	1009843	RAKUB/HO/ICTD-142/2024-2025/208 Date: 22-08-2024	Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for Network Devieces and its related Services in Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Banks Near Data Center (NDC).	22-Sep-2024 12:00	22-Sep-2024 16:00
04	1009844	RAKUB/HO/ICTD-142/2024-2025/207 Date: 22-08-2024	Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of Web Application Firewall (WAF), Load Balancer and its related services in Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Banks Near Data Center (NDC)	19-Sep-2024 14:00	19-Sep-2024 16:00
05	1009845	RAKUB/HO/ICTD-142/2024-2025/206 Date: 22-08-2024	Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of Firewall, WEB Security Appliance and its related services in Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Banks Near Data Center (NDC).	25-Sep-2024 12:00	25-Sep-2024 16:00

These are online tenders, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To Submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of the tender from the e-GP System Portal have to be deposited through any registered Banks' branches up to above mentioned Date and Time.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Sd/-
(Md. Abul Kalam)
Deputy General Manager

GD- 246

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

MANIFESTING TRUE EQUALITY

MITHILA

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Actress and activist Rafiath Rashid Mithila firmly believes that whenever one witnesses injustice, they should stand up against it. According to her, the more people who take a stand against wrongdoing, the more likely it is that positive change will occur.

"When I saw students being mistreated, I couldn't stay silent—I had to speak out," shared the actress, who gained widespread admiration and support when she joined the anti-discrimination student movement.

Even now, she continues to be embraced by the love and respect of many. Reflecting on this, she said, "The students were the heart of the movement—they deserve all the credit for any praise or love received. We were simply there to support them and stand by their side in whatever way we could."

She continued, "In the fight against discrimination, students united setting aside differences in religion, race, or background, and took to the streets. That's exactly how it should be. We need to speak out against injustice wherever it occurs. Only then can we build a better nation."

"When people protest against injustice, we must stand in solidarity with them. Those who have lost a loved one are the ones who truly feel the depth of that pain and loss—a sorrow that lingers for a lifetime. Witnessing these tragic killings, I felt compelled to raise my voice out of a sense of basic human compassion," Mithila asserted.

When asked about her hopes for the future, the actress shared, "I wish for a future without injustice, where people feel secure in their lives, and power is not abused. I envision a country of true equality, where everyone has equal rights and opportunities."

Mithila also reflected on how people come together to support flood victims, regardless of religion or background. "This is the true essence of Bangladesh. I hope for a nation where equality prevails, and people support one another in times of need."

Several districts across the country are facing severe flooding, leaving millions stranded. When asked what should be done in such a situation, Mithila said, "I am doing what I can within my means. Whenever floods occur, I make an effort to contribute, and I'm doing the same now. It's heartening to see everyone, regardless of political affiliation or religion, coming together to help as much as possible. Unity in crisis makes us stronger than ever."

Regarding the flood victims, she added, "Many people, both domestically and internationally, are eager to donate funds for relief efforts. This aid must be used effectively. From my end, I am coordinating and verifying necessary sources to ensure that the donations are being properly allocated."

As the conversation came to a close, Mithila expressed her current emotional state, saying, "Right now, I'm not in the right emotional state to return to acting."

PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

'Joruri Shongjog' concert raises over Tk 21 lakh for flood victims

Last Friday, the ***Joruri Shongjog*** concert at Dhaka University's Raju Memorial Sculpture raised funds for flood victims, drawing a large crowd in the afternoon.

The concert featured performances by more than 30 bands and artistes, including Shironamhin, Shonar Bangla Circus, F Minor, Arghya Deb, Krishnakali, and Shayan, among others. Attendees contributed both funds and essential relief items to support the flood victims.

According to Shironamhin, one of the pro bono performers, the concert raised Tk 21,41,200 and accumulated about 20 truckloads of relief supplies for flood-affected communities.

Taylor Swift shatters Michael Jackson's record at Wembley

Taylor Swift's Eras Tour has set a new record, making her the first solo artiste to perform at London's Wembley Stadium the most times in a single tour, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

During her Tuesday show, she announced to her fans, "You just made me the first solo artiste to ever play Wembley eight times in a single tour," as reported by the BBC. "We will never, ever be able to thank you enough for it."

Swift broke the previous record held by Michael Jackson, who performed at the stadium seven times during his 1988 Bad Tour. Additionally, the pop group Take That also performed there eight times during their 2011 Progress Tour.

NEWS

Metro service resumes today

FROM PAGE 12

many commuters waiting long hours to reach their destinations.

The recent protests by various groups after the fall of Hasina have only exacerbated the situation, leaving commuters to bear the brunt of the metro rail's absence.

After the fall of the Hasina-led government on August 5, the interim government instructed DMTCL to resume metro services by August 17, except at the vandalised stations.

However, DMTCL announced delays due to an "unavoidable situation," which later revealed to be a work abstention by around 700 employees from grades 10 to 20, who began striking on August 6, demanding a pay hike to match their higher-grade colleagues.

The metro rail authority decided to resume operations on August 25 [today] after the employees returned to work on August 19.

Drop Shakib

FROM PAGE 12

per ICC rules. He needs immediate removal from the cricket team.

He needs to be suspended from all forms of cricket for the integrity of Bangladesh cricket and sports, he said in the notice.

The case was filed with Adabor Police Station on August 22 over the killing of a garment factory worker Md Rubel.

Shakib Al Hasan has been accused in the case. Besides, former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Obaidul Quader and 156 named and 400-500 unidentified people have also been accused in the case.

Lawyer Sajib Mahmood Alam told The Daily Star that Shakib is now in Pakistan with the Bangladesh national cricket team.

He also said that his client has not given any time limit to BCB for bringing Shakib back to the country and for removing him from the cricket team, as a new team has been appointed in the BCB administration and they will need some time to function properly.

Mushfiqur scales Asian summit

FROM PAGE 12

His near nine-hour vigil at the crease, which began four overs into the post-lunch session on the third day and ran until the fourth day's final session, wrested control of the match away from the hosts and allowed the visitors to head into the final day leading by 94 runs.

Mushfiqur has previously scored six Test centuries at home, including a couple of double hundreds against Zimbabwe, a 200 against the Lankans in Galle back in 2013 -- which was the maiden Test double hundred by a Bangladesh player -- and made 127 against India in Hyderabad, 2017.

The 37-year-old also has centuries in New Zealand and West Indies, making him the only Bangladesh batter with Test tons in six Test nations.

On the fourth day, Mushfiqur lost his overnight partner Liton Das (56) early but found ample support from Mehedi Hasan Miraz, with whom he batted for 56 overs and accumulated 196 runs, forming the best-ever eighth-wicket stand in Test cricket for Bangladesh.

Mushfiqur, who was unbeaten on 55 after the third day, reached the three-figure mark right at the cusp of lunch, with a glance down fine leg against off-spinner Agha Salman.

As he completed the second run to reach his 11th Test hundred, he punched the air and let out a deafening roar, releasing the emotions he had held in for hours. He then proceeded to perform a Sajdah before putting back his gear, regaining his composure, and resuming his vigilance.

After playing out the entire second session alongside Miraz, and also getting a life on 150 thanks to Babar Azam, Mushfiqur seemed destined to score his fourth double ton.

But when he was just nine runs away from joining the likes of Sunil Gavaskar and Zaheer Abbas, he fell to pacer Mohammad Ali, playing a loose shot on a delivery that bounced a tad more than he anticipated, took an outside edge, and nestled into the gloves of Mohammad Rizwan.

The agony of missing the double ton was apparent in Mushfiqur's expression; however, falling nine runs short of 200 does not diminish the effort it took to score the previous 191 runs.

Even though the match is likely to end in a draw unless something dramatic happens on the final day today, fans of Bangladesh cricket will remember it as the game where Mushfiqur conquered the Asian summit.

Worry over fresh influx grows

FROM PAGE 12

abuses tragically reminiscent of the military atrocities in 2017," said Elaine Pearson, Asia director at Human Rights Watch in a statement on August 21.

Prof Sk Tawfique M Haque, director at the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance at North South University, said the AA once was soft on the Rohingyas, but now the rebel group is not happy with them.

The reality in Rakhine suggests that the AA will be eventually taking full control of the state. In that case, Bangladesh needs to make contact with AA through a backchannel, while the diplomatic relations with whoever is in the central control should continue, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We don't see any scope in the near future of Rohingya repatriation. However, the current interim government is well accepted, especially in the western world. This can also be an opportunity to pressurise the AA," Prof Tawfique said.

Meanwhile, in a meeting in Thailand last week, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said China supports a democratic transition in Myanmar and backs a regional plan to find a way out of the ongoing crisis in the Southeast Asian country.

Bangladesh needs to closely follow the developments relating to Myanmar. If Bangladesh can include the issue in the regional or global level negotiations, a solution may be found, Prof Tawfique said.

Providing humanitarian aid to the one million Rohingya in the camps is challenging to Bangladesh because of the dwindling supply of funds and Bangladesh's economic state.

This year, around $852 million is needed for humanitarian aid at the camps. So far, less than 40 percent of the sum has come through.

"Managing the increasing number of Rohingya will be a real challenge with declining funding. The international community must understand the multiple challenges Bangladesh faces today and extend their hand," Tawfique said.

"The rapidly escalating conflict in Myanmar is all the more reason for the United Nations Security Council to finally refer the situation in the country to the International Criminal Court. There can be no progress without accountability," Amnesty International's Myanmar Researcher Joe Freeman said in a statement.

"The future of Myanmar hinges on protecting, promoting and upholding the human rights of all people in the country."

Justice Manik

FROM PAGE 12

injured detainees first and then hand them over to the jail authority. But in this case, they did not."

Manik was detained by Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Friday night from the Dona border in Sylhet's Kanaighat upazila while trying to flee to India.

That night, he alleged that he was robbed and beaten by a group of people at the border.

After he was handed over to Kanaighat Police Station last morning, police produced him to Judicial Magistrate Alamgir Hossain's court, showing him an arrestee under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The court later sent him to jail, said court inspector Jamshed Alam.

Jamshed said that as the arrestee is a retired justice, the jail authority was ordered to provide adequate facilities as per the jail code. The court also ordered treatment for Justice Manik as he informed the court of his illness.

"He is accused in murder cases filed with Dhaka's Lalbagh, Adabor, and Badda police stations. He has also been accused in several other cases," the inspector added.

41,551 accused

FROM PAGE 12

of this report last night.

Moin Uddin Razib, the convener of the Anderkella Ward Jubo Dal, filed the attempt-to-murder case with the Kotwali Police Station.

Some other accused named in the FIR are former MP of Chandgaon-Boalkhali constituency Abdus Salam, former MP of Pahartali-Double Mooring constituency Mohiuddin Bacchu, MA Latif of Bandar-Patenga constituency, former MP of Sitakunda constituency Didarul Alam, former President of Chittagong University Chhatra League Shahjahan Chowdhury, city Swechchhasebak League President Debashish Debu, city unit Chhatra League President Imran Ahmed, General Secretary Zakaria Dostagir, and former central Jubo League member Rintu Das.

The other accused in the case are mostly leaders and activists of the Awami League and affiliated organisations.

According to the case statement, the plaintiff was threatened and assaulted by the named and unnamed accused with sticks, roads, and weapons while he was attending the student movement protests on August 4.

On the other hand, Inspector (Investigation) Ripon Kumar Das of Kotwali Police Station filed the case over the attack on the police station, accusing 30,000 to 40,000 unnamed miscreants under various sections of the Penal Code, the Explosives Act, and the Special Powers Act.

In the case statement, Rajon claimed that around 30,000 to 40,000 attackers stormed the police station on August 5, carrying weapons and explosives. They looted government property, damaged vehicles and documents, and stole firearms, ammunition, and cash after vandalising the station and setting it on fire.

A series of cases are being filed against the Awami League lawmakers, ministers, and advisers following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5 amid massive protests by the students and people.

After the fall of the regime, at least 43 police officials were killed as hundreds of police establishments including police stations came under attack by the mobs.

Flood causes 50km jam

FROM PAGE 1

tailback on both ends of the highway has crossed 50km. Traffic is very slow.

"Passengers travelling between Dhaka and Chattogram are facing untold sufferings, as they are forced to wade through floodwater for three to four kilometres with their belongings. We are on the ground and are working with other agencies to keep the road open... ," said the police official.

Our correspondent reported from Feni that floodwater was receding in Mahipal, but there was knee-to-waist-deep water between Lalpol and Baraiyarhat. Volunteers were seen setting up camps at various locations along the road and conducting rescue and relief operations in nearby villages.

Feni RHD Sub Assistant Engineer Muhaiminul Sohag said, "Five to six kilometres of the highway in Feni's Lalpol is still submerged, which has completely halted vehicular movement.

"We have received a report that the Lemua Bridge, over the Selonia river, in Feni has been damaged as it was submerged by floodwater."

ROBBERY NEW WORRY

Robbers are a new worry for the flood-affected people, many of whom do not have electricity.

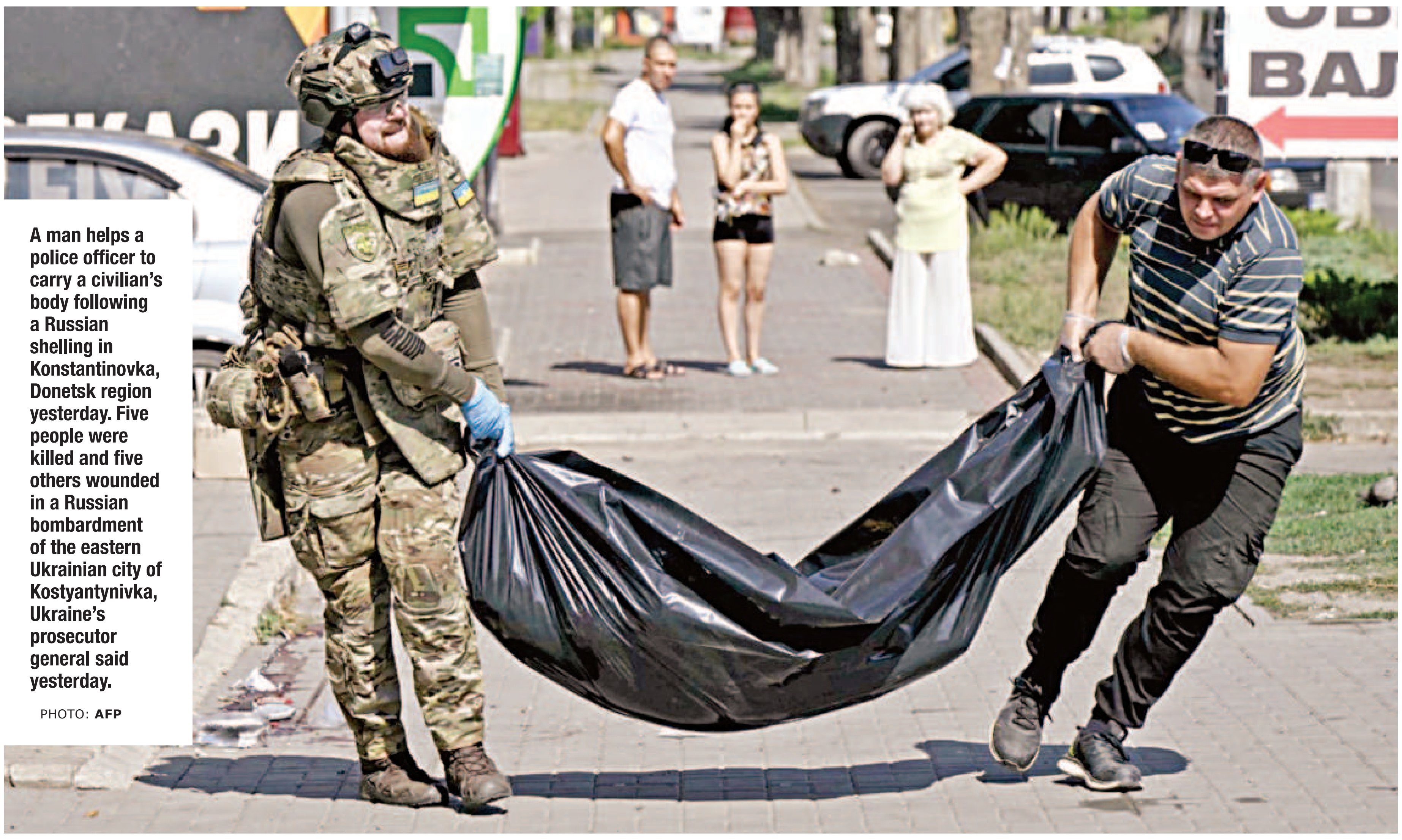
Nighttime robberies have been reported in several areas, including on highways and villages, according to sources.

Posing as flood victims or relief workers, the robbers have been looting locals and relief workers in the flood-affected areas, they said.

Omar Faruk Emon, a resident of Paschim Joyar village in Karerhat union of Mirsarai, said, "People panicked after a group of robbers looted several homes on Friday night. To alert everyone, locals used loudspeakers of mosques."

Incidents of robberies on highways have also been making the rounds on social media since Friday night.

SP Khairul said, "We have heard about several incidents of robberies, but we could not verify them because no one reported the matter to the police. Considering the situation, we have asked local police stations and law enforcement agencies to remain alert. Drivers were also advised to stay vigilant."



A man helps a police officer to carry a civilian's body following a Russian shelling in Konstantinovka, Donetsk region yesterday. Five people were killed and five others wounded in a Russian bombardment of the eastern Ukrainian city of Kostyantynivka, Ukraine's prosecutor general said yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

GLOBAL PLASTIC TREATY

Experts meet as talks near

AFP, *Bangkok*

With months until crunch talks on the world's first binding treaty on plastic pollution, experts are meeting in Bangkok to discuss financing options and problematic plastics.

The four-day gathering is a largely technical waypoint on the road to final negotiations in late November in South Korea's Busan.

There, countries are hoping to seal a potentially groundbreaking deal to tackle the gargantuan problem of plastic pollution.

The scale of the issue is almost unprecedented -- microplastics have been found in the deepest ocean trenches, highest mountain peaks, in clouds and even breastmilk.

Plastic production has doubled in 20 years and at current rates it could triple by 2060, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Yet over 90 percent of plastic is not recycled, with much of it dumped in nature or buried in landfills.

Negotiators have already met four times to discuss a deal that could include production caps, unified rules on recyclability, and even bans on certain plastics or chemical components.

However significant gaps remain, including on whether the treaty will be adopted by consensus or a majority vote.

Other flashpoints include whether plastic production will be addressed, Eirik Lindebjerg, global plastics policy lead at WWF, told AFP.

SYNAGOGUE BLAST

France opens terror probe

AFP, *Montpellier*

An explosion outside a synagogue in southern France wounded a police officer early yesterday, in what authorities said was being treated as a potential terror attack.

Security around Jewish sites was tightened following the early Saturday blast outside the Beth Yaacov synagogue in the seaside resort of La Grande Motte, near the city of Montpellier.

A fire was also started at the entrance of the synagogue, but was quickly put out, with two doors damaged, investigators said.

President Emmanuel Macron called the incident "an act of terror".

Two cars outside the synagogue burst into flames after a gas canister likely exploded inside one of the vehicles, police said. The blast wounded a police officer, police said, without providing any other details.

La Grande Motte's mayor, Stephan Rossignol, said that CCTV had picked up images of an individual setting fire to the cars.

The potential suspect seen in the footage was brandishing a Palestinian flag, a source close to the probe added.

Another source said that the man was carrying two empty bottles and had a Palestinian flag draped around his waist as left the scene on foot.

Zelensky vows more 'retribution' for Russia

Signs anti-Russia laws to mark independence day; rivals exchange 230 prisoners of war

AGENCIES

President Volodymyr Zelensky vowed more "retribution" against Russia on Ukrainian Independence Day yesterday, as Kyiv and Moscow announced the exchange of 230 prisoners just over two weeks into Ukraine's surprise offensive on Kursk.

Zelensky also signed a law banning the Russian-linked branch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and called the legislation a "liberation from Moscow's devils".

Kyiv marked its independence from the Soviet Union at a tense moment in the long war as it mounts a push into Russia and Moscow eyes more east Ukrainian towns.

Zelensky published a video of him standing in a hilly, forested area filmed near from where Ukraine launched its shock incursion on August 6.

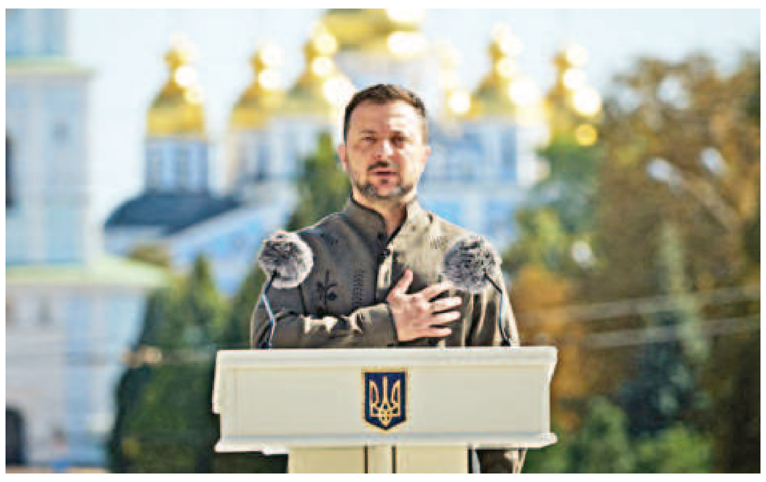
"Russia was seeking one thing: to destroy us... Instead, today we celebrate the 33rd Independence Day of Ukraine and what the enemy brought to our land has now returned to its home," he said.

The Ukrainian leader said Russia will "know what retribution is" and called President Vladimir Putin a "sick man from Red Square who constantly threatens everyone with the red button," referring to nuclear war.

Soon afterwards, Ukraine's military intelligence said it had carried out a "successful" attack on an ammunition depot in Russia's southern Voronezh region.

Zelensky held official independence celebrations on Kyiv's Sofia Square, with Polish President Andrzej Duda and Lithuanian Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte.

In Russia, President Putin held a meeting with army chief Valery Gerasimov with the Kremlin saying they had discussed "countering enemy forces invading the Kursk region and measures being taken to destroy them."



The Kremlin's choice of language was a break from previous statements that downplayed the Ukrainian surprise move.

While it has visibly rattled Moscow, Ukraine's Kursk operation has not slowed Russia's advance in eastern Ukraine.

Kyiv yesterday said that a Russian bombardment in the eastern city of Kostyantynivka had killed five people and Ukraine has carried out evacuations from the hub of Pokrovsk amid fears it will fall.

Both Kyiv and Moscow said they had returned 115 captive servicemen each in a deal brokered by the United Arab Emirates.

Kyiv had said one of the aims of its Kursk operation was to gain more Russian captives to get back its men from Russia. There were widespread reports in Russia of young conscripts going missing in Kursk.

Ukraine yesterday also ratified a statute that paves the way for Ukraine to join the International Criminal Court (ICC).

US sanctions 400 entities for aiding Russia's war

REUTERS, *Washington*

The United States on Friday imposed sanctions on more than 400 entities and individuals for supporting Russia's war effort in Ukraine, the State Department said, including Chinese companies that US officials believe are helping Moscow skirt Western sanctions and build up its military.

Washington has repeatedly warned Beijing over its support for Russia's defense industrial base and has already issued hundreds of sanctions aimed at restricting Moscow's ability to exploit certain technologies for military purposes.

Friday's sanctions include measures against companies in China involved in shipping machine tools and microelectronics to Russia, according to a State Department fact sheet outlining its sanctions against 190 targets.

The US Treasury Department said it was also targeting transnational networks involved in procuring ammunition and other materiel for Russia, helping Russian oligarchs and others evade sanctions and laundering gold for a sanctioned company.

The Biden administration also added 123 entities to its US export control list known as the Entity List which forces suppliers to obtain licenses before shipping to targeted companies. Those added on Friday included 63 entities in Russia and 42 in China, according to a notice published in the Federal Register.

The US Treasury said it was imposing sanctions on several Russian financial technology, securities, real estate lending and other financial firms, but it stopped short of imposing sanctions against foreign banks for aiding transactions that support Russia's war effort.

The Treasury has warned banks since December that continued transactions in Russia's war economy could cut them off from the dollar-based financial system.

The State Department's sanctions include moves aimed at stifling Russia's energy sector and against companies in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Central Asian economies that the US believes are helping Russia evade sanctions, the State Department said.

Targets include the import-export arm of China's Dalian Machine Tool Group, which the State Department said had supplied $4 million of dual-use items to Russian companies.

The Treasury also targeted more than 20 Hong Kong and China-based firms it said were supplying Russia's military industrial base.

The spokesperson for China's embassy in Washington, Liu Pengyu, said Beijing "firmly opposes unilateral sanctions based on 'long-arm jurisdiction'" and added that "normal trade between China and Russia should not be undermined, still less turned into an instrument to smear and contain China."

The latest US sanctions include measures against firms supplying components used in the Orlan drones that Russia is using in Ukraine.

Washington also sought the sanctions to disrupt future energy projects in Russia and its shipment of liquefied natural gas. It targeted Russia's $21 billion Arctic LNG 2 project, which has already been hit by Western sanctions that have curbed its access to ice-class tankers, and other companies involved in future energy projects in Russia, according to the fact sheet.

FESTIVAL KNIFE ATTACK

German police hunt suspect

AFP, *Solingen*

German police yesterday hunted a man who stabbed three people to death and wounded eight others at a street festival in the city of Solingen, with a terror motive for the attack "not excluded".

The knifeman went on a rampage in the western town of Solingen late on Friday, as thousands had gathered for the first night of a "Festival of Diversity", part of a series of events to mark the town's 650th anniversary.

Yesterday, police announced they had detained a person as part of the probe, with a prosecutor later saying it was a 15-year-old who may have been in contact with the knifeman.

"The author (of the attack) has not yet been identified," Markus Caspers, prosecutor of Duesseldorf that lies just west of Solingen, told a press conference.

"We have not been able to identify a motive for now, but in view of all of the circumstances, we are working under the assumption that the initial suspicion of a terrorist motive cannot be excluded," Caspers said.

The people killed were men of 56 and 67 years of age and a 56-year-old woman, officials said.

"The victims were completely unknown with no known ties between them, so based on this we're concluding that it could be a terror act," Caspers said, adding that "no other motive is evident at this time".

Four of the wounded were in a "serious" condition.

Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said Germany's "security authorities are doing everything they can to catch the perpetrator" of the "horrific act", while Chancellor Olaf Scholz said he "must be caught quickly and punished".

A woman kneels at a makeshift memorial of flowers and candles for the victims yesterday close to the scene where at least three people were killed and several injured when a man attacked them with a knife late Friday in Solingen, western Germany, during a festival to mark the city's 650th anniversary.

PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan blast kills two children

Injures 16

REUTERS, *Quetta*

A bomb blast in southwestern Pakistan killed two children and injured 16 people yesterday, police officials said.

Seven policemen were among those injured when the remote-controlled bomb, attached to a motorcycle, detonated near police headquarters in Pishin, the city's senior superintendent of police, Manzoor Buledi, told Reuters.

"Explosives were planted in a motorcycle which was parked in the area," said police officer Mujeeb-Ur-Rehman, adding that the two children killed were passing through the area when the blast occurred.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed deep sorrow and grief over what he called the martyrdom of young children in the explosion. In a statement he expressed condolences to their families.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

An extraordinary flood relief campaign

Let's keep up this culture of volunteerism

An extraordinary example has been set on the Dhaka University (DU) campus over the past three days. Under the leadership of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, DU students have launched a massive relief campaign for the flood-affected people of the country. The campaign, which began on the morning of August 22, is still ongoing, with people from all walks of life—from corporate workers to homemakers, from small children to elderly citizens, from day labourers to rickshaw pullers—contributing whatever they can. While students from DU are working around the clock to collect and organise relief goods, students from other institutions and volunteers have also joined the effort. The nation has not witnessed such a display of compassion and unity in a long time.

Since the start of the student-led mass uprising that led to the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, Bangladesh has witnessed the power and unity of students, as well as the general populace, who have been desperate to bring about real change in the country. Now, as the country faces one of the deadliest floods in its recent history—which has already affected 48 lakh people in 12 districts—our students have once again shown us the way by uniting the entire nation. And it's not just the students of DU—other educational institutions and voluntary organisations across the country have also come forward to help those affected.

Over the past few decades, we have somewhat forgotten the culture of volunteerism that once existed in the country. The last times we witnessed such volunteerism were during the floods of 1988 and 1998, when people from all walks of life came forward to help. After the fall of the Awami League government, when there was virtually no government in the country and the police force was reluctant to perform their duties, we saw how our students managed traffic and safeguarded their localities and places of worship of religious minorities. We must revive this culture of volunteerism and stand by our people during any future crises—whether they be natural disasters or other emergencies.

Reportedly, by the second day of the relief campaign on August 22, around Tk 1.5 crore had been deposited into the relief fund operated by the students at the TSC, which is truly remarkable. While the biggest challenge in any such mass effort is organising the relief goods and utilising the received funds efficiently, it seems that the students are well-organised to do so. To help support the flood victims, we should all step forward to contribute whatever we can from our own positions. We must be prepared to help the them after the water recedes, as they will need more assistance with rehabilitation and livelihood opportunities. And finally, we should continue such volunteerism for the sake of improving our country and for the betterment of all its people.

Prevent a repeat of Rohingya atrocities

International community should play a more active role

We are deeply concerned that the United Nations has stated the Myanmar conflict is becoming so volatile that the atrocities of 2017 may be repeated against the Rohingyas. The UN human rights chief Volker Turk expressed concern on Friday, saying that the situation across Myanmar, particularly in Rakhine, has sharply deteriorated recently. Additionally, reports suggest that hundreds of civilians have been killed while trying to flee the fighting.

Exactly seven years ago today, the second phase of the Rohingya genocide had started. It is estimated that between August 25 and September 24, 2017, at least 6,700 Rohingya were killed. Despite the Myanmar government dismissing these findings as exaggerations, the UN found evidence of widespread human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, summary executions, gang rapes, the arson of Rohingya villages, businesses and schools, among other horrific atrocities. Currently, a case is ongoing at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing Myanmar of abetting genocide against the Rohingya ethnic group.

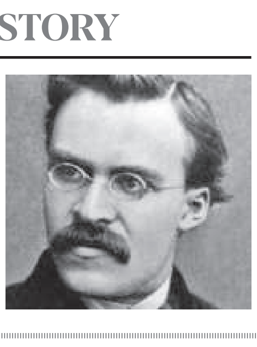
Following the events of 2017, an estimated 750,000 Rohingyas fled from Myanmar into Bangladesh and took shelter in various refugee camps. Despite repeated dialogues between Myanmar and Bangladesh for the safe repatriation of these Rohingyas back to their homeland, we have seen little to no progress made over the years. With clashes between the Arakan Army and Myanmar's ruling junta worsening, the possibility of further destabilisation in the region due to the ongoing situation in Myanmar seems to be rising rapidly.

Reportedly, thousands of Rohingyas have already been forced to flee again on foot, with the Arakan Army herding them repeatedly into locations that offer scant safe haven. Finding themselves trapped between the military and its allies and the Arakan Army, many of them are again looking to cross into Bangladesh. Given that Bangladesh is already overwhelmed with its own issues, as well as struggling to continue providing support to the Rohingya that had earlier sought shelter within its territories, the influx of even more Rohingya into Bangladesh could prove disastrous.

The burden of supporting the Rohingya—on humanitarian grounds, and rightly so—has been massive on Bangladesh. As such, we invite the international community to be more active in solving the Myanmar crisis so that this burden can be lifted and the region can regain some of its lost stability. We hope that every influential member of the international community, including the collective West, China and India, will urgently respond to this call.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Friedrich Nietzsche dies



On this day in 1900, German Classical scholar, philosopher, and critic of culture Friedrich Nietzsche, one of the most influential of all modern thinkers, died at age 55.

Regain the land and regain its soul too

STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING

Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan, *ndc, psc (retd) is a former associate editor of The Daily Star.*

SHAHEDUL ANAM KHAN

We had lost both in the last decade and a half. We belonged to the land, but the land was anything but ours. Those who usurped power over time became like Doctor Faustus, and sold not only the soul for an eternal life but its body too to the devil. Otherwise, how can one be moved to tears at the destruction of a statue but remain impassive and unmoved by the deliberate killings of hundreds of young people? Ambition and greed trumped over ethics and morality, public good was sacrificed for personal aggrandisement, and the country was subordinated to the self. We were ruled, not governed.

The land was not ours because we were deprived of the right to choose our leaders to represent and govern the country. We were not only denied the right to shape our own destiny and determine the trajectory of our progress, but we were also robbed of our right to criticise the usurpers, to question them and hold them accountable.

Imagine for a moment that the people, being the employer—because it is their money that pays for the perks, privileges and all the trappings that go with the VIP tag, from the highest office of the country to the lowest paid peon—had lost their right to question whether their employees were doing their jobs properly and, if necessary, admonish them for dereliction of duty. Various anti-people and anti-democratic laws, such as the Digital Security Act, were enacted through a submissive parliament and validated by a compliant judiciary, hanging over the people like the sword of Damocles. Crossing their defined line meant incarceration, enforced disappearance and, in some cases, death.

So great was the fear infused by the coercive nature of the administration that even the media—the very few that had not surrendered to and become a part of the establishment—exercised such extreme level of self-censorship that it contradicted their primary responsibility of informing the people and holding the establishment to account (my article, "Surrender of the Fourth Estate?," *The Daily Star*, February 27, 2019).

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We now have the opportunity to correct the wrongs that were done over the past 15 years. PHOTO: **STAR**

Can we rightfully claim the land to be ours when emissaries from a so-called friendly country applies "friendly" pressure on an opposition leader unwilling to participate in an election which had zero credibility, urging his participation to lend it validity so that a proxy in Bangladesh could come to power and do their bidding? The result: 15 years of politics without democracy, a parliament with a peculiar and unique arrangement where the opposition was also a part of the government and where laws were enacted by trampling on the people's interests.

Can we claim the land to be ours when the state abdicates its bounden duty to ensure safety and security of individuals and groups? Dissenting voices were silenced through enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings and stage-managed encounters with the same narratives. Government agencies' operatives, in plain clothes, were on overdrive, picking up people without even adhering to legal norms. The agency that was supposed to provide security to the people became the cause of their insecurity (my article, "When state becomes the cause of its own insecurity," *The Daily Star*, July 22, 2010).

How can we claim the land to be ours when our strategic assets are frittered away to meet the so-called security concerns and geo-strategic and economic interest of a big neighbour? I don't recall any bilateral agreement or treaty in the last 15 years being ratified by Parliament. National interest was sacrificed at the altar of partisan interests. The comments and actions of some advisers to the prime minister made one wonder whether they were appointed to uphold the interests of the nation or the neighbour (my article, "What have we done with our strategic assets?," *The Daily Star*, August 16, 2022).

Children of the victims of enforced disappearances hold their photos at a rally in front of the National Museum in Dhaka, May 28, 2022. PHOTO: **STAR**

The country lost its soul too. And it began with the commercialisation of the most revered and sanctified part of our history the Liberation War, and with it the name of Sheikh Mujib—the two were commercially and politically overused. And what excesses were done in their names!

A wedge was driven that divided the people into various camps, into "we" and "they." And it was done successfully. The people were asked to think in binary terms—to choose between their faith and their ethnic identity, defying the underlying essential truth that the two were not mutually exclusive, and that one can exist with multiple identities.

We lost our soul when the constitution was ravished by the combined effort of a warped parliament and judiciary—the greatest harm done to the country's democracy by a dissolute chief justice whose fealty to the party in power borders on criminality.

The ultimate damage to the soul was inflicted by corrupting the judicial system. This is to be expected when the chief justice is forced out of office at the point of a gun for a verdict that did not sit well with the party in power, as it obstructed their efforts to exert control over the judiciary.

What kind of soul resides in a body that allows wrongful confinement for indefinite periods, or endures the complicity of the judiciary and law enforcing agencies in scuttling the investigation and trial of the gruesome murder of a journalist couple, allegedly killed for possessing information related to people close to power who would have exposed their anti-state activities (my article, "The long road since 48 hours," *The Daily Star*, February 14, 2023), or that of a young soul from Narayanganj killed by a member of a family belonging to the ruling party?

A raft of issues needs addressing. Admittedly, each requires separate treatment. We must start by assessing the loopholes in the system and how they have been exploited to corrupt it.

The guiding document—our constitution—should be the first focus for the current regime. We cannot have elected representatives turn into autocrats. Mere elections do not make a country democratic. We want democracy not just every five years, but every day of our lives. The past administration was essentially a one-woman show. This must be prevented by adding appropriate provisions to the constitution. Remember, Hitler was also popularly elected. Politics must be spared from becoming a family affair (my articles in *The Daily Star*, "Democracy means more than the ability to vote" and "Who killed democracy in Bangladesh?"). Only the people are sovereign. As a corporate entity, they are beyond question.

The judiciary should be separated from the administration, and the Election Commission delinked from the administration.

The police should be recast, more than notionally like bringing changes in the dress, but by implementing the measures recommended in the Draft Police Ordinance 2009. Their operational procedures, arms and accoutrements should be revamped. In a civilised society, we cannot afford for the police to become the armed wing of the party in power, the kind we suffered over the last 15 years (my articles in *The Daily Star*, "Can citizens' expectations from the police be met?" and "Who will guard the guards?").

Lastly, among internal issues, the duties and terms of reference for intelligence agencies should be revisited immediately. Over the past 15 years, it seems that these agencies, instead of ensuring state security and countering hostile intelligence, focused on securing the future of a political party. The Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, in particular, requires special attention (my article, "DGFI's Lakshman Rekha," *The Daily Star*, February 9, 2012).

As for our external relationships, we need to revisit all bilateral agreements and treaties to assess the benefits the country would draw from those. Otherwise, we ought to recast them in a manner and form that enhances our national interest. It was as if we were the Sindbad with the proverbial old man who would never get off our shoulders. We need to cast that old man off our shoulders.

The country can be regained by pursuing a robust and dynamic foreign policy where bilateral and multilateral relationship will be based on sovereign equality. Our foreign policy should be driven by our national security and interests, independent of another country's diktat, and should be designed to enhance our diplomatic manoeuvrability rather than be constrained by neighbouring demands. Treaties and agreements should be mutually beneficial.

Only when we are able to establish an egalitarian and pluralistic society—where the constitution will be respected by adherence to it and not by its violation, where the people will be governed by the rule of law, wherever it stems from, and not of men, when a person's qualities will be the prime consideration for his advancement and not his family connections, where the son or grandson will not have to bear his fathers or grandfather's cross, where people will be free to practice his creed without apologising for it and where people can coexist with multiple identities—will we be able to regain the nation's soul. This can be achieved by a new crop of leadership that builds bridges rather than divides the nation and is inclusive in their dealings. I believe it is time to pass on the baton.

I believe the student revolution was an outburst against the wrongs done to the people and the country. We now have the opportunity to correct those wrongs. Failure is not an option.

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ROHINGYA GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY

Rohingya refugees need sustainable solutions

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SK TAWFIQUE M HAQUE, ISHRAT ZAKIA SULTANA *and* **SM MASHRUR ARAFIN AYON**

In 2017, the genocide in Myanmar drove Rashid and many other Rohingya into Bangladesh to escape ceaseless persecution by the military. In Bangladesh, he had wanted to pursue his education but learned about government restrictions on Rohingya's access to education. Then he desperately looked for a job but failed to get one. Finally, he became a member of a criminal syndicate and got arrested.

Rashid is just one example of many such tragic stories among the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Being deprived of education and employment opportunities, many youngsters from that community have adopted a dark path where they get engaged in various kinds of illegal activities, including drug trafficking, smuggling, and the likes.

Unlike Rashid, Nadia, a young Rohingya woman, had a graduate degree from her home country Myanmar, but failed to get a job or study further in Bangladesh. Passing months with no work and earning, she finally became involved in the illegal sex work in Cox's Bazar.

When Bangladesh opened its borders to the Rohingya in 2017, the world applauded its humanitarian gesture. But over time, the burden of hosting 971,904 Rohingya, according to a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) report, has come to weigh upon the resources and patience of the host country. What started as a temporary refuge turned into a prolonged stay with no end in sight. As a result, the initial hospitality of the local people, eventually switched to hostility toward the Rohingya. According to a 2023 report by Human Rights Watch (HRW), there are emerging signs of growing anti-Rohingya sentiment. One of the key reasons is the increase in the unemployment rate and decrease in wages in the area. Manual labourers in Cox's Bazar typically earn a meagre Tk 100-150 per day (around $3), but illegal Rohingya workers, who accept wages as low as Tk 60-80, further drive down the already depressed market rates. This is a major concern and a potential marker for instability in the local labour market in Cox's Bazar.

Research shows that most Rohingya are willing to return home, but only under conditions of safety, through voluntary repatriation, and with dignity. These conditions are, however, yet to be met in their home country. The situation in Myanmar is so grim that the Arakan Army (AA) is still fighting with the beleaguered junta to ensure its own cut of the spoils in Rakhine State. Recent events, including an August 2024 attack allegedly carried out by the AA against Rohingya civilians trying to flee across the Naf River, illustrate the risks still awaiting returnees. In the recent heinous attack, over 200 Rohingya, including women, children, and the elderly, were mowed down in a single day.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Deprived of education and formal jobs, the new generation of Rohingya is at risk of becoming enmeshed in criminal activities.

Efforts to resolve the crisis through repatriation have repeatedly failed. One example is the 2017 accord between Myanmar and Bangladesh, which would have seen the repatriation of the first group of Rohingya refugees by November 2018, but never took off. Subsequent efforts met the same fate, including an attempt backed by China in 2019. The unresolved issue of citizenship—a basic right that the Rohingya have been denied for generations—was a reason. Efforts to resolve the issue took another step back when, at the beginning of 2021, the military in Myanmar carried out a coup, turning hopes of an amicable and early solution all the more distant for the Rohingya.

The political landscape in Myanmar remains volatile. The junta has already been weakened by internal dissent and the withdrawal of support by the Bamar majority. It now faces increased challenges from the Three Brotherhood Alliance, including AA, that controls much of Rakhine State, once the home of the Rohingya before their displacement. Besides, the ethnic armed organisations have also been emboldened recently through the support of the National Unity Government. The complexities of negotiating with a fragmented and conflict-ridden state raise serious doubts about the feasibility of repatriation in the near future.

While the latter fact complicates many education plans and means to sustain lives already traumatised by experiences in Myanmar, 52 percent of the Rohingya population in Bangladesh are children aged between 0 to 17 years and 44 percent are between the ages of 18 to 59 years, according to a 2024 joint report by UNHCR and Bangladesh. Deprived of education and formal jobs, this new generation is practically on the fast track to becoming enmeshed in criminal activities—therefore perpetuating a poverty and violence cycle.

Migration experts very often observe that the average length of time it takes for a refugee community to find a permanent solution is 17 years. It has already been seven long years since 2017 and another decade is in the offing for the Rohingya in Bangladesh. For the first wave of the 1978 displaced Rohingya, however, the wait has been agonisingly long. Now that there is no sign of repatriation, it is crystal clear that keeping the Rohingya idle is not sustainable and also unfair toward this unfortunate community. Many youths like Rashid and Nadia pay a huge price for this.

Given this impasse, three possible ways of proceeding emerge, each fraught with its own set of difficulties. The first is accepting the existing situation. If the present status quo is maintained, that would only mean that Bangladesh will remain dependent on the foreign aid that have already started drying up. One of the key reasons for the decrease in foreign funding is the shift of international attention to the crises in Ukraine and Israel-Palestine. Such alternation of donors' attention may lead to a worse scenario in the camp management because Bangladesh is fully dependent on the foreign aid to run the Rohingya programme. The second can be drawing support from the international community. Until now, Bangladesh has failed to demonstrate its diplomatic strength on the Rohingya issue. As a result, the permanent members of the UN Security Council and regional powers like India, and other countries have remained quiet on the issue of Rohingya repatriation. Earlier initiatives have demonstrated the inadequacies of Bangladeshi diplomatic strategies. So, it is unlikely that this option will be useful in resolving the crisis. The last option can be the economic integration of the Rohingya refugees, albeit without granting them citizenship. They should be tapped for vocational training and job prospects. BRAC has already initiated some steps in the agricultural sectors through NGOs. Institutionalisation of these efforts through special economic zones is expected to create sustainable livelihoods and also contribute toward the country's economy. In this regard, experiences from the German economy on successful inclusion of Syrian refugees are particularly recommended. Most Syrian refugees were provided with temporary protection that enabled them to access health services, education, and work permits within certain regions. Bangladesh can look at this approach and consider providing skill development training to Rohingya men and women. Kay Kraft, a Bangladeshi fashion house, has already started such an initiative at Bhasan Char. Although small in scale, such projects can be replicated in creating job opportunities in Cox's Bazar.

But the third option remains fraught with risks, too. On the one hand, economic integration might expose the Rohingya to Bangladeshi society to a great extent and may pose a serious challenge to social harmony and our national identity. In this view, strong safety measures can be applied. On the other, the world community, especially Myanmar, may get the wrong signal that, in response to genocide committed by Myanmar, Bangladesh has decided to assimilate the Rohingya with the Bangladeshi people forever.

Engaging with Rohingya researchers and the diaspora is important so that the devised strategies do not backfire. Given these complexities, there might not currently exist a solution to the crisis. Bangladesh has never agreed to grant citizenship to the Rohingya, and third-country resettlement is a very uncertain and highly limited option. Any durable solution could only result from careful planning, international collaboration, and adapting solutions according to the way circumstances keep changing.

So, let's remember—on this Rohingya Genocide Remembrance Day—Rohingya youth like Rashid and Nadia, who became victims of exploitation and despair because of the unavailability of options to study and work and make a decent living.

On this day, let us reflect on the possible ways in which we can stand by the Rohingya, demonstrate humanity again, and thus save Cox's Bazar economy too.

Names of the individuals mentioned in the article have been changed for privacy reasons.

CREATION OF THE NEW POLITICAL ORDER

Rebuilding ship in an open and turbulent sea

Dr Mirza Hassan *is based at Brac Institute of Governance and Development, Brac University. He can be reached at mirzahass@gmail.com*

MIRZA HASSAN

The *chatra-janata* led mass insurrection has provided us with a historic opportunity to reimagine and reconstitute existing relations between the state and society. The students are now demanding state reform, which is very timely and necessary. But, I believe, we ought to demand more than that. The people, I would argue, need to demand reform of the existing state-society relations as well. The desires and dreams of the youth will never be realised unless we substantively reform existing institutions and create one to govern and mediate relations between the state and society. In place of the hollowed out and purely procedural forms of representative democracy that were practiced by past regimes, we require a more substantive, direct, and deliberative democracy.

The past Awami League regime completely undermined the forms of accountability and checks and balances that characterise a liberal and representative democracy. Since 2014, elections have totally lost effectiveness as a form of direct accountability. Further, the past 15 years of progressively quasi-totalitarian rule by the AL has completely undermined intermediary institutions through which citizens indirectly hold the state accountable—such as parliamentary accountability committees, the judiciary, and the press.

My fundamental concern is about how to make reforms irreversible. This concern stems from the bitter lesson that we learned from the experiences of reforms implemented by the 2007-8 caretaker regime. The caretaker government passed close to 100 acts, ordinances, and laws,and created new institutions which were wiped out within a few weeks by the newly-elected AL government in 2009. The ones retained were captured by party members or hollowed out from within. How do we guarantee that the future ruling party will not do the same?

To address this question, we need to reimagine and reconstitute the state-society relations in two domains: i) representative democracy; and ii) state-society accountability relations. First, we need to re-conceptualise and broaden our definition of democracy. Democracy in Bangladesh has meant representative democracy with a de facto emphasis on its procedures, known as the procedural form of democracy. This form of democracy is in danger of being reduced to pure procedure, without any substance—for example, the rigged elections held by the previous regime. Instead of a hollow procedural democracy, we require a more substantive democracy that emphasises democratic inclusivity and equality and through which we can claim real ownership over the republic, as is proclaimed in the constitution.

We need to imagine more *direct* forms of citizen engagement, such as periodic referendums and deliberative forums that are discussion-based and non-majoritarian. These forms of direct, deliberative, and substantive democracy will prevent the formation of monopolistic "party-archies" (whereby political parties dominate the political process and civil society), the syndrome of winner-take-all politics, and the resurgence of a dominant party-state (in which, one party calls the shot).

VISUAL: ALIZA RAHMAN

There have been discussions of reforms in the electoral system, such as bi-cameral parliament, proportional representation, and elimination of Article 70 (that deters floor crossing by the parliament members). To these proposals, I would add another more direct democratic option for citizens—the power of constituents to recall their representatives if they are not happy with their performances.

To me, the most critical concern is to guard the guardian, that is to prevent political party elites from capturing accountability institutions. As our past experience shows, the conventional checks and balances imposed by a division of the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches are prone to capture by ruling political elites. The news media, another potential check, can also be captured or subdued. To prevent capture, we need multi-level checks and balances involving multiple stakeholders.

Fundamental institutions and policies should be protected with complex checks and balances mechanisms whereby citizens can exercise veto power at multiple points. Examples of such mechanisms currently under discussion include citizens' commissions for police, banking, education etc., composed of a combination of citizens and state officials.

Beyond such commissions, we need purely societal-based regulatory mechanisms (consisting of citizen members only), for which we have no precedents in Bangladesh. But this is exactly what we need to build to safeguard the achievements of the student movement and to ensure that the reforms remain irreversible in the future.

Such mechanisms would constitute the basis for a *dual power* and *permanent revolution*, whereby citizens can maintain a continuous check on state institutions. Our dual power has to be based on a liberal constitutional framework since our context for such innovation is a liberal democratic revolution. These societal based checks and balances with multiple stakeholders and veto points must be endorsed by the constitution—whether a new or highly modified one. Constitutional experts can help with the design.

Such mechanisms, we can call these "Citizens' Committees," may be domain-specific (for example, for education and health sector and police administration) as well as on the basis of administrative tiers (district, upazila, and union parishad). We must understand that, to contain a potential counter revolution, street-based countervailing power, akin to a Maoist cultural revolution, has its limits. We observed, recently, how such power prevented the possibility of a "judicial coup." But over time, these types of pressure tactics will alienate people and there is a potential danger that the revolutionary student leadership might exhaust its current popular legitimacy. There is also a risk that multiple accountability mechanisms might contribute to institutional and policy sclerosis but, I believe, we will learn to remedy such problems with trials and errors.

Given our long history of dictatorship and illiberalism, and political elites' strong incentives to govern through a de facto structure of authoritarian dominant party-state and their loathing for uncertainty inherent in electoral democracy, the utmost necessity is to keep political elites in a narrow corridor by balancing the powers of both state and society. For all these, time is of the essence. The title of this piece—rebuilding the ship in the open and turbulent sea—alludes to a high-risk period for reforming state-society relations, whereby actors, who have lot to lose from these, will be eager to sabotage the process. The ship must not sink.

Reimagining and reconstituting electoral democracy and establishing and sustaining dual power thus keeping the political elites in a narrow corridor—deserve our greatest attention. The rare opportunity that the democratic revolution has presented to us must not be missed.

WHO invites vaccine manufacturers to apply for emergency use listing amid growing mpox outbreak

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General announced on 7 August 2024 that he had triggered the process for Expression of Interest for Emergency Use Listing (EUL) of mpox vaccines given worrying trends in the disease's spread. There is a serious and growing outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) that has now expanded outside the country. A new viral strain, which first emerged in September 2023, has for the first time been detected outside DRC.

The EUL procedure is an emergency use authorisation process, specifically developed to expedite the availability of unlicensed medical products like vaccines that are needed in public health emergency situations. This is a time-limited recommendation based on a risk-benefit approach.

WHO is requesting manufacturers to submit data to ensure that the vaccines are safe, effective, of assured quality, and suitable for the target populations.

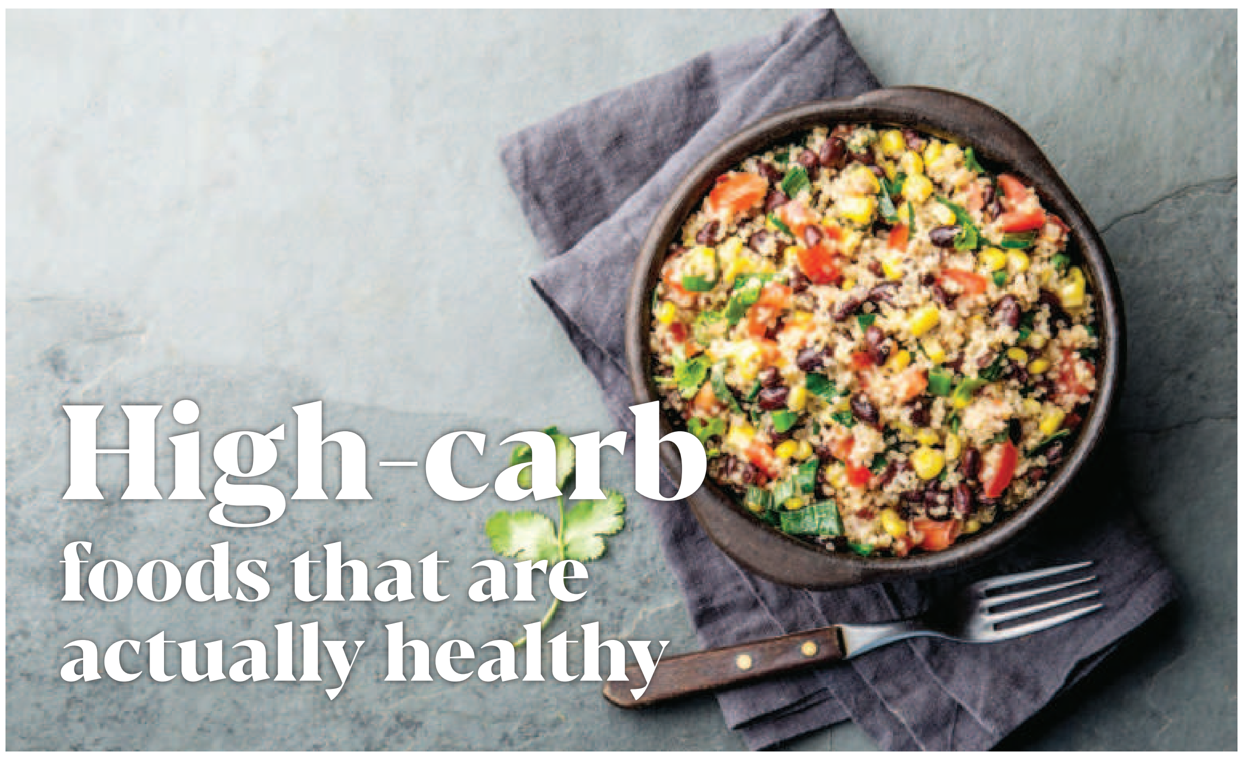
MONKEYPOX
VACCINE

Granting of an EUL will accelerate vaccine access, particularly for those lower-income countries that have not yet issued their own national regulatory approval. The EUL also enables partners, including Gavi and UNICEF, to procure vaccines for distribution.

Mpox is a viral illness caused by the monkeypox virus, a species of the genus Orthopoxvirus. Mpox can be transmitted to humans through physical contact with someone who is infectious, with contaminated materials, or with infected animals.

There are currently two vaccines in use against the disease, both of which have been recommended for use by the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation, or SAGE.

Source: *World Health Organisation*



High-carb foods that are actually healthy

STAR HEALTH DESK

Carbohydrates have had a rough go of it in recent years, often being blamed for everything from weight gain to type 2 diabetes. But not all carbs are created equal. While processed foods high in sugar and refined grains can be unhealthy, many nutrient-dense, fibre-rich foods are packed with healthy carbs that are good for you.

Oats: Oats are carb-rich food that deserves a place in your diet. A cup of raw oats contains 54 grammes of carbs, but it also packs in 8 grammes of fibre, including a special type called oat beta-glucan. This fibre is known to lower cholesterol levels, reduce the risk of heart disease, and improve blood sugar levels. Oats are also surprisingly high in protein, making them a great option for breakfast or a snack that keeps you full and satisfied.

Bananas: Bananas are a staple in many diets, and for good reason. One large banana contains about 31 grammes of carbs, primarily in the form of starches and sugars. Bananas are also high in potassium, vitamins B6 and C, and beneficial plant compounds. They are particularly good for heart health, thanks to their potassium content, and less ripe bananas contain resistant starch and pectin, which support digestive health.

Sweet potatoes: Sweet potatoes are a delicious and nutritious root vegetable, rich in carbs and packed with vitamins A and C, potassium, and antioxidants. A half-cup serving of mashed sweet potatoes contains about 20.7 grammes of carbs. The antioxidants in sweet potatoes help protect your cells from damage, reducing the risk of chronic diseases. Plus, their fibre content can aid in weight management by keeping you feeling full longer.

Oranges: Oranges are not only refreshing but also nutritious. These citrus fruits contain about 15.5 grammes of carbs per 100 grammes and are a great source of r. Oranges are particularly high in vitamin C, potassium, and several B vitamins. They also contain citric acid and antioxidants, which can boost heart health, prevent kidney stones, and enhance iron absorption from other foods, helping to prevent anaemia.

Apples: Apples are a beloved fruit with a sweet-tart flavour and crisp texture. Depending on the variety, apples generally contain 14–16 grammes of carbs per 100 gms. They are a good source of vitamin C, fibre, and antioxidants. Eating apples has been linked to better blood sugar management and heart health, and early research suggests they may even reduce the risk of certain types of cancer.

Kidney beans: Kidney beans are a legume rich in protein, carbs, and fiber. A 100-gramme serving of cooked kidney beans contains about 21.5 grammes of carbs. They are also packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, including anthocyanins and isoflavones. Kidney beans have been shown to help regulate blood sugar and may reduce the risk of colon cancer.

Chickpeas: Chickpeas, also known as garbanzo beans, are another legume high in carbs and fiber. A 100-gramme serving of cooked chickpeas contains 27.4 grammes of carbs, and nearly 8 grammes of chickpeas are also a great source of plant-based protein, iron, and B vitamins. They have been linked to improved heart and digestive health, and some studies suggest they may help protect against certain types of cancer.

Not all carbs are bad. In fact, many of the healthiest foods are high in carbohydrates. While refined carbs like white bread and pasta may not be the best choice, these nutritious, high-carb foods can be part of a healthy, balanced diet.

So, the next time you are planning a meal, consider adding some of these healthy carbs to your plate. Your body will thank you!

EVERYDAY CARCINOGENS

What you need to know to stay safe

Carcinogens are substances that can cause cancer, and they are more common than you might think. They can be found in the air we breathe, the products we use, and even the foods we eat. But just because you come into contact with a carcinogen does not mean you will automatically get cancer. It depends on how much you are exposed to and your genetic makeup.

One of the most well-known carcinogens is tobacco. Whether you are smoking or inhaling secondhand smoke, tobacco contains at least 70 chemicals that can damage your DNA and lead to cancer. Even smokeless tobacco is not safe.

Radon, a naturally occurring gas, becomes dangerous when it accumulates indoors. It is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers, and since you can not see or smell it, testing your home is essential.

Then there is asbestos, once commonly used in building materials. If its tiny fibres become airborne and are inhaled, they can lodge in your lungs and cause serious health problems, including cancer.

Even foods can be risky. Crispy, browned foods like roasted potatoes can release acrylamide, a chemical that has been linked to cancer in animals. Limiting these foods might help reduce your risk.

Other everyday carcinogens include formaldehyde in household products, ultraviolet rays from the sun or tanning beds, alcohol, processed meats, engine exhaust, and polluted air.

Understanding these risks and making small changes in your daily routine can help you protect your health and reduce your exposure to these common carcinogens.

Occupational therapy for bullet injury

RABEYA FERDOUS

Many students and normal people experienced gunshot injuries in recent times in Bangladesh. This injury hampered their life very significantly.

A gunshot wound is a penetrating injury caused by a projectile from a gun. Damage may include bleeding, bone fractures, organ damage, wound infection, and loss of the ability to move parts of the body. In severe cases, death may occur.

There are numerus conditions that may arise after gunshot injuries. These include soft tissue injury, muscle injury, nerve injury, vascular injury/haemorrhage, bone injury, pain, spinal cord injury, amputation.

After a gunshot, the patient faces different long-term complications. These are joint contracture, myofascial, chronic, or neuropathic pain, complex regional pain syndrome, central sensitisation, mental health issues, including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, or depression, difficulty to participate in daily activities, etc.

Occupational therapy has a significant role in rehabilitating bullet-injured patients. Occupational therapists help to train up on re-performing daily activities and facilitate community reintegration. An occupational therapist uses specific activities to limit the effects of disability and promote independence in all aspects of daily life.

Mainly, occupational therapists use the following stage during therapy sessions:

1. Upon receiving a referral, the first step involves conducting a thorough assessment of the situation or condition.

2. Following the assessment, the next phase is identifying the specific problem or problems that need to be addressed.

3. With the problem identified, a detailed treatment plan is then developed to guide the approach to care.

4. The treatment plan is then implemented, with the necessary interventions and actions being carried out.

Finally, the effectiveness of the treatment is evaluated to determine whether the desired outcomes have been achieved.

According to patients' conditions, treatment may vary. Overall, the occupational therapist provides the following therapy:

- Functional Range of Motion (ROM) exercises
- Functional strengthening exercise
- Practice Activities of Daily Living (ADL) like dressing, grooming, brushing, combing hair, etc.
- Functional balance training
- Memory training
- Carer and family training
- Writting practice
- Learn energy conservation techniques.
- Fall prevention
- Ergonomically home, office, or classroom modification
- Provide an assistive device or splinting.
- Stress management
- Social skills training

A person may suffer from any type of disability after a gunshot injury. Students face different challenges to continue their study. In this situation, the occupational therapist can help to make him/her independent from their study-related or other daily task activities. Occupational therapy focusses on functional performance and occupational engagement—staying in school, keeping a job, and maintaining relationships.

The writer is an occupational therapist at the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospitals (NINS&H). Email: rabeya1988@gmail.com

A new hope for spinal cord injury patients

Predicting recovery from a cervical spine injury has always been a tough challenge, often leaving patients and their families in uncertainty. However, a recent study may have discovered a key to more accurate forecasts: preserved spinal tissue bridges, which are intact neural tissue near the injury site.

The Lancet published a groundbreaking study that spanned three countries and included 227 patients with spinal cord injuries (SCI) at the C1–C7 vertebrae, revealing these tissue bridges as a powerful predictor of sensory motor recovery. The research team conducted imaging assessments a few weeks after the injury, followed by neurological check-ups at 3 months and, for most patients, at 12 months.

The results are promising. For every millimetre of preserved tissue bridge, patients saw significant improvements in their ability to move and sense touch. A tissue bridge width of 2.0 mm or more was linked to better recovery at 3 months, while a width of 4.0 mm was particularly telling for long-term improvement.

These findings could transform the way doctors and therapists approach spinal cord injuries, offering a new tool to guide treatment and give patients a clearer picture of their recovery journey. As researchers continue to explore this exciting development, the future looks brighter for those facing the daunting road to recovery after a spinal cord injury.

Is Bangladesh ready to face the hit of Mpox?

GOURI BASAK PAROMA

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified the Mpox epidemic a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on August 14, 2024, prompting governments throughout the world to reevaluate their readiness. Bangladesh, a highly populated South Asian country, is at a critical juncture as the new, more transmissible Clade 1b type of Mpox spreads fast throughout Africa and beyond, prompting a thorough assessment of its preparedness to face this possible calamity.

The global health community is on high alert following the discovery of the Clade 1b form, which appears to spread more easily through sexual networks, adding a new dimension to the issue. Mpox mostly infects people and animals. It is in the same viral family as smallpox, although the symptoms are milder, such as fever, chills, and body pains. However, it has the potential to cause serious disease and even death in certain circumstances.

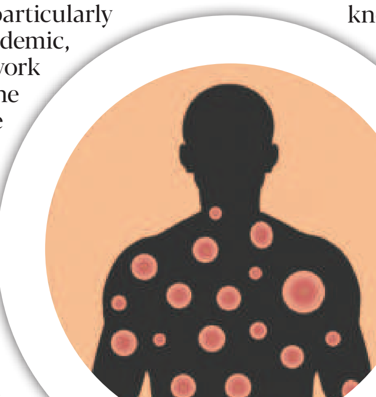
Bangladesh's previous experience with health emergencies, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic, serves as a framework for its response to the Mpox danger. Despite being pressured, the country's public health system has demonstrated resilience and adaptation in recent years. However, the distinct properties of mpox and its novel version need a custom response plan. Early detection and surveillance are one of the most significant difficulties Bangladesh confronts.

Dhaka airport has implemented a system to handle passengers with Mpox symptoms, in response to the World Health Organisation's global public health alert. The airport is providing leaflets, and arrival health desks are staffed by doctors 24/7. Passengers' temperature is screened using thermal scanner archways, and those with symptoms will be sent to designated hospitals via ambulance if necessary. The airport's health team recommends avoiding close contact with suspected or confirmed cases, wearing medical masks, avoiding skin-to-skin contact, using disposable gloves, and regularly cleaning hands with soap or alcohol-based hand rubs.

Health authorities need to set up a strong surveillance system, evaluate its laboratory's competence, and promptly train healthcare professionals about mpox symptoms and diagnostic procedures. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh made progress in strengthening its diagnostic capacities; nonetheless, testing for Mpox necessitates specialised knowledge and equipment. In order to upgrade facilities, the nation must evaluate its present laboratory infrastructure and look for outside assistance. Two worldwide Mpox vaccines are still not widely available in Bangladesh, and in order to obtain vaccination doses, the health ministry must work with foreign groups. It is important to have a well-defined vaccine priority plan that targets high-risk populations and healthcare workers.

Bangladesh is getting ready for a possible epidemic of Mpox by concentrating on producing necessary drugs and vaccinations locally. To investigate these options, the government should communicate with pharmaceutical corporations. In order to share resources, knowledge, and best practices for mpox preparedness and response, regional cooperation—especially within the context of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)—may be indispensable. Bangladesh has significant expertise and assets at its disposal, such as its handling of prior medical crises. However, Mpox and its new variant's distinct qualities necessitate a customised, all-encompassing strategy. Early planning, vigilant monitoring, strong public relations, and multinational collaboration are essential for success.

By taking proactive steps now, Bangladesh can strengthen its resilience against Mpox and other potential health emergencies. As the global health landscape evolves, Bangladesh's ability to adapt and respond effectively will be crucial for protecting its population and contributing to global health security. Continuous assessment, adaptation, and collaboration will be essential in navigating this new chapter in global public health.



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What to WATCH

T SPORTS AND GTV
Pakistan vs Bangladesh
1stTest, Day 5
Live from 11:00 am

SONY SPORTS 5
England vs Sri Lanka
1stTest, Day 5
Live from 4:00 pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
Premier League
Wolves vs Chelsea
Live from 7:00 pm
Liverpool vs Brentford
Live from 9:30 pm

Magnificent MUSHY

- Playing his first Test in Pakistan, Bangladesh's Mushfiqur Rahim fell just nine runs short of what would have been his fourth Test double hundred.
- Mushfiqur got to his **11**th Test ton on way to scoring **191** off **341** deliveries. In terms of most Test centuries by any Bangladesh cricketer, Mushfiqur remains just behind Mominul Haque who has **12**.
- This was also Mushfiqur's fifth Test ton away from home -- most by any Bangladesh player, surpassing Tamim Iqbal who has scored four centuries overseas.
- Mushfiqur overtook Tamim as Bangladesh's leading scorer in away Tests, taking his run tally to **2381**. He overtook Tamim, who has **2329** runs in **59** innings.
- This was also the **37**-year-old batter's **68**th innings in away Tests, more than any other player in Bangladesh.

SHORIFUL
47
TRAN
GROUP
TPT

After Mushfiqur Rahim and Mehedi Hasan Miraz [bottom] helped Bangladesh dominate proceedings for the most part, the Tigers also finished the fourth day of their first Test against Pakistan on a high in Rawalpindi yesterday. Pacer Shoriful Islam removed Pakistan opener Saim Ayub to leave the hosts at 23 for one, still trailing by 94 runs. PHOTO: AFP

Decision on Shakib expected after first Test: Faruque

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Faruque Ahmed informed the board will make a stance regarding a murder case filed against Shakib Al Hasan following the conclusion of the ongoing first Test between Bangladesh and Pakistan.

"The good news is that we finished the fourth day well... I don't think we have considered taking any stance on this matter at the moment," Faruque told reporters yesterday in Mirpur after an unofficial meeting with a few board directors at BCB office.

On Thursday, a case was filed with Adabar Police Station accusing Shakib, along with former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Obaidul Quader, 156 named individuals, and 400-500 unidentified people, of involvement in the killing of garment worker Mohammad Rubel.

Amid such a situation, on Saturday, a legal notice was sent to BCB by a Supreme Court lawyer, asking the BCB to bring Shakib back to the country for a proper investigation into the murder case.

However, the newly elected BCB boss denied receiving such a notice until Saturday.

"We are yet to receive the legal notice. I can't comment on that. A case has been filed, an FIR to be specific. There will be an investigation, and then it will proceed in some direction.

"We may tell you about the legal notice [after the end of first Test] as we expect to get it by this time," Faruque said, further informing that they are working on reforming the current standing committees; including cricket operations, which became vacant after the resignation of Jalal Yunus.

Meanwhile, Faruque said that they have decided to donate Tk one crore to the Chief Adviser's relief fund and send 3,000 packets of dry food and other necessary items through the Bangladesh Army to flood-affected people.

Wickets in first hour vital: Miraz

SPORTS REPORTER

All-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz said that a fiery first hour from the Bangladesh bowlers on Day 5 of the first Test against Pakistan in Rawalpindi can create an unlikely opening for the Tigers in a contest that seemingly is heading towards a draw.

Bangladesh pacer Shoriful Islam reaped the rewards during a sizzling spell in the last hour of play when he dismissed Pakistan opener Saim Ayub (1) and had the duo of Abdullah Shafique and Shan Masood guessing as the hosts finished the day at 27 for one, still trailing by 94 runs after bundling out the Tigers for 565 earlier.

From the other end, Hasan Mahmud provided adept support with strict line and lengths which boosted confidence in the Tigers' camp to make use of the morning session which should indicate if the Test will see a result other than a draw.

"Our bowlers will have a great chance in the first hour. If we bowl well in the first hour, we will be in a good position," Miraz told reporters after the day's play.

"We have a great chance tomorrow. If we get a few wickets in the first hour, we will get a chance to win. The bowlers need to bowl in good areas. I was fielding at slips and it felt really good to see the way they bowled in the last hour."

Throughout the four days, it has been a challenge for the bowlers to stamp their authority on a Rawalpindi wicket which has maintained the tradition of being a batters' paradise. While pacers have fared better than spinners at the venue, spinners will have a role to play, largely in providing breathers to the quicks in between spells. They can also hope to make use of the turn the Day 5 pitch may provide.

Miraz attested to the visibility of cracks on the surface and will look to do the job with the ball after an impressive 77 with the bat.

"The wicket looks good right now. There are a few cracks and there is a little bit of spin as well," Miraz said.

Earlier, Mushfiqur Rahim stood tall with the bat after the Tigers were reduced to 218 for five on Day 3. The 37-year-old starred with a 191-run knock but fell short of his fourth double century. He stitched a 114-run stand with Liton Das (56) and set a Bangladesh record with a 196-run seventh-wicket stand with Miraz to propel the Tigers to 565.

"We're really happy because we've scored 500 runs after a long time. We had a good partnership. The credit goes to him [Mushfiqur]. He kept supporting me and told me to keep going as it was an excellent wicket," Miraz said.

'Hamza will be a great addition'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh coach Javier Cabrera is looking forward to Leicester City's Hamza Choudhury as a 'great addition for the team' after the midfielder received his Bangladesh passport and sent a letter to the Bangladesh Football Federation expressing his desire to represent the Red and Greens.

During a press briefing on Saturday, BFF general secretary Emran Hossain Tushar informed that Hamza's parents collected his passport from the Bangladesh High Commission in London on Friday and the footballer has also sent a letter to the BFF, wishing to play for Bangladesh.

Speaking on the issue, Cabrera praised the England-born midfielder for his leadership quality as well as his technical ability.

"He (Hamza) will be a great addition for the team, not only for his quality – what he can provide because of his quality as he is definitely a very top-level player – but I think he can provide a lot of things off the pitch as a leader with his experience in the Premier League at the top-flight," Cabrera said of his impression about the 26-year-old footballer.

"He has also played for all the youth teams of England. So I think he'll definitely be a very good example off the pitch and he will definitely be a great addition. Hopefully he will be with us very soon," hoped the Spaniard.

Emran, meanwhile, informed that the federation has already asked for an NOC from the English FA regarding the player's availability for Bangladesh, and once it gets the NOC, the certificate will be forwarded to FIFA's players' status committee for approval.

Meanwhile, Cabrera called up 14 players for next month's two-match FIFA friendly series away to Bhutan, with the rest to be called up later.

Cabrera informed that these 14 players will be joined by the players of the Bashundhara Kings as well as a few from the U-20 team, which is currently in Nepal for the SAFF U-20 Championship. The 14 players will undergo a training camp at the Bashundhara Kings Arena on August 26 and after the others join, the final squad of 23 will be announced on August 29, a day prior to the team's departure for Bhutan.

"The priority was to play at home, but in the end it didn't happen. Going to Bhutan is a bit more challenging, mainly because of the altitude and also it's during the Bhutan Premier League, plus the fact that we'll play on an artificial turf," Cabrera said when asked about the team's original plan of securing FIFA ranking points through these two matches, which are scheduled for September 5 and 8.

Sri Lanka's Kamindu Mendis celebrates his century against England in the second innings of the first Test at Old Trafford in Manchester yesterday, helping the visitors set a victory target of 205 for the hosts. PHOTO: REUTERS

'Leverkusen have to be more aggressive'

REUTERS, *Monchengladbach*

Bayer Leverkusen manager Xabi Alonso asked for more character after his side beat Borussia Moenchengladbach 3-2 in the Bundesliga season opener on Friday through yet another stoppage-time winner.

Leverkusen were awarded a penalty deep into added time and Florian Wirtz scored on a rebound to earn the visitors the three points after Gladbach's Ko Itakura fouled substitute Amine Adli.

"It was an intense first Bundesliga game for us. A lot of things happened in the second half, it was full of emotion right to the end. We did well in many phases," Alonso told a press conference.

"But we weren't always so compact today, we were also a bit passive in some phases. We have to do that better. We have to be more aggressive.

"It's difficult to explain why we always score late goals. We can't train that and I can't influence it. It's the mentality of the team."

Champions Leverkusen, who set a European record of 51 consecutive games without loss across all competitions last season, kept their unbeaten streak intact with a number of late equalisers.

"We said at halftime that we must not let up and not think that the game is over," said former Gladbach player Granit Xhaka.

"At the end of the first half, we started not being consistent enough in our passing game and losing easy balls. Here at home, Gladbach never die, you could see that in the (goals for) 1-2 and 2-2."

Xhaka gave Leverkusen the lead with a screamer from outside the box in the 12th minute but did not celebrate out of respect for his former club.

"I had the feeling that we made it unnecessarily difficult for ourselves," added Wirtz, who scored two goals on the night, including the decider.

"We were asleep when it came to conceding goals. We let it slip away ourselves, even though we were actually in control, although we didn't have the ball the whole time.

"I just wanted to decide the game. I know that in the end it will be a lucky win. (But) we are happy that we won and that I was able to score the follow-up shot."

Leverkusen came into the game off a German Supercup win, where they beat VfB Stuttgart 4-3 on penalties after scoring a late equaliser to snatch a 2-2 draw over 90 minutes and lift the trophy on Saturday.

Manchester United players were left distraught after Joao Pedro's 95th-minute header handed Brighton a 2-1 win on Saturday. The win saw Brighton stay perfect in the Premier League, providing a dream home league debut to their 31-year-old boss Fabian Hurzeler. PHOTO: AFP

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Mushfiqur scales Asian summit

ASHFAQ-UL-ALAM

It is difficult to say whether Bangladesh stalwart Mushfiqur Rahim likes climbing mountains in real life, but when it comes to scaling the hypothetical mountains that exist in cricket, the veteran wicketkeeper-batter has conquered many.

Mushfiqur yesterday reached another such mountaintop in the first of two Tests against hosts Pakistan, becoming the first Bangladesh player to score a Test century in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka -- hence conquering the Asian summit.

Now, there is one more Asian country that hosts Test cricket – the UAE – but it does not have Test status and serves as a neutral venue.

On the other hand, there is Afghanistan, the newest member of the Asian Test club, but due to security concerns, Test cricket is yet to be played on Afghan soil.

In his maiden Test innings in Pakistan, Mushfiqur made 191 off 341 balls in Rawalpindi, a knock that oozed class, exemplified his patience, and put his watertight defence on display.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Bangladesh's Mushfiqur Rahim let out screams of joy as he reached his 11th Test ton on Day 4 of their first Test against Pakistan in Rawalpindi yesterday. Mushfiqur, however, fell just nine runs short of what would have been his fourth Test double hundred but the batter's 341-ball 191 helped Bangladesh to a commanding position.

PHOTO: AFP

41,551 accused in two cases filed in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Within a span of 24 hours, two cases have been filed accusing around 41,551 people on charges of attempting to murder, and attacking a police station and looting firearms in Chattogram.

The case with the attempted murder charge has been filed against 351 people including the former education minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury, and 1,200 unnamed people early yesterday.

Just a day earlier, on Friday, another case was lodged, accusing 40,000 unnamed people on charges of attacking on-duty police personnel, vandalising property, looting firearms and ammunition, and setting fire to the police station.

Both cases were filed with the Kotwali Police Station in CMP, SM Obaidul Haque, Officer-in-Charge of the police station, confirmed the development to The Daily Star.

Police, however, declined to elaborate when asked why the cases were registered with so many unnamed people as accused. No one was arrested in these cases till filing

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Humpback whales use tools!

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Humpback whales have joined an exclusive list of animals that not only use but also manufacture their own tools, a new study conducted off the coast of Alaska has found.

Researchers have known that humpbacks create "bubble nets" to hunt. Now, they have found that the giant marine mammals don't just use these unique nets but also manipulate them in a variety of ways to maximise their food intake.

"Many animals use tools to help them find food but very few actually create or modify the tools themselves," said Lars Bejder, an author of the study, published on Tuesday in the journal Royal Society Open Science.

In the study conducted in southeast Alaska, scientists followed and observed solitary humpback whales that blow and craft complex bubbles to catch krill.

The whales have previously been documented to blow bubbles in patterns that form nets with internal rings.

Researchers have now found that mammals actively control details of the bubble nets like the number of rings, the size and depth of the net, and the spacing between bubbles.

The careful approach, "wholly unique" to humpbacks, lets the behemoths capture up to seven times more prey in a single feeding dive without using extra energy.

"This impressive behaviour places humpback whales among the rare group of animals that both make and use their own tools for hunting," Dr Bejder said.

Justice Manik undergoes surgery after attack

Earlier Sylhet court sent him to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik, a retired judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, was hospitalised last night shortly after he was sent to the Sylhet Central Jail.

According to hospital sources, Manik underwent surgery at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital and was placed under post-operative observation.

Earlier in the day, while being taken before a judge, Manik sustained critical injuries after coming under attack by unruly people on the court premises in Sylhet, said Md Sagir Mia, deputy inspector general (DIG) prisons of Sylhet.

"He was bleeding internally, and one of his testicles was ruptured from the beating. As his condition was critical, we rushed him to the hospital after he was handed over to the prison authority.

"Police usually arrange treatment for critically

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

SEVEN YEARS OF ROHINGYA CRISIS

Worry over fresh influx grows

PORIMOL PALMA

A fresh wave of violence forcing displacement of Rohingya people in Rakhine is a cause for concern for Bangladesh as the country failed to repatriate the Rohingyas who came here in 2017 and before.

The decline in international aid and the birth of 30,000 babies a year at the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar is also putting to test Bangladesh's ability to manage the camps where criminal activities are common.

"The reports of fresh displacement of Rohingyas and their attempts to enter Bangladesh are worrisome. Several hundred Rohingya people entered Bangladesh over the last weeks," said a foreign ministry official.

"Our border guards are careful. They are preventing attempts by Rohingyas to enter Bangladesh," the official added, requesting anonymity.

Bangladesh maintains that sustainable repatriation of the Rohingya people is the only solution. At least 1,000 Rohingyas were set to return to Myanmar in November last year. The initiative failed as new conflicts erupted in Rakhine state, the official added.

Two earlier attempts at repatriation also failed.

After Myanmar launched a violent military crackdown in Rakhine on August 25, 2017, about 750,000 Rohingya people entered Bangladesh.

The Gambia later filed a genocide case against Myanmar with the International Court of Justice, and the International Criminal Court is investigating the human rights violation. The UN adopted several resolutions.

But the Rohingya people did not agree to return, saying the condition in Rakhine was not safe, even though the rebel group Arakan Army and Myanmar military signed a ceasefire in October last year.

After November, AA engaged in renewed clashes with the junta and took control of the vast majority of Rakhine State. Over 320,000 people were displaced in Rakhine and Chin states.

Human Rights Watch said in recent months, the Myanmar military and the ethnic Arakan Army have committed mass killings and arson attacks against Rohingya communities.

On August 5, nearly 200 people were reportedly killed by drone strikes and shelling on civilians fleeing fighting in Maungdaw town, according to Rohingya witnesses. About 630,000 Rohingya remain in Myanmar.

"Rohingya in Rakhine State are enduring

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Metro service resumes today after over a month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The metro rail is set to resume its service today, over a month of suspension following attacks during the recent mass student protests.

However, the Mirpur-10 and Kazipara stations will remain closed as those were badly damaged in the attacks, metro rail officials said.

The Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) announced on their verified Facebook page that, as before, the train service will not operate on Fridays.

The metro rail will follow its previous schedule.

Metro had brought much-needed relief to the city dwellers, reducing commute time by offering a convenient alternative to the congested roads.

Commuters enjoyed the ease of purchasing tickets and navigating the city without the hassle of traffic jams.

But people started to suffer on the streets again after the metro rail services were suspended on July 18 as the Mirpur-10 and Kazipara stations were vandalised during the quota protests.

The familiar struggle of catching overcrowded buses returned, with

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Drop Shakib from national cricket team

Demands legal notice served on BCB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A legal notice has been served on the Bangladesh Cricket Board, asking it to remove cricketer Shakib Al Hasan from the national cricket team as he is an accused in a murder case.

Supreme Court lawyer Sajib Mahmood Alam sent the notice to the BCB on behalf of another SC lawyer Md Rafinur Rahman yesterday.

The notice also asked the BCB to bring Shakib back to the country from abroad for the purpose of a proper investigation into the murder case.

The lawyer, in the legal notice, said that since a criminal case has been lodged against Shakib, he cannot be on the national cricket team as

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Students yesterday sorting the relief materials that have poured into TSC of Dhaka University for the flood victims. Story on page 3.

Gaza talks set to resume in Cairo as fighting rages

AFP, *Cairo*

Negotiators geared up for a crucial weekend of Gaza ceasefire talks yesterday, as Hamas said it was sending delegates to Cairo but would not participate in the discussions, and fighting raged in the Palestinian territory.

The United States, Egypt and Qatar have spent months trying to broker an end to the war in Gaza between Hamas Palestinian militants and Israel.

The war, sparked by Hamas's unprecedented October 7 attack on Israel, has devastated Gaza, displaced nearly all of its population at least once and triggered a humanitarian crisis.

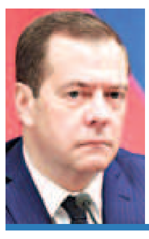
The White House said progress had been made at the latest round this week, although the possible permanent presence of Israeli troops along the Gaza-Egypt border has emerged as a major sticking point.

Previous bouts of optimism during months of on-off ceasefire and hostage release negotiations have always proven unfounded.

A senior Hamas official said a delegation from the Islamist group was heading to Cairo, but that they would not engage in the talks. Instead, they would meet with senior Egyptian officials for updates on the negotiations.

The delegation would "be briefed... but this does not mean it will take part in the negotiations", the official told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The official said Hamas would insist Israel withdraw all its forces from all of Gaza, including "from the border area with Egypt", known as the Philadelphi Corridor.



"He miscalculated. For all our common enemies now, he is Russian – and therefore unpredictable and dangerous."

Former Russian president **Dmitry Medvedev** on the arrest of Telegram CEO **Pavel Durov**

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শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Timing of polls 'a political decision'

Says Yunus in address to nation, asks people to fix interim govt's mandate, tenure

- Measures to be taken so that no one can ever turn country into a police-state
- Clauses of laws which hinder freedom of expression to be amended
- Justice to be ensured for all extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances
- Police, bank commissions to be formed for reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Urging the people to set the interim government's tenure and mandate, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said when the elections will be held is "completely a political decision".

"Everyone is eager to know when our government will depart. The answer lies in your hands. It is up to you to decide when to bid us farewell. We are not the people to rule the country," he said in a 26-minute televised address to the nation yesterday evening.

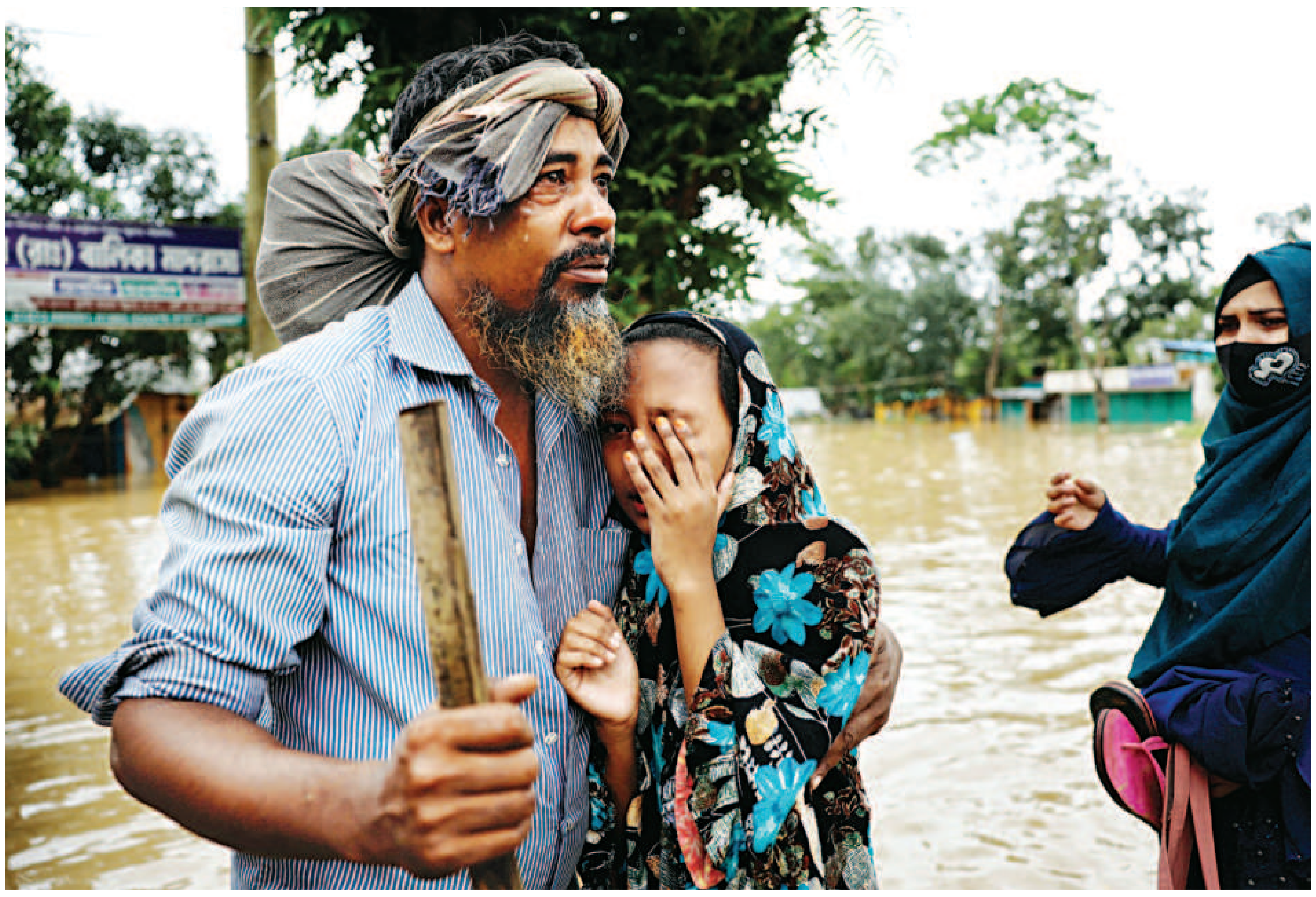
He went on to request the people to discuss and prescribe what is the least the interim government needs to do.

"We can get a guideline from this discussion," Yunus said, adding, "But the political decision is the ultimate decision. And political decisions will only come from political discussion."

In his first address to the nation, the chief adviser also assured that he would not seek to extend his tenure.

He said the members of the advisory council took up the responsibilities at the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Saiful Islam and his daughter Sadia Akter cry as they meet after four days in the Lalpol area in Feni yesterday. Saiful said he could not contact his daughter as a severe flood cut all communication in the area.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

50 injured as Ansars clash with students

Ansars earlier besieged Secretariat to press home their demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite the government's assurance of fulfilling their demands, ansar members continued demonstration by blocking the Secretariat gates yesterday and clashed with students and people.

At least 50 people were injured.

The clash broke out around 9:20pm as the students and the people tried to drive away the demonstrators demanding nationalisation of their jobs, said witnesses.

During the clash, the groups hurled brick chunks at each other and chased each other.

At least 40 injured took treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital till 11:00pm, said Bachchu Mia, inspector of DMCH police outpost.

Hasnat Abdullah, one of the conveners of Anti-discrimination Student Movement, was also injured during the clash.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

FLASH FLOODS

'We had no clue what was coming'

Says victim in remote area of Noakhali; 10 lakh still marooned

MD ABBAS

When Tuhin Rana, a private company employee in Dhaka, heard last week that floodwaters were entering his remote village in Noakhali, he called his parents and wife who had just given birth and told them to stay safe.

Tuhin thought his family members, natives of the coastal region, would know how to cope with the disaster.

But on Thursday, he found their phones unreachable and read about the devastation the floods were causing.

Yesterday, Tuhin reached his home after nearly an 18-hour journey, which usual took five hours, because the roads were flooded and he had to wait for hours to find boats.

"I found my elderly parents sitting on the bed of our hut to stay dry. They had not eaten cooked food in two days. My wife and newborn were taken to a safer place by the neighbours. There is still one-feet deep water in the house," he told this correspondent.

"They are drinking unsafe water. Water in the hand pumps is not clean. I am feeling helpless. They had no idea what was coming."

Most residents of the area took shelter at Batakandi Model School and College. But they also do not have enough food, water and sanitation, locals said.

"Some people set up kitchens and provided food. But they ran out of money. Due to the lack of boats in the area, barely any relief materials reach here."

> **Some people set up kitchens and provided food. But they ran out of money. Due to the lack of boats in the area, barely any relief materials reach us.**
>
> **Tuhin Rana**, resident of Noakhali

Tuhin's family members are among millions in Noakhali, Feni, and Cumilla districts who have been suffering for the past four days.

In Noakhali, eight upazilas were still flooded. Due to a bout of downpour yesterday, the situation worsened.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

MOBILE SERVICE DURING DISASTERS

No contingency system despite available funds

Telecom ministry fails to set up system in two years

MAHMUDUL HASAN

The telecom ministry has failed to establish a National Emergency Telecommunication System (NETS) to maintain telecommunication and internet services during disasters despite starting the initiative almost two years ago.

In September 2022, following a devastating flood in Sylhet that rendered most of the mobile towers nonfunctional, the Posts and Telecommunications Ministry formed a 12-member committee to develop NETS.

The committee was tasked with formulating a specific plan for NETS, including technical aspects, management and maintenance of the system.

However, the ministry has yet to furnish any plan. Moreover, some organisations listed as committee members are unaware of the committee's existence.

"As far as we know, we haven't been invited to the committee in the last two years -- such a system is very essential to ensure smooth communication during the different types of natural disasters," said Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, which was named as a member of the committee.

Every time a cyclone, flood, or other natural disaster strikes Bangladesh, affected individuals first lose access to mobile networks when they need connectivity the most to seek help.

This disruption is primarily due to extended power outages: the standard battery backup duration for base transceiver stations ranges from four to eight hours.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Mazumder, Sarafat's bank accounts to be frozen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) yesterday asked banks to freeze the accounts of Nazrul Islam Mazumder, the chairman of Exim Bank and Nassa Group, and Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat, former chairman of Padma Bank, and their family members.

Nazrul Islam

Nafeez Sarafat

In separate letters, the anti-money laundering agency instructed the lenders to keep the accounts frozen for the next 30 days in the first phase. The intelligence unit also instructed the banks to suspend their locker facilities.

Sarafat and Mazumder, also the chairman of the private bank owners' forum Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB) since 2008,

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

EDN INSTITUTIONS

Forcing people to resign may lead to collapse

Says edn adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Wahiduddin Mahmud

Education adviser to the interim government, Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud, said yesterday that forcing individuals in educational institutions to resign could lead to the collapse of the administrative system.

Speaking at a meeting with ministry officials, the adviser said legitimate complaints against individuals will be addressed, but forced resignations are not an option.

The adviser said that established rules and regulations govern the process of appointments and transfers in government educational institutions, and there is no room for coercion,

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6

All-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz (L) runs in to celebrate with teammates after dismissing Pakistan batter Agha Salman during the fifth day of the first Test against Pakistan at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday. Miraz's four wickets in the second innings helped Bangladesh register a historic 10-wicket victory, their first-ever in the format against Pakistan.

PHOTO: **AFP**

A statement victory for Tigers

AL-AMIN

When opener Zakir Hasan swept off-spinner Agha Salman down to the square-leg boundary for the winning runs at the Rawalpindi Stadium yesterday afternoon, it marked the end of Bangladesh's long wait for a Test win against Pakistan.

The 10-wicket triumph in the first of the Two-Test series on a dramatic fifth and final day was not just a win, but a true statement of courage, commitment, self-belief and discipline that deserved to be preserved for posterity.

There are so many heroes in Bangladesh's first-ever Test win against Pakistan after 13 unsuccessful attempts. The only occasion the Tigers came close to winning before this was in Multan in 2003 when a portly Inzamamul Haq robbed them with an unbeaten 138 in the second innings, with Pakistan winning by one wicket.

However, there was no Inzy this time around when Bangladesh, riding on an invaluable 117-run first-innings lead, went for the final push for an unlikely win on an otherwise flat track.

Resuming on 23-1 on a 'never trust a fifth day pitch', Pakistan stumbled to 105-6 by lunch with the Bangladesh spin duo of Shakib Al Hasan and Mehedi Hasan Miraz getting some purchase and eventually sharing seven wickets between them.

However, it was right-arm pacer Hasan Mahmud, bowling a probing line throughout the Test, who drew the first blood early in the morning by having Pakistan captain Shan Masood caught behind for 14.

Lanky Nahid Rana with his raw pace then had the 'big fish' Babar Azam, who chopped onto his stumps a widish delivery outside the off-stump for 22.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

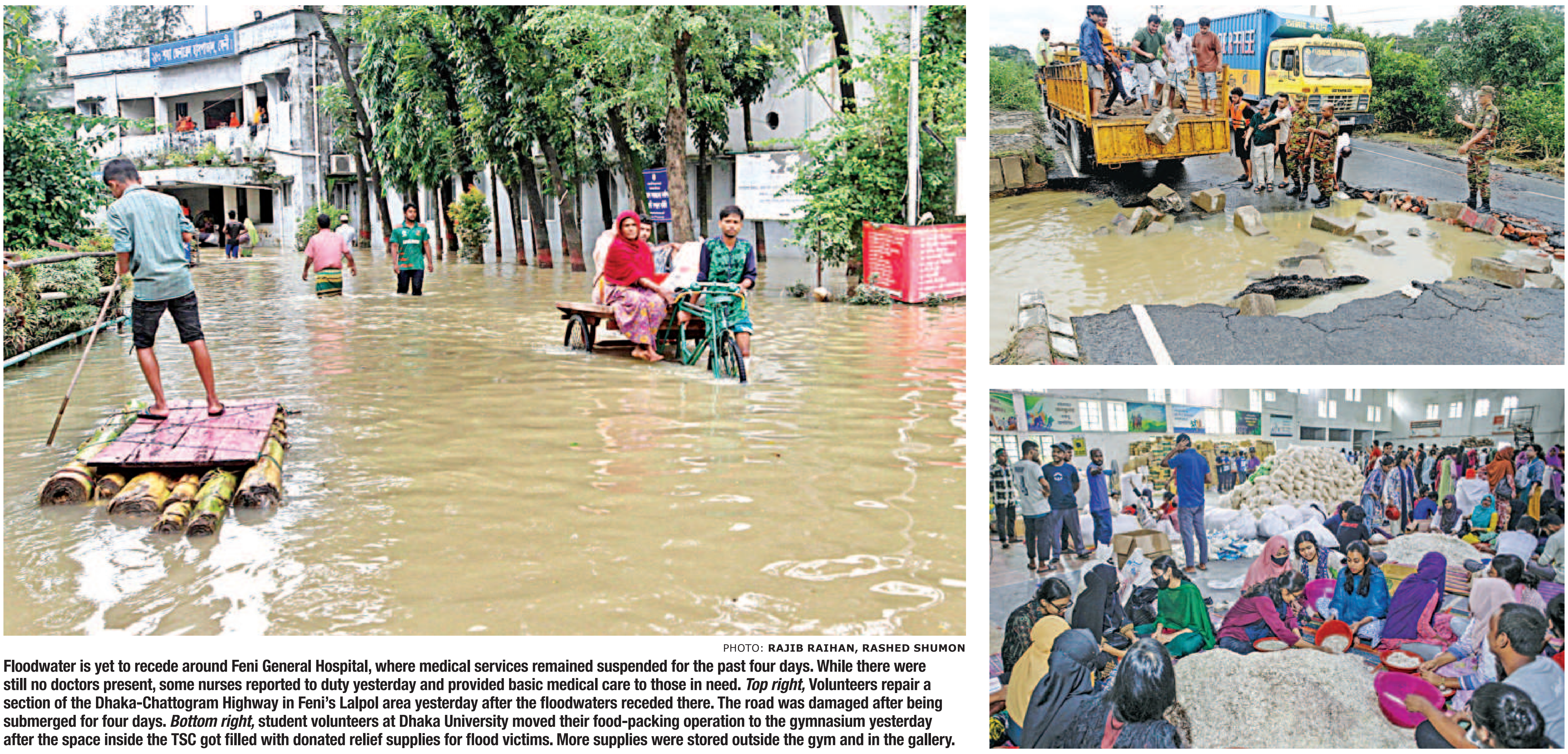


PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN, RASHED SHUMON**

Floodwater is yet to recede around Feni General Hospital, where medical services remained suspended for the past four days. While there were still no doctors present, some nurses reported to duty yesterday and provided basic medical care to those in need. *Top right,* Volunteers repair a section of the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway in Feni's Lalpol area yesterday after the floodwaters receded there. The road was damaged after being submerged for four days. *Bottom right,* student volunteers at Dhaka University moved their food-packing operation to the gymnasium yesterday after the space inside the TSC got filled with donated relief supplies for flood victims. More supplies were stored outside the gym and in the gallery.

Timing of polls 'a political decision'

FROM PAGE 1

call of the students and have been carrying out their duties with utmost diligence as a team.

Seeking blessings from the people, he said the government does not want to lose the opportunity to build a new Bangladesh, earned through the blood of the students and the people.

"If we lose this opportunity now, we will be defeated as a nation. We want to remain committed to the martyrs, the injured, and the surviving students so that we do not lose this achievement."

He said local government institutions will be empowered, and decentralisation of power will be ensured to strengthen democracy.

Necessary reforms to the administration, judiciary, Election Commission and the electoral system, and law and order would be made to ensure free flow of information and a free, fair, and participatory election.

"The aim of these [reforms] will be the initiation of an accountable political system against corruption, looting, and genocide," Yunus said.

The chief adviser said after the fascist government leader fled the country in the face of public wrath, they want to build a country where the human rights of every citizen are completely protected.

"We have one goal -- an open, democratic, exploitation-free, and non-communal Bangladesh. We are one family. We have one goal. We are committed to ensuring that no division can disrupt our dream," said the Nobel Peace Prize winner.

He said Bangladesh was built with the supreme sacrifice of several millions, but it has been destroyed by fascism and tyranny.

The country had been changed so much that even an autocrat's peon can accumulate illegal wealth of Tk 400 crore without any obstruction.

"They have crippled the education sector; looted banks and the stock market; set world records in project expenditures; plundered resources openly; turned law enforcement agencies into puppets of their party; snatched away freedom of speech; and violated human rights. These are just the tip of the iceberg," he said.

To consolidate power, he said, "The fascist government curbed the people's constitutional power and rights. Their misrule, corruption, injustice, repression, and farce in the name of justice endangered public safety."

Millions of people were deprived of their voting rights for years and the autocrat not only took the nation's ownership, it also handed it over to its families and party people, he said.

Yunus thanked the people for their support for his government's efforts to bring reforms and said, "We realise that you have high expectations of us. We are determined to meet these expectations."

However, the long-standing absence of democracy and 15 years of fascist rule left the interim government with challenges as big as mountains.

"But we are ready to take up the challenge," he said, urging all to have patience.

He called on all not to force the immediate fulfilment of their demands, threaten individuals at work, mount pressure to lodge cases, or attack people at courts.

"These actions will tarnish the glory and potential of the revolution of student and people, and hinder the efforts to build a new Bangladesh," Yunus said.

He said the government had to begin the job of rebuilding the country on a fragile structure, which is contrary to public interest.

The government wants to build Bangladesh in such a way that the people become the source of all power in the true sense. "We must succeed in the task of reforming... There is no alternative to this."

DON'T OBSTRUCT OUR WORK

Regarding agitations and road blocks by different groups for realising their demands, Prof Yunus said rallies have been held daily at the Secretariat, around his office, and in various places in the city.

"We understand that you have suffered a lot and have grievances pent-up over the past 16 years. If you do not let us work, all paths to reducing the sufferings will remain closed. My earnest request to you that allow us to work," he said.

The chief adviser urged the agitating groups to submit their demands to them in writing and assured everyone of taking measures to solve the issues in line with the law.

- Education sector to see massive reforms
- Work to update the curriculum has started
- Urged to have patience for administrative reforms
- Measures taken to curb inflation, price hike of essentials
- Polls after necessary reforms
- All advisers will reveal their affidavits
- Ordinance to be made to appoint an ombudsman
- Remittance through official channels urged
- Groups urged to make demands in writing, not demonstrate

MEASURES FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

Prof Yunus said the government took all-out measures at government and private levels to ensure that the flood-hit people return to a normal life at the soonest.

"We have initiated discussions so that we can work together with neighbouring countries and domestic stakeholders to prevent floods in future," he said.

INSTRUCTIONS TO FORCES

Prof Yunus alleged that the army, police, BGB, and Rab have been disgraced as they were used for enforced disappearances and torture.

"They are the pride of the country. We do not want to see the image of an entire force get tarnished due to some overenthusiastic members.

"We want to identify the criminals and punish them so that no member of the patriotic forces, police, or Rab dares to engage in murder, enforced disappearances, or torture at anyone's command," he said.

Prof Yunus further said that he instructed the defence forces, police, and all other forces to identify and bring to justice those among them who were directly involved in murder, enforced disappearances, killings, or physical and mental torture.

Lists of those who have been made to disappear or were murdered are being prepared, he said.

He said the government is also at the final stages of establishing a "July Genocide Memorial Foundation", led by him, to preserve the memory of the martyrs of the mass uprising.

CORRUPTION

The chief adviser said a committee has already been formed to prepare a white paper on the corruption, money laundering, anti-public interest agreements, looting in the name of projects, and other crimes committed over the last 15 years.

"The entire country is submerged in a sea of bribery. Please advise us on how we can get out of this. If we can advance on this issue, I believe this government will have left an important contribution to the country," he said.

'WE ARE ALL EQUAL'

Putting emphasis on the need for unity, Prof Yunus said the government's responsibility is to bind all people of the country as a family.

"There will be disagreements in a family. There will be arguments. But we are brothers and sisters; we are parents. We are not enemies of each other. We will not consider anyone an enemy because of their opinions, religion, or gender.

"We all are equal. No one is above or below anyone else. We would like to establish this concept in all areas of national life," he said.

REFORMS IN SECTORS

The chief adviser talked about reform initiatives in various sectors, including banking, judiciary, police, education, health, and agriculture.

He said the government took initiatives to ensure good governance in the banking sector, which was turned into a den of "plunderers and the corrupt".

Skilled personnel are being recruited in this sector, he said, adding that a banking commission will be formed for long-term reforms in the sector.

He said a roadmap will be prepared and made public soon.

Immediate measures are being taken to address the extreme disorder in the stock market, transportation sector, and other areas. Besides, steps were taken to control the prices of essential commodities and inflation.

He said efforts were being made to free the judiciary from corruption and political influence. Measures were taken through a specific process to ensure the independence and accountability of the judiciary.

"Justice will be ensured for all extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, murders, abductions, and other heinous crimes committed by the fascist government. Everyone involved in these crimes will be brought to justice.

"Steps have been taken, including becoming a party to the international convention on enforced disappearances," he said.

Prof Yunus said a police commission will be formed to make the force people-centric, politically neutral, and accountable.

Necessary reforms will be made under the commission's leadership in line with the UN investigation and other agencies' reports, he said, adding, "Measures will be taken to ensure that no one can turn Bangladesh into a police state ever again."

Prof Yunus asserted that the free flow of information and freedom of the press will be ensured.

Legal and other barriers to free flow of information will be removed and repressive provisions in laws that obstruct freedom of expression will be amended, he said.

"We are committed to ensuring people's right to information."

He said the previous government unleashed anarchy in the education sector and this government's top priority will be massive reforms to the sector. The curriculum will also be updated promptly.

Yunus said, "All of our advisers will disclose their assets in the shortest possible time. This will be made regular and mandatory for all government officials gradually."

He said an ordinance will be enacted to appoint an Ombudsman in line with the constitution.

The chief adviser mentioned that necessary reforms will be brought to the health sector while farmers' interests will be protected so that they receive fair prices for their produce.

He said, "Development that destroys and pollutes rivers, canals, wetlands, hills, forests, soil, and air is not sustainable in the long term. Our government will give utmost importance to protecting the environment and climate."

Yunus said the government will maintain friendly relations with all countries and the foreign policy will be based on mutual trust, faith, and cooperation.

Through political unity, necessary reforms will ensure that women, children, people with disabilities, religious minorities, indigenous people, and all citizens of this country are entitled to equal protection under the law, he said.

A statement victory for Tigers

FROM PAGE 1

A vintage Shakib then struck twice in the space of six overs, leaving Pakistan tottering at 104-5. Shakib lured both first-innings centurion Saud Shakil and Abdullah Shafique to come down the wicket, with the former missing the ball completely while the latter miscuing an attempted heave at point to Shadman Islam.

Shadman then plucked a stunning low catch at slip off Mehedi to see the back of Salman for a duck, leaving Pakistan in deep trouble at lunch.

Wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan, who hit a superb 171 not out in Pakistan's first innings total of 448-6 declared, tried to take the fight to the opposition by blending caution with aggression.

But once he was dismissed by Mehedi, Pakistan's second innings folded for 146, leaving Bangladesh with a simple task of scoring 30 runs to win with more than a session in hand.

Shadman and Zakir stroked those runs in 6.3 overs, sparking wild celebrations at the Bangladesh dressing room.

It was Bangladesh's seventh overseas Test victory and the most decorated one after the success against New Zealand in Mount Maunganui in 2022.

This was a Test where Bangladesh, for a change, demonstrated the hallmark of a quality Test side after languishing as a mediocre one for the most part of their journey since 2000.

The young pace bowling unit, spearheaded by Shoriful Islam, more than matched the Pakistan heavyweights of Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah. Shoriful finished with three wickets in the match, however, the figure hardly reflected how well he bowled with the new ball.

Even though the Tigers have developed a tendency of buckling under pressure once their opponents put on a massive total, in Rawalpindi, they were not intimidated after Pakistan amassed 448. Rather, they grafted and then prospered with such conviction, rarely seen before.

Coming into the side after two years, opener Shadman anchored the innings with a solid 93. Mominul Haque also played his part with 50 and Liton Das provided the necessary thrust in the middle. His 56 off 78 balls was a spectators' delight, especially the three boundaries and a massive six that he smote in one over off Naseem.

Mehedi demonstrated his all-round ability with a priceless 77.

But the best came from the best batter of the country -- an ageless Mushfiqur Rahim. The little right-hander was in a league of his own with an imperious 191, laced with 22 fours and a six.

It was his masterclass knock that propelled Bangladesh to 565 in their first essay and that priceless lead. He dominated two century stands -- 114 runs for the sixth wicket with Liton and 196 for the seventh wicket with Mehedi.

The pocket-size dynamo, nicknamed Mr. Dependable in the Tigers' ranks, hardly allowed anything to get past his watertight defence and was sublime in his stroke-play during his more than three-session vigil at the wicket.

An epitome of hard work and discipline, Mushfiqur is the only wicketkeeper-batter who has three double hundreds under his belt. He might have missed a fourth, but his latest knock was a special one considering the context and could be a good manual for up-and-coming cricketers.

Champion all-rounder Shakib had to endure a lot due to some disturbing developments back home. He did not contribute with the bat, but struck with the ball when it mattered most.

As a key member of the team, Shakib would desperately need mental peace more than anything else when the second Test starts at the same venue on August 30.

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50 injured as Ansars clash with students

FROM PAGE 1

Critically wounded Asif Hawladar, Dhaka University correspondent of Prothom Alo, was undergoing treatment at a city hospital.

The situation turned violent after over a thousand students and others, many of them equipped with sticks, went to the Secretariat, hearing that Ansar members blocked the Secretariat even after getting assurance of fulfilling their demand, said witnesses.

Several conveners of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement asked students to gather at the Raju Memorial Sculpture to march towards the Secretariat. Terming the Ansar members "agents of autocracy", the students started marching towards the Secretariat around 9:00pm.

When they reached the Secretariat, there were chases and counter-chases between ansar members and students.

At one stage, students and others were able to drive away the ansar members around 9:45pm, witnesses said.

Later, army personnel were seen at the spot. The situation started getting normal after 10:00pm, and Gate-3 of the Secretariat was opened at 10:30pm so that officials who were stuck inside could go home, said witnesses.

After the clash, a group of people were seen beating up dispersed ansar members at different places.

After the incident, Nahid Islam, information and broadcasting adviser, said the demonstration by ansar members is part of a conspiracy as they continued their programme even after getting assurance of meeting their demand.

"We will take legal action against those involved in the conspiracy," he said while talking to the media in front of the Secretariat.

Maj Gen Abdul Motaleb Sazzad Mahmud, director general of Ansar and VDP, told The Daily Star last night, "Those who continued the demonstration even after getting the assurance are not Ansar members. They are outsiders ... they came with an additional set of clothes and their intension was different."

"They did not want any solution. We will take lawful action against those people."

He said they have a separate disciplinary force called battalion ansar, who did not join the demonstration.

In the evening, Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury told a press briefing at the Secretariat that they assured the demonstrating ansar members of abolishing the "mandatory leave system".

He said this after an hour-long meeting with representatives of the Ansar members.

A seven-member committee was formed with Ansar and VDP DG Maj Gen Abdul Motaleb as convener, and its Director Jahanara Akter as member secretary to find a solution to their demand.

The committee has been asked to submit a report within seven working days, according to a notification issued by the home ministry's Public Security Division.

The report then will be sent to an inter-ministerial committee that will make necessary decisions based on the recommendations, said the home adviser.

Asked about the "mandatory leave system", the Ansar DG said according to the regulations, a member is sent on a six-month mandatory leave after working for three consecutive years. During the time, they are not paid.

"An initiative has been taken to abolish the system. After this, their jobs will be considered regular."

At the briefing, Nasim Miah, a convener of the Ansar demonstration, said they were temporarily withdrawing their programme. "The Ansar members will return to work. We will look into the decision and then we will announce our next course of action, as our main demand is nationalisation of our job."

But the demonstrating ansar members did not accept the decision and vowed to continue their demonstration. They even stopped the vehicle of the home affairs adviser as it was leaving the Secretariat, a top official of the home ministry told The Daily Star.

"The adviser then called an emergency meeting to address the situation around 8:00pm. But the meeting ended without any decision as students drove away the demonstrators," the official said.

There are three branches of Ansar: General Ansar, Battalion Ansar, and Village Defence Party (VDP).

In another development, Dhaka Metropolitan Police last night banned all rallies, meetings, or demonstrations near the Secretariat and the residence of the chief adviser until further notice.

Vested quarter spreading propaganda against media

Says CA office

BSS, *Dhaka*

A vested quarter is spreading propaganda against media using the name of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, said Chief Adviser's office in a message yesterday.

The quarter was asking people not to collaborate with media outlets that did not support or cooperate with the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, it said.

The vested quarter also threatened that if anyone cooperates with these media outlets, he or she will be insulted, defamed and fired, it added.

The CA office said the leaders of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement have informed the office that such letters or lists of media outlets are fake.

They, as well, urged all not to be confused over such letters or lists.

Women passengers travel in their designated compartment on the metro rail, as its operations resumed yesterday after over a month of suspension. Despite the closure of two key stations, metro rail services are back on track, which were suspended on July 18 amid violecne centring the quota reform protests.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

China pledges to strengthen ties with Bangladesh

Ambassador meets Dr Yunus, donates $20,000 for flood victims

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

China said yesterday that the political changeover in Bangladesh is its internal affairs. The country has expressed its continued commitment to enhancing bilateral relations with Bangladesh.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen conveyed this message during a meeting with Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus at the State Guesthouse Jamuna.

"No matter what changes have taken place in Bangladesh, China's commitment to developing China-Bangladesh relations remains unchanged," Ambassador Yao said, according to a statement from the Chinese embassy.

He congratulated Dr Yunus on his new role and reiterated China's principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

Yao emphasised China's support for Bangladesh's sovereignty, independence, and stability, and expressed Beijing's readiness to assist Bangladesh's interim government in its reform and development efforts.

He also highlighted the importance of pragmatic cooperation and the implementation of agreements between the two nations.

Dr Yunus urged China to relocate some of its solar panel factories to Bangladesh to aid in the country's green transition and boost exports.

He also called for increased imports of Bangladeshi goods to China and enhanced collaboration in technology, disaster management, education, and agriculture.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'The crisis has united us'

Student-led relief efforts continue for fourth day

NILIMA JAHAN

From children donating their savings from tiffin money to women offering their jewellery, from street beggars donating a part of the alms received in a day to corporate entities donating a day's salaries of their staff -- the people of Bangladesh have joined in a united effort to support those devastated by the recent flash floods, contributing in every way possible.

Truckloads of clothing, dates, flattened rice, puffed rice, salt, sugar, water, candles, rice, oil, lentils, saline, lighters, water purifying tablets, soap, and sanitary napkins are being transported to the flood-affected areas, while the cash received are being used to buy more relief materials.

Till 4:00pm yesterday, more than Tk 4.39 crore have been collected at TSC of Dhaka University.

Under the leadership of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, general students of DU and seven affiliated colleges, as well as volunteers from other educational institutions, have joined in to collect, sort, package, and load relief items to the trucks.

Hasnat Abdullah, a coordinator of the platform, wrote on his Facebook page, "Fascism had divided us, but the crisis united us again. The relief you provided is a testament of peoples' trust on us, and we are giving a detailed account of it."

Md Rakib Hossain, a volunteer and master's

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

First cyclone Remal, now floods: Khulna villages submerged again

15,000 stranded, locals join hands to fix breached embankment

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

Thousands of villagers, including around a thousand women, work tirelessly to repair a breached embankment near Kalinagar village. The dyke was breached four days ago, completely submerging thirteen villages. The locals have blamed the BWDB for using substandard materials during repair works.

PHOTO: **HABIBUR RAHMAN**

Cyclones, river erosions, and floods -- people in coastal Bangladesh have been fighting natural disasters on a regular basis, and each year is turning out to be increasingly more challenging than the previous one due to climate change.

Just this year, thousands in Khulna lost their livelihoods as a tidal surge triggered by cyclone Remal swept through their homes and villages.

Just when things turn normal, another disaster strikes.

Take the case of 13 villages in Deluti union under Khulna's Paikgachha upazila for example.

Just when the people there were healing from the aftermath of cyclone Remal, the recent floods have left their areas submerged for the last four days.

Embankments getting breached too easily despite repeated repair work also adds to their misery.

The locals have blamed the Bangladesh Water Development Board for using substandard materials during repair works.

At least 15,000 residents of the aforementioned villages have been stranded.

Hundreds of villagers have left their homes behind to take shelter on nearby higher grounds.

Earlier on Thursday afternoon, the embankment near Kalinagar village in the union was breached, which led to the inundation of Kalinagar, Darun Mallik, Gopi Pagla, Telikhali, Syedkhali, Khejurtala, Sener Ber, Hatbari, Phulbari, Bagirdana, Durgapur, Harinkhola, and Noai villages.

These villages previously suffered a similar plight after the embankment was earlier breached during Cyclone Remal on May 27.

The affected villagers alleged that officials of Bangladesh Water Development Board have not been sincere in handling the issue.

Khadija Bibi, a resident of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

MURDER CASE

Palak, Tuku placed on 7-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed six people, including ex-state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak and former deputy speaker Shamsul Haque Tuku, on a seven-day remand.

They were remanded in a case filed over the death of Khalid Hasan Saifullah, a 11th grader, in the capital's Lalbagh area during the quota reform protests on July 18.

The other accused are Arif Khan Joy, former deputy sports minister; Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, general secretary of DU Chhatra League; Ahmad Hossain, Awami League organising secretary; and Rear Admiral Mohammad Sohail, former chairman of Chattogram Port Authority.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Arobia Khanam passed the order after Md Akkas Mia, sub-inspector of Lalbagh Police Station and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Legal notice seeks list of presidential pardons of 33yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday served a legal notice seeking a list of convicted persons whose sentences have been waived, commuted and suspended by presidents between January 1991 and July 2024 under Article 49 of the constitution.

The article says, "The President shall have power to grant pardons, reprieves and respites and to remit, suspend or commute any sentence passed by any court, tribunal or other authority."

Barrister Md Omar Farooq sent the legal notice to the secretaries at the ministries of home, law, cabinet division and the president's office, asking them to provide him with the list in 15 days.

The lawyer requested the notice recipients to explain under which process those convicted persons' sentences have been commuted or suspended.

Bottled water in large stocks on sale in the capital's Karwan Bazar yesterday amid the high demand for clean drinking water during the ongoing floods.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

STEP UP AS OUR NEXT CEO

A leading finance company who has operations in capital market and financing & investment activities is looking for an experienced and qualified professional for the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** position.

How to Apply: Interested and eligible candidates can apply for the position at the following link: https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/jobs/bdjobscareer4a.htm or scan QR given below.

Application Deadline: September 07, 2024

Location: Dhaka

Scan to Apply

First cyclone Remal

FROM PAGE 3

Syedkhali village who took shelter on the embankment in Sadhur Ghat area, said she used to earn a living by hatching and rearing ducks and selling those in the market.

"The incubator was damaged by floodwater and more than 30 ducks floated away. Almost everything in the house was destroyed. The flood left me destitute overnight," she said.

Many other villagers shared similar plights.

RESIDENTS REPAIRING EMBANKMENTS

Meanwhile, several thousand villagers, including around a thousand women, were seen yesterday noon working voluntarily to repair the breached portion of the embankment.

Different organisations from Khulna and other districts have also lent a helping hand to the villagers by providing relief materials.

Students were seen distributing food items to those who sought shelter on other parts of the embankment.

Ripon Kumar Mandal, chairman of Deluti Union Parishad, said the flood damaged numerous homesteads and washed away shrimp enclosures and crop fields.

"There is no other way to save the people of this union without sustainable embankment," he added.

Contacted, Ashraful Alam, executive engineer of BWDB-2 in Khulna, said the river's water level rose by 3–4 feet higher compared to normal tide, which led to the embankment getting breached.

"Locals have been working to repair it while we are providing technical support. The repair work will be completed within tomorrow [today]," he added.

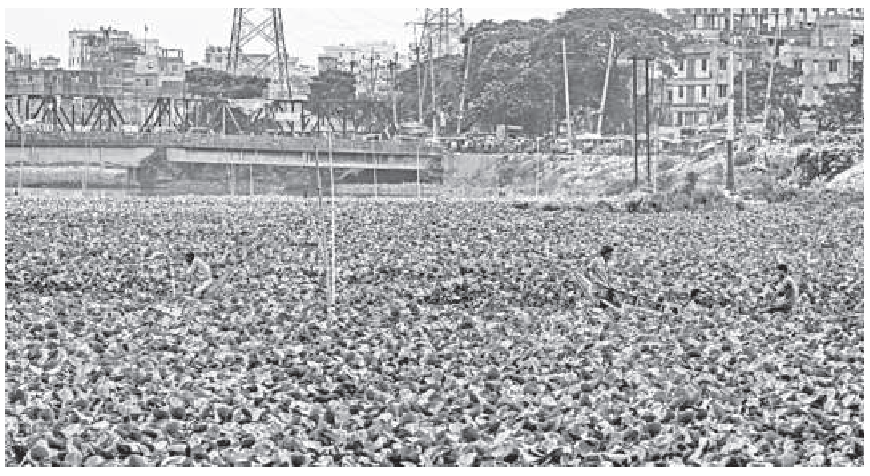


PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Boats struggle to navigate through a dense layer of water hyacinth covering this portion of the Old Buriganga river, disrupting communication between Kamrangir Char and Lalbagh areas in the capital. The photo was taken recently.

NSU faculty

FROM PAGE 5

of agitated students, an individual incited them to engage in "mob justice" and even encouraged them to throw an administration member off the rooftop.

Videos of this life-threatening provocation have been widely circulated on social media, according to the statement.

"As members of the community who work for a respectful and peaceful academic and working environment for all, we wholeheartedly condemn such actions," the statement read.

China pledges

FROM PAGE 3

The Chief Adviser expressed hope for continued Chinese support for the Rohingya crisis and recalled his positive experiences in China, including the establishment of Yunus Centres at Chinese universities.

Ambassador Yao presented a $20,000 donation to Bangladesh's Flood Relief Fund and announced a $100,000 contribution from the Chinese Red Cross for flood-affected people.

The crisis has united

FROM PAGE 3

student of DU's history department, said, "Now we urgently need to focus on cooked food, items like diapers, milk, and baby clothes. Our activities will continue till flood situation improves," he added.

The platform has announced to move the mass relief collection to DU's Central Field, as TSC has no space left to keep more relief materials. The TSC booth will now accept only cash and emergency medicine, said Lutfar Rahman, a coordinator.

Similarly, students of Jahangirnagar University launched a campaign titled 'Jahangirnagar Stands with Flood Victims' on August 22.

Fundraising and donations have been taking place at the new Arts Building, university gates, nearby areas, and along the Dhaka-Aricha highway.

People from all walks of life have contributed to raise Tk 33 lakh and other relief items till yesterday. The funds and materials are being gathered at the new Arts Building, while two trucks with 1,957 relief packets and a van with baby food left for flood-affected areas yesterday morning.

The students of private universities are not sitting idle either.

AIUB's social welfare club 'Shomoy' raised over Tk 5 lakh and distributed it to flood victims in Feni on Saturday.

Students of Fareast International University collected and packed relief items and 20 volunteers will be heading with those for Feni today, said Amina Akter, a student.

Many individuals are personally collecting funds and sending relief items to flood-hit people.

"I have already sent five lots of clothes, each with 120 sacks. Each sack has 200 pieces of clothing. My domestic help and others are washing the clothes and packing those to be sent to flood victims," said Farhana.

Advocate Noorjahan Kabir from Uttara collected Tk 4 lakh and two truckloads of clothes from her neighborhood and hopes to send those soon.

Samanta Islam, 12, a 6th-grader at Monipur School and College, said she has donated her tiffin money for flood relief.

[Additional reporting by Sirajul Islam Rubel and Sakib Ahmed.]

Firearms licences issued over

FROM PAGE 5

operate under significant pressure and often lack adequate rest.

He mentioned that a policy decision for police reform has been made, although it is still in the early stages.

He added that reform initiatives would eventually extend to other forces under the ministry, including Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Department of Narcotics Control (DNC), Bangladesh Coast Guard, Ansar and VDP, Fire Service and Civil Defence, Bangladesh Jail, and the Department of Immigration and Passports. Deputy Head of Mission of the French Embassy in Dhaka, Guillaume AUDREN de KERDREL, and senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs were also present at the meeting.

In another meeting with senior police officials at Police Headquarters, the home adviser said any breach of discipline by Bangladesh Police would not be tolerated.

"Corruption must be stopped at all costs. There will be no concessions in case of breaching discipline," he said.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police has appointed new officers-in-charge at 25 police stations, DMP Commissioner Mainul Hasan issued an order in this regard yesterday.

Palak, Tuku placed on 7-day

FROM PAGE 3

investigation officer of the case, produced them with a 10-day remand petition for each of them.

In the petition, the IO said involvement of the accused with the incident was primarily found true.

On August 19, the victim's father, filed the case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Anisul Huq, Salman F Rahman, and 49 others with Lalbagh Police Station.

The case document mentioned that Khalid participated in the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

On July 18, law enforcers indiscriminately fired at the students with direct support from the accused, resulting in Khalid being fatally shot, it added.

Earlier in the day, Tuku, Palak, and Shaikat were produced before another court on completion of their 10-day remand in a case filed with Paltan Police Station over the death of rickshaw-puller Kamal Mia in the city's Paltan area on July 19.

Meanwhile, Arif Khan Joy was produced before another Dhaka court on completion of a five-day remand in a case filed over the death of grocery shop owner Abu Saeed in Dhaka's Mohammadpur on July 19.

Ahmad Hossain and Sohail were produced before another Dhaka court on completion of their four-day remand in a case filed over the killing of a shop owner, Nabin Talukder, in Dhaka's Paltan on July 19.

Six killed

FROM PAGE 5

Chanchal, 38, of Madhyapara area of Brahmanbaria town; and Shaheen Chowdhury, 48, of Nayanpur village of Sadar upazila.

Confirming the matter, Mohammad Mozaffar Hossain, OC of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station, said police recovered the bodies and kept those in Brahmanbaria General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The injured are being treated in Akhaura Upazila Health Complex, he added.

In Munshiganj, a motorcyclist died as he lost control over steering and hit the railing of Basiya Bari bridge in Dhipur union of Tongibari upazila yesterday.

The deceased, Sohan Sheikh, 17, was a resident of Jashlong village in the upazila.

The accident took place at around 12:30pm. Sohan died on the spot. His body has been handed over to family without autopsy, said Ansar-uz-Zaman, in-charge of Dighirpar Police Outpost.

৩ বীর (লংগদু জোন)
মাইনীমুখ আর্মি ক্যাম্প
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। আভিযানিক ও নিরাপত্তা সক্ষমতা বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে অপারেশন উত্তরণে নিয়োজিত সেনাসদস্যদের জন্য বিভিন্ন দ্রব্যাদি ক্রয় বাবদ অপারেশন কন্টিনজেন্সি ব্যয় নির্বাহ করা হবে। উক্ত ক্রয় কার্যক্রম সম্পন্নের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশ সেনাবাহিনীর তালিকাভুক্ত আগ্রহী ঠিকাদারদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরযুক্ত প্যাডে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।
২। সিডিউল এবং বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য ৩ বীর (লংগদু জোন), মাইনীমুখ আর্মি ক্যাম্পে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। প্রতিটি সিডিউলের মূল্য ১,০০০.০০ (এক হাজার টাকা মাত্র) টাকা যা আগামী ২৮ আগস্ট ২০২৪ তারিখ হতে বিক্রয়ের জন্য প্রস্তুত থাকবে।
৩। আগ্রহী ঠিকাদারদের আগামী ০৫ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখ ১০০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ৩ বীর (লংগদু জোন সদর) এর আরপি গেইটে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে দরপত্র জমা করতে হবে।
৪। সর্বনিম্ন দরদাতাকে ১০% সিকিউরিটি মানি (ফেরতযোগ্য) দরপত্র গৃহীত হবার পর কার্যাদেশ গ্রহণের পূর্বে পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফটের মাধ্যমে অধিনায়ক, ৩ বীর বরাবর জমা করতে হবে।

অধিনায়ক
৩ বীর
মাইনীমুখ আর্মি ক্যাম্প
লংগদু জোন, রাঙ্গামাটি পার্বত্য জেলা
মোবাঃ ০১৮৪১-৩০২৬১৪

আইএসপিআর/সেনা/২০২৪/৪৪২
২৫/০৮/২৪

জিডি-২৬১

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICE

Qualified consulting firms or individuals are requested to submit separate EOI (Expressions of Interests) for the following two projects:

Project A: A comprehensive Procurement Manual outlining the organization's policies, procedures, in light of PPR 2008 and best practices .

Project B: A feasibility study with objective data for educational programs to be offered by a new private university.

- *Submit complete portfolio/skills profile/similar work experience along with the EOI*
- *Shortlisted firms/individuals would be called to discuss scope of work before asking for financial proposal.*

Qualified firms or individuals with adequate resources, experience, and track record interested in any of the project requested to submit their respective **Expression of Interest (EOI) before 12 PM on September 22, 2024**

AUST
1995

Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology
Address: 141-142 Love RD, Tejgaon I/A, Dhaka-1208
Email: registrar@aust.edu, Tel: 02-8870422 Extn.: 103

www.aust.edu/ces/eoi

খুলনা পানি সরবরাহ ও পয়ঃনিষ্কাশন কর্তৃপক্ষ
Khulna Water Supply & Sewerage Authority
৭ নং রুজভেল্ট জেটি ঘাট রোড, জোড়াগেট নিকটবর্তী, খালিশপুর, খুলনা-৯০০০।

স্মারক নং: ৪৬.০৭.০০০০.০০৩.০৭.২৩.৩৫.২৪.৩৭২
তারিখ: ২৫/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রি:।

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of Goods/Works	Last Selling Date and time	Closing Date and time	Opening Date and time
1009885	KWASA-G-HDPE Pipe-fittings-24-25	Supply of HDPE House Connection & Main Pipeline Repair Pipe-fittings to Khulna WASA Store for Financial year 2024-2025.	22-Sep-2024 17:00	23-Sep-2024 11:30	23-Sep-2024 11:30
1010370	KWASA-G-PumpMotor-24-25	Supply of 5 Nos. 10 HP Submersible Pump Motor Set for Financial year 2024-2025.	22-Sep-2024 17:00	23-Sep-2024 12:00	23-Sep-2024 12:00
1010380	KWASA-G-HandPump-24-25	Supply of 6 No. Hand Pump Complete Set & its Parts to Khulna WASA Store for Financial Year 2024-25.	17-Sep-2024 17:00	18-Sep-2024 11:30	18-Sep-2024 11:30

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank Branches.

Further Information and Guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

25.08.2024
Khan Salim Ahmed
Superintending Engineer
Khulna WASA
Phone No: +88-02 4777022973

GD-252

ফরিদপুর পৌরসভা
স্থাপিত : ১৮৬৯খ্রিঃ
ফরিদপুর, বাংলাদেশ।

ফোন :
অফিস : (০৬৩১) ৬৪৮৭১, ৬৩০২৪
ফ্যাক্স : ৬৫৩০০

e-mail:faridpurmayor@yahoo.com, website:www.faridpurmunicipality.com

স্মারক নং-ফঃপৌরঃ/প্রকৌঃ/২০২৪/৫৭;
তারিখঃ ২৫/০৮/২০২৪ইং

"নোটিশ"

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ফরিদপুর পৌরসভার "বঙ্গবন্ধু সুপার মার্কেটের" দোকান বরাদ্দের জন্য স্মারক নং-৫২৮,তারিখ ২৫/৬/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ মূলে প্রচারিত বিজ্ঞপ্তির সার্বিক কার্যক্রম অনিবার্য কারণ বশতঃ বাতিল করা হলো। আবেদনকারীগণকে ব্যাংক ড্রাফ্‌ট এবং সিডিউল মূল্য ফেরত নেওয়ার জন্য নির্দেশক্রমে অনুরোধ করা হলো।

(মোঃ তানজিলুর রহমান)
পৌর নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তা ও
সদস্য-সচিব দোকান বরাদ্দ কমিটি
ফরিদপুর পৌরসভা।

GD- 258

Bangladesh Krishi Bank
Head Office
83-85 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000
Estate & Engineering Department
Phone - 02223384539; E-mail : dgmengineering@ krishibank.org.bd

BKB/HO/EED-2(220)/2024-25/236
Date: 25/08/2024

"e- Tender Notice (OTM)" (Re-Tender)

Previous Tender ID- 1000575

This is to notify all concern that the following tender has been published through National e-Government Procurement Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd)

Sl	Tender ID, Tender Package and Reference No.	Name of Tender	Tender Documents Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	Tender Method
01	1010343, 64/2023-2024, Reference No.: HO/EED-2(220) /2024-25/236 Dated: 25/08/2024	Modernization works of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Staff College, Mirpur, Dhaka.	Date: 17-09-2024 Time: 17:00	Date: 18-09-2024 Time: 12:00	OTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-Government Procurement Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) and you can also ask help from e-gp help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Sd/-
(Md. Anowarul Azim Khan)
Deputy General Manager

GD-260

CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF BANGLADESH
Office of the Director
Shah Amanat International Airport, Chattogram.

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

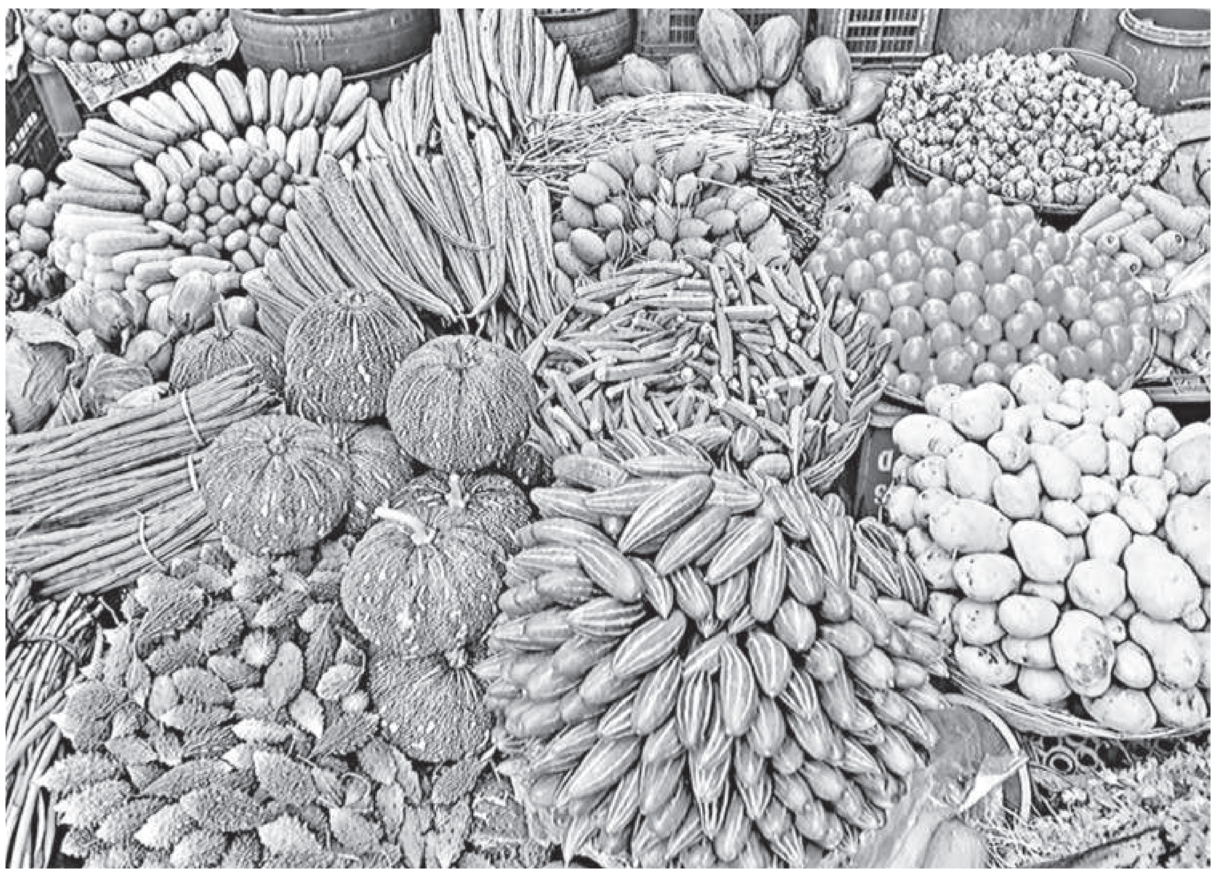
SL No	Tender ID	Reference No.	Name of Works	Tender Closing Date & Time	Remarks
1.	1009803	30.31.0000.121. 07.001.24.81	Supply and Commissioning of VCCS Fan at SAIA,CTG.	08-Sep-2024 15:30	Re-Tendered

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please resister on e-GP system portal. (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)

নং-৩০.৩১.০০০০.০৫১.১১.০০১.২৪/৪৫৮
তারিখ: ২৫/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ

20.08.24
(Group Captain Taslim Ahmed, psc)
Director
Shah Amanat International Airport, Chattogram

GD-255



STAR FILE PHOTO

Vegetable prices in Chattogram markets have surged due to floods and transportation disruptions.

Vegetable prices soar in Ctg

Green chilli now Tk 550-700 per kg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prices of vegetables in Chattogram city's kitchen markets have surged in the last few days, driven by the flooding on highways and the suspension of transport services.

Green chilli is currently being sold at Tk 550 to Tk 700 per kg, tomatoes at Tk 590 per kg, and other vegetables ranging from Tk 90 to Tk 520 per kg at the retail level in Chattogram.

This correspondent visited several kitchen markets, including those in the 2 No Gate, Kazir Dewri, and Karnaphuli Complex areas, and observed similar pricing trends across all locations.

At the city's prime wholesale market in Riazuddin Bazar, most stalls were found empty. Several vegetable vendors attributed the price hikes to the floods and the resulting transportation crisis, which have significantly reduced supply.

The ongoing flood situation and subsequent supply shortages have severely impacted retail kitchen markets in the city. Retail traders said vegetable prices have increased by at least 70 to 100 percent in the last three days.

In retail markets, bottle gourd, pumpkin, and sweet gourd are being sold at Tk 90 per kg, brinjal at Tk 140, beans at Tk 250, cauliflower at Tk 580, pointed gourd at Tk 140, snake gourd at Tk 120, bitter gourd at Tk 150, ladyfingers at Tk 100, and cucumbers at Tk 110 per kg.

> **Last Friday, I sold gourd at Tk 50 per kg, whereas the current price ranges from Tk 90 to Tk 100. Additionally, the price of green chilli, which was Tk 250 per kg on Friday, has surged to Tk 590.**
>
> ABUL HASHEM
> Vegetable trader

Abul Hashem, a vegetable trader at Kazir Dewri retail market, said, "Last Friday, I sold gourd at Tk 50 per kg, whereas the current price ranges from Tk 90 to Tk 100. Additionally, the price of green chilli, which was Tk 250 per kg on Friday, has surged to Tk 590.

"Prices of all types of vegetables have increased due to low supply in the market," he added.

Nurul Alam, a wholesale trader and owner of Shah Amanat Trading at Riazuddin Bazar, explained that a significant portion of the vegetables supplied to Chattogram city originates from markets in Sitakunda, Mirsarai, Feni, Noakhali, and Cumilla regions.

Recent flooding has severely impacted crop yields in these areas, leading to a reduction in vegetable supply by approximately 60-70 percent.

Written exams of 46th BCS suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The written tests of the 46th BCS examination, scheduled to be held between August 28 and September 9, were suspended yesterday due to unavoidable circumstances.

The Bangladesh Public Service Commission issued a press release in this regard.

The date and time of the tests (compulsory and post-related subjects) will be notified through a press release at an appropriate time, said the press release signed by Ananda Kumar Biswas, exam controller (cadre) of BPSC.

NSU faculty condemn violence on campus

STAR REPORT

Faculty members of North South University yesterday condemned the incidents of violence and intimidation that occurred on the university campus on August 21.

In a press statement, they said a group of individuals entered the NSU campus armed with firearms and verbally assaulted several faculty members present on the premises.

The statement claimed that during a gathering

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 26

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Firearms licences issued over last 15yrs suspended

Home adviser discusses issues of law and order, police reform with French ambassador

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Home Affairs has suspended all firearms licences issued to civilians over the past 15 years during the tenure of the Awami League government.

Licensed arms holders have been instructed to deposit their firearms and ammunition at the nearest police station by September 3, according to a circular issued by the Public Security Division of the ministry.

The circular, signed by Md Johirul Haque, senior assistant secretary of the ministry, states that licences granted between January 6, 2009, and August 5, 2024, are suspended.

The suspension came hours after Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury met French Ambassador to Bangladesh Marie Masdupuy at the Secretariat yesterday.

During the meeting, various issues such as law and order, police reform, and the recovery of illegal arms were discussed.

The ambassador expressed concern over arms looted from different police stations, to which the home adviser responded that a crackdown would be launched soon to recover these weapons.

Jahangir also noted that while the law and order situation in Bangladesh is gradually improving, certain challenges remain due to various public demands and protests.

However, he expressed optimism that the situation would improve in the near future.

The ambassador also inquired about government efforts to reform the police force.

Jahangir explained that the police

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Six killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least six people were killed and nine others injured in separate road accidents in Mymensingh, Barishal, Brahmanbaria and Munshiganj districts.

In Mymensingh, a freedom fighter was killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Boilor area of Trishal upazila yesterday morning.

The victim, Md Shafiqul Islam, 75, was a resident of Boilor Boro Pukurpar area in the upazila and was a retired manager of Krishi Bank, police said.

Shafiqul was crossing the highway around 11:00am when speeding motorcycle hit him, leaving him critically injured, said Md Kamal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Trishal Police Station.

He was taken to Mymensingh Medical College hospital where doctors declared him dead. A case was later lodged with the police station in this connection, the OC added.

In Barishal, a woman and her son were killed and four others were injured as their three-wheeler was hit by a Dhaka-bound passenger bus of Jamuna Line Paribahan from opposite direction on Dhaka-Barishal Highway in Gournadi upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Soma Begum, 30, and her son Azmain, 3, of Islampur village under Babuganj upazila of the district.

The incident took place at around 1:30pm in Bezhar area.

All six passengers of the three-wheeler were injured in the accident and were taken to Barishal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, where Soma and her son were declared dead, said Golam Rasul, OC of Gournadi Highway Police Station.

In Brahmanbaria, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw hit a motorcycle, leaving its rider and pillion dead, while five passengers of the auto-rickshaw including its driver sustained injuries.

The incident took place in Kodda area of Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila yesterday noon.

The deceased are: Mahibul Islam

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়
ঠাকুরগাঁও

গাড়ী ভাড়া নেয়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি-২/২০২৪-২০২৫

"The Public Procurement Regulation-2008" ও তৎপরবর্তী সংশোধনী মোতাবেক আগামী ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরে ঠাকুরগাঁও জেলার মাঠ পর্যায়ের পুলিশ ইউনিটসমূহের (থানা/ফাঁড়ি/ক্যাম্প) নিয়মিত অপারেশনাল কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার জন্য ভাড়ায় চালিত গাড়ী ব্যবহারের জন্য পেট্রোল/ডিজেল সম্বলিত মাইক্রোবাস/প্রাইভেট কার/পিকআপ সরবরাহের নিমিত্ত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/মালিক ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীল মোহরযুক্ত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	ঃ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/পুলিশ বিভাগ।
২	সংস্থা	ঃ	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর প্রধান	ঃ	পুলিশ সুপার, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
৪	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর জেলা/সংস্থা	ঃ	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
৫	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি স্মারক নং ও তারিখ	ঃ	স্মারক নং-২০৫০/ই, তারিখঃ ২৫/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ
৬	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	ঃ	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)
৭	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	ঃ	পুলিশ বাজেট "কোড নং-১২২০২২০১০৬১৫২-৩২২১১০৬ পরিবহন ব্যয়" খাত।
৮	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	ঃ	২৬/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।
৯	দরপত্র সিডিউল সর্বশেষ প্রাপ্তির তারিখ	ঃ	১০/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।
১০	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	১১/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ সময় ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১১	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	১১/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা দরপত্রদাতা বা মনোনীত প্রতিনিধিদের উপস্থিতে (যদি থাকে)।
১২	দরপত্র মূল্যয়নের তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ	১৫/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ সময় ১৩.০০ ঘটিকা।
১৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী অফিস ও ঠিকানা	ঃ	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
১৪	দরপত্র প্রাপ্তির স্থান	ঃ	ডিআইজি, রংপুর রেঞ্জ, রংপুর এবং পুলিশ সুপার, ঠাকুরগাঁও/দিনাজপুর/পঞ্চগড়।
১৫	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	ঃ	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
১৬	দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজ জমা দিতে হবে	ঃ	দরপত্র জামানত, হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনদ, ভ্যাট রেজিষ্ট্রেশন সনদ, ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সনদ (স্টেটমেন্টসহ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সনদ, ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের মালিকানা সংক্রান্ত হলফনামা।
১৭	দরপত্র আহবান কর্তৃপক্ষের নাম	ঃ	জনাব উত্তম প্রসাদ পাঠক, পিপিএম-সেবা, পুলিশ সুপার, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
১৮	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী ও ঠিকানা	ঃ	পুলিশ সুপার, ঠাকুরগাঁও।

১৯	লট নং	কাজের বিবরণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমান	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময়
	১.	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরে ঠাকুরগাঁও জেলার মাঠ পর্যায়ের পুলিশ ইউনিট সমূহের (থানা/ফাঁড়ি/ক্যাম্প) নিয়মিত অপারেশনাল কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার জন্য মাইক্রোবাস/প্রাইভেট কার/পিকআপ সরবরাহের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৫০,০০০/-	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসর

২০ বিশেষ শর্তাবলী ঃ
ক ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্বত্বাধিকারীর সীল স্বাক্ষরযুক্ত প্যাডে আবেদন পূর্বক অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত সিডিউল সংগ্রহ করা যাবে (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত)
খ দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী সিডিউল সংগ্রহকালে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় হতে জানা যাবে।
গ পিপি আর আইন/২০০৬ ও পিপিআর বিধিমালা/২০০৮ তৎপরবর্তী সংশোধনী এবং সিডিউলে সংযুক্ত সকল শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে।
ঘ নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পর সিডিউল বিক্রয় এবং দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
ঙ দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন সময় কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন।
চ কর্তৃপক্ষ সর্বনিম্ন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করতে বাধ্য নহেন এবং কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ কিংবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন।

(৪X৯)

২৫।৮।২৪
(উত্তম প্রসাদ পাঠক, পিপিএম-সেবা)
বিপি-৮০০৮১২১৫৭২
পুলিশ সুপার, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
ফোন- ০২৫৮৯৯৩১৯৬০, ফ্যাক্স- ০২৫৮৯৯৩১৯৬৩
E-mail-spthakurgaon@police.gov.bd

GD- 254

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
Power Division
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.

Invitation for Tender (OTM)

1	Ministry/Division	Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources	
2	Procuring Entity Name	Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources	
3	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present	
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh	
5	Invitation for	Stationary goods, Desktop Computers & ICT Equipments, Printer Toner.	
6	Invitation Ref No	27.00.0000.043.07.028.24.472	
7	Date	25.08.2024	
	KEY INFORMATION		
8	Procurement Method	OTM	
	FUNDING INFORMATION		
9	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue/GOB	
10	Development Partners (if applicable)	Not Applicable	
	PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
11	Tender Package No.	01 (2024-2025)	
12	Tender Package Name	Procument of Stationary goods, Desktop Computers & ICT Equipments, Printer Toner.	
13	Tender Publication Date	26.08.2024	
14	Tender Last Selling Date	09.09.2024 Time: 3.00 PM	
15	Tender Closing Date and Time	10.09.2024	Time: 12.00PM
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	10.09.2024	Time:12.30 PM
17	Name & Address of the office(s)	Power division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
	Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Assistant Secretary (Admin-3), Power Division, Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
	Selling Tender Document (Others)	Accounts officer, Power Division, Secretariat Link Road, Biddut Vabon (level-10), Dhaka.	
	Receiving Tender Document	Assistant Secretary(Admin-3) Power Division , Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka	
	Opening Tender Document	Senior Assistant Secretary(Admin-1), Power Division, Room # 205, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
	INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
18	Eligibility of Tender	The tenders should be well Experienced with (1) Trade License (2) Incomes Tax Certificate(TIN) (3) Vat Registration Certificate(3) Bank Solvency Certificate (4) Minimum 3(Three) successful completion Certificate within last 3(Three) years etc.	
19	Brief Description of Goods	Lot-01 (Stationary goods), Lot-02 (Desktop Computer & ICT Equipments) & Lot-03 (Printer Toner) .	
20	Brief Description of Related Services	Not Applicable	
21	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	LOT (1, 2 & 3) Tk. 1,000/- (Per Lot)	

22	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Complementary equipment's
		Lot-01 Stationary goods, Lot-02 Desktop Computer & ICT Equipments, Lot-3 Printer Toner.	Power Division Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	Lot-01 for Tk., 18,000/- Lot-02 for Tk.25,000/- Lot-03 for Tk. 15,000/-	Ready stock or purchase/supply from main dealer/reputed company of Bangladesh within 30 days from the date of issue work order. The Tenderer Must submit sole distributor certificate /distributor authorization letter along with tender document. The authorization letter (for lot-2) in favor of majority product must be granted.

23	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Power Division	
	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Assistant Secretary (Admin-3)	
	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Room # 212, Building # 6, Power Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel. 02223390024	E-mail: Admin-3@pd.gov.bd
24	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all or any tender.		
25	Special Condition: This invitation for tender notice will be available at Power Division's Website.		

25.08.2024
(Md. Delwar Hossain)
Assistant Secretary
Ph: 02223390024.

GD-248

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Censor board shouldn't exist
TANZIKA AMIN

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Following a hiatus of nearly six weeks, Tanzika Amin is back on set, shooting for a new series on Maasranga Television. Directed by Nazrul Islam Raju, this drama highlights the complexities of city life.

Tanzika revealed that her role has an interesting angle—the character is a girl who's eager to leave the country, introducing a subtle yet distinct variation to the storyline.

Regarding her return to filming, the actress shared, "I spent some time abroad in London. Upon coming back, I noticed significant changes in the country. After settling in, I resumed shooting. It feels great to be back on set."

The ***Bakul Fuler Mala*** actress has also begun working on a new web-series. She mentioned that all the details have been finalised, but she remained tight-lipped about the director and the title of the story.

In the meantime, the former Lux star is eagerly anticipating the release of her film, ***Omimangshito***, directed by Raihan Rafi. She shared, "I completed the movie last year, and it was submitted for censorship, but it has been held up."

Tanzika Amin, visibly frustrated, expressed, "After submitting the film to the censor board, it was shuffled from one desk to another, causing significant delays. We put in a tremendous amount of effort to complete the project, only for it to get stalled at the censor board in the end."

She added that with the changes happening in the country, everything seems to be starting afresh. When asked if ***Omimangshito*** would now finally go through the censorship process, she confidently responded, "It will definitely go to the censor board and be released. I firmly believe that."

The actress shared that the film's narrative centres around a couple who are both journalists. She takes on the role of the female lead, a character named Neeru.

Reflecting on her experience portraying a journalist, Tanzika mentioned, "I had played a journalist in a drama many years ago, but stepping into the shoes of a female journalist in a film after so long was a refreshing experience. The role brought its own set of challenges, which made it all the more rewarding."

When asked about her experience working on ***Omimangshito***, the actress shared that the film was a challenging journey. She recounted various intense moments during the shoot that left her with physical scars. "I poured my heart and soul into this project. Even after cameras stop rolling, I found it difficult to shake off the story and character—I was completely absorbed," Tanzika explained.

With growing curiosity surrounding the film, some have speculated that it mirrors the tragic story of Sagar-Runi. Addressing this, Tanzika clarified, "The film portrays a story of barbarism, reflecting the many brutal realities in our society. It's the story of a journalist couple, and it's undeniably a heart-wrenching story. However, it isn't based on any specific individual's life."

When asked about the debate surrounding the need for a censor board, the actress expressed a strong opinion, stating, "I believe the censor board shouldn't exist. Filmmakers should have the freedom to tell their stories as they envision them, without interference. A director's role is to bring a wide range of narratives to the screen, and they shouldn't be hindered by censorship. Films that were previously blocked, such as ***Saturday Afternoon***, should now see the light of day."

The artiste further emphasised the importance of books and films as educational tools, saying, "People gain knowledge and insights by engaging with literature and cinema. Just as there are stories of brutality, there are also stories filled with positivity. If directors are constrained, we won't see the productions of quality work."

Reflecting on the present situation, she added, "I'm optimistic that something remarkable is on the horizon. So far, 99 percent of developments have been positive. Let's see how things unfold."

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Dhaka's theatre troupes unite to support flood victims with charity shows

The capital's theatre community has come together to support flood victims, with troupes such as Ethic, BotTola, and Anuswar, deciding to donate the proceeds from their performances to aid those affected by the disaster.

Ethic returned to the Dhaka stage on Saturday (August 24) with the play ***Haari Phatibe*** at the Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium of the Bangladesh Mahila Samity at 7 pm.

Meanwhile, BotTola will revive their popular play ***Bannyatherium*** on August 30 at 6pm at the Mahila Samity in celebration of their anniversary. The troupe has pledged to donate all proceeds from this performance to aid children in flood-affected areas.

Putul finally finds flood-hit family

Renowned singer Sajia Sultana Putul has finally located her sister, Sanjida Akhter Kona, and the rest of her family members after days of searching amid the devastating floods in the country, with the help of the community.

Though facing a shortage of drinking water, they are safe, the singer informed yesterday. Putul expressed deep gratitude on social media, particularly to Lops Sharkar, who located them.

The ongoing floods have impacted 5.1 million people across 12 districts. Communication blackouts, especially in Feni, left many families, including Putul's, unable to reach loved ones. As the waters begin to recede, Putul hopes for her family's safe return and urges compassion for flood victims during this crisis.

NEWS

Hasina made accused in 12 more cases

FROM PAGE 12

director of BDR in 2010.

Rahim, an accused in the BDR carnage case, died in jail on July 29 of that year.

Advocate Abdul Aziz, son of deceased Abdur Rahim, filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Akhtaruzzaman.

Mosharraf Hossain Kajol, the then public prosecutor of the BDR mutiny case, and former lawmakers Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Sheikh Helal, and Mirza Azam are among the accused in the case.

Hasina and 48 others were sued in a case filed over the death of university student Sheikh Ashabul Yamin at the Savar Bazar bus stand during the quota reform movement on July 18.

The victim's uncle, Abdullah Al Kabir, filed the case with a Dhaka court. In a viral video, Yamin, a student of the Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST), was seen being dropped on the road by the law enforcers from their armoured van. He was still alive at the time.

One Masud Rana filed a case with another Dhaka court against Hasina and 24 others over the death of his brother-in-law, Babu Mollah, in the Hatirjheel area on July 19.

Hasina and 21 others were sued over the death of Golam Nafiz, 17, at the Farmgate area of Tejgaon on August 1. Rafiqul Islam filed a case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Nurul Huda Chowdhury.

Nasir Uddin filed a case with a Dhaka court against Hasina and 18 others over the death of shop employee Jasim Uddin, 35, in the Uttara Paschim area on July 18.

Upon separate hearings, the four magistrates recorded the statements of the complainants and asked the officer-in-charges (OC) of the police stations concerned to register the complaints as the First Information Report (FIR).

Yesterday, Rizia Begum, 36, filed a case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Saddam Hossain against Hasina and 33 others over the death of his nephew journalist Mehedi Hasan near the Kazla Toll Plaza over Hanif Flyover in Jatrabari during quota protests on July 18.

Babul Mia, 42, also filed a case with the court of the same magistrate over the death of one Jisan against Hasina and 26 in Matuail on July 20, while Mamunur Rashid, 34, filed a case against Hasina and 27 others over the death of his brother-in-law Yusuf Mia Sanoar in Shani Akhra area on July 20.

Another case was filed against Hasina and 13 others over the death of Mahamudur Rahman Soikot, 19, in Mohammadpur on July 19.

Besides, 30-40 unnamed police officers and members were also accused.

In Narsingdi, Angur Mia, the brother-in-law of the slain Jaman Mia, filed a murder case against Hasina and two others with a local court.

The court directed the Madhabdi Police Station officer-in-charge to record it as an FIR.

Local Awami League leaders and activists, at the behest of the named accused, opened fire on a peaceful student protest on July 21. Jaman was shot while overseeing the protest and later succumbed to his injuries on July 25 at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In Rangpur, a murder case has been filed against 150 individuals, including Hasina and her sister, Sheikh Rehana, with a local court over a clash between student protesters and law enforcement agencies during a student movement in Rangpur on July 19.

A shop worker, Momdel Hossain, who was forced to amputate his left leg from the knee, filed the case. The court asked Kotwali Police Station to record it as an FIR.

In Pirojpur court, Hasina and 13 others, including five Rab members, were sued in an abduction case filed by Babul Hawlader, father of Sunny Hawlader, who was a victim of enforced disappearance in 2013.

The then Rab director general Mokhlesur Rahman was among the accused.

Interim govt to be given

FROM PAGE 12

According to him, Bangladesh has to clean up all the rubbish of the past and build a truly democratic country – a task completed by the former caretaker government led by Justice Latifur Rahman in just three months before it organised a fair election.

"We want to allow the interim government a reasonable time to reform all the institutions of the state to hold an acceptable election. But the time will not be indefinite," he said.

The BNP secretary general blamed India for the ongoing floods and criticised the neighbouring country for its position on sharing water from the common rivers with Bangladesh.

"Parts of the country have been affected by severe floods that were not witnessed in the last 15 years. This terrible flood happened because India opened their dams without any prior alert," he said.

Fakhrul also alleged BNP leader M Ilias Ali became a victim of enforced disappearance because he stood up to India's water-sharing policy.

"The bilateral contract of sharing transboundary river water has not been established yet. They (India) are using water aggression as a weapon. Protests against this water aggression started from Sylhet which was led by M Ilias Ali. As a result, he was forcefully disappeared," he said.

Asked about the whereabouts of Ilias, he said, "We are not sure whether he is alive or not. We are not given any specific answer from the organisations involved but we are keeping out pressure to know what happened to all the people who faced enforced disappearance. We have earlier submitted all details to the UN. A UN investigation team arrived in Bangladesh to investigate the matter. We are hopeful."

Fakhrul claimed around 700 BNP leaders and activists were subjected to enforced disappearance while more than 1.45 lakh cases were filed against over 6 million BNP activists in its struggle for democracy since 2012 – which he said was "unbelievable".

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was freed through the mass movement but she never bowed to the power, Fakhrul said and added now the party is battling legally several cases against its acting chairman Tarique Rahman.

Fakhrul accused Hasina of attempting to establish a one-party rule. "Sheikh Mujib was a leading figure in the liberation movement of the country and was in the government from 1972 to 1975 with people's support. But he decided to initiate a one-party rule, formed BKSAL and dissolved all other political parties. Sheikh Hasina followed in his footsteps and finalised the preparation for a one-party system, but failed in the face of the resistance of the general students."

The BNP secretary general promised to repeal the Digital Security Act, which is now the Cyber Security Act, if the party forms the government after the election.

"In the previous regime, people could not speak out for fear of the Digital Security Act. Journalists were suppressed by this law. Now people have regained freedom of speech," he said.

Now Social Islami Bank freed

FROM PAGE 12

The new board was constituted as per section 45 of the Bank Companies Act, 1991 to protect the interests of depositors and ensure good governance, said the BB letter to the SIBL managing director.

The move to dissolve the board comes after a group of SIBL officials requested the BB governor to do so following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5.

Alam is said to be a close associate of Hasina.

The group and its associates took out Tk 4,200 crore from the bank, which came under S Alam's control in 2017, according to central bank documents.

However, the actual amount taken is in the neighbourhood of Tk 15,000 crore, which would be about 41 percent of the bank's total outstanding loans at the end of last year, according to the bank's officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The amount given to S Alam and its associate companies has left the bank with a deficit in its current account balance with the central bank for more than a year.

To plug the deficit, the central bank provided special liquidity support to the lender without any collateral on the orders of former BB governor Abdur Rouf Talukder.

As of August 7, the bank faced a current account deficit of Tk 2,877 crore with the central bank.

The liquidity support was stopped after Ahsan H Mansur took charge in the middle of August.

At the end of 2023, SIBL had Tk 9,568 crore in default loans but it showed only Tk 1,644 crore, according to a recent BB investigation.

UN calls for stepping up

FROM PAGE 12

The UNHCR welcomed Bangladesh's renewed commitment to the refugees, set forth by the interim government's Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus. "We echo Dr Yunus's call for continued solidarity from the international community through consistent financial support and helping to ensure their 'eventual repatriation to Myanmar, with safety, dignity and full rights'."

"Bangladesh's humanitarian spirit, at a time of transition for the Bangladeshi people, deserves global appreciation," the statement said.

A dignified and sustainable return to Myanmar remains the primary solution to this crisis, the UN agency said, calling on the international community to demonstrate the political will to make this possible.

Highlighting the ongoing conflict between Myanmar forces and rebels in Rakhine, the UNHCR also called on the Bangladesh authorities to ensure that civilians fleeing the violence in Myanmar are allowed access to protection in Bangladesh.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also called on all parties to the conflict in Myanmar to end the violence and ensure the protection of civilians, said his spokesperson Stephane Dujarric in a briefing.

Guterres also appealed to strengthen regional protection efforts, provide access to conflict-affected communities and further support host countries.

Julie Bishop, the UN secretary-general's special envoy on Myanmar, is engaging all stakeholders, including regional actors, to move towards an inclusive Myanmar-led process for sustainable peace and national reconciliation, Dujarric said.

These are important steps to create conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of the Rohingya people to Myanmar, he said.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said that the ongoing humanitarian crisis and human rights violations in Myanmar are making life even harder for many of the country's ethnic and religious minority groups, especially the Rohingya people.

In a statement yesterday, he said the US stands with the survivors of the Rohingya genocide and is committed to providing life-saving assistance to affected members of Rohingya communities and those affected by the crisis.

Over the past seven years, he said, the US has contributed nearly $2.4 billion and is also conducting extensive documentation of the atrocities and abuses committed against Rohingya and all civilians.

"Our support for the people of Burma in their aspirations for a democratic, inclusive, and peaceful future is unwavering, as are our calls on all parties to protect civilians from harm."

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said the country continues to support international accountability for human rights violations and other abuses.

In a statement, it called on the Myanmar regime to take a different path -- cease violence, engage in dialogue and grant safe and unimpeded humanitarian access.

"We support ASEAN's efforts to resolve the crisis through the work of the ASEAN Chair and Special Envoy and consistent with the Five Point Consensus. We continue to support the people of Myanmar and their aspirations for a return to the path of democracy."

Janmashtami

FROM PAGE 12

The day of Janmashtami is a public holiday in Bangladesh.

Temples and religious organisations and institutions have also chalked out programmes to celebrate Janmashtami festival.

National dailies will publish special articles while Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television, other private TV channels, and radio stations will air special programmes highlighting various aspects of the life and philosophy of Lord Sri Krishna.

Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad and Mahanagar Sarbajanin Puja Committee have programmes to be observed centrally at Dhakeshwari National Temple here.

The programmes include Geeta Joggo at 8:00am at Dhakeshwari National Temple to seek blessings for the country and the nation.

Ex-minister

FROM PAGE 12

War, he was honoured with the heroic title 'Bir Protik', the fourth-highest gallantry award in Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, police detained Abdus Sobhan Golap in the capital's Nakhalpara area in the afternoon.

He was picked for interrogation around 2:45pm, said Mobarak Hossain, officer-in-charge of Tejgaon Police Station.

Golap is a former lawmaker from Madaripur-3 constituency.

He lost his seat to independent candidate Tahmina Begum in the last general election.

In February last year, a writ was filed at the High Court seeking direction to investigate the allegation that Golap purchased nine houses in New York for $4 million.

Telegram CEO arrested in France

REUTERS, *Paris*

Pavel Durov, the Russian-born billionaire founder and owner of the Telegram messaging app, was arrested at Le Bourget airport outside Paris shortly after landing on a private jet late on Saturday and placed in custody, a police source said.

There was no official confirmation from France of the arrest, which French and Russian media have also reported, saying that Durov, 39, was arrested shortly after arriving at Le Bourget airport on a private jet from Azerbaijan.

France's BFM and TF1 said that Durov, who has dual French and United Arab Emirates citizenship, was arrested as part of a preliminary police investigation into allowing possible criminality due to a lack of moderators on Telegram and a lack of cooperation with police.

Durov faces possible indictment, according to French media yesterday.

Yemen Houthis hail Hezbollah strikes

Renew threats to launch their own assault on Israel

AGENCIES

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels praised attacks by Lebanon's Hezbollah on Israel yesterday and renewed threats to launch their own assault in response to Israeli strikes on a port in Yemen.

"We congratulate Hezbollah and its Secretary-General on the great and courageous attack carried out by the resistance this morning against the Israeli enemy," the Houthis said in a statement after Hezbollah said it had launched a large-scale attack with rockets and drones.

The Yemeni rebels said the "strong and effective response ... confirms that the resistance is capable, strong and honest in its promise and threats."

The Houthis pledged to launch their own attacks against Israel in response to July 20 strikes that targeted a rebel-run port in the coastal city of Hodeida. "We reaffirm once again that the Yemeni response is definitely coming," the statement said.

The strike on Hodeida came a day after the Houthis launched their first deadly strike on Israel -- a drone attack in Tel Aviv that killed an Israeli civilian, reports AFP.

Israel's response destroyed much of the port's fuel storage capacity and killed at least nine people, according to the rebels.

The Houthis are fighting Israel as part of Iran's so-called "axis of resistance", which includes militant groups in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

Since November, the Yemeni rebels have launched a flurry of missile and drone strikes on Israel-linked shipping in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.

Meanwhile, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi yesterday warned America's top general during a meeting of the dangers of a major conflict in Lebanon.

US Air Force General C Q Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in Egypt hours after a significant missile exchange between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah, reports Reuters.

In a statement, Sisi's office said the Egyptian leader told Brown that the international community needed to "exert all efforts and intensify pressures to defuse tension and stop the state of escalation that threatens the security and stability of the entire region."

"(Sisi warned) in this regard of the dangers of opening a new front in Lebanon, and stressing the need to preserve Lebanon's stability and sovereignty," the statement read.

Sisi yesterday called for a "decisive stance from the international community" and a stronger response "to joint Egyptian-American-Qatari efforts" for a ceasefire and hostage-prisoner exchange, which would enable a "path to calm and stability in the region," his office said.

EAST UKRAINE

Reuters staff missing in Russian strike on hotel

REUTERS

A member of the Reuters team covering the war in Ukraine was missing and two others were hospitalised after a Russian strike on a hotel in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kramatorsk.

In a statement, the news agency said that the Hotel Sapphire, where a six-person Reuters crew was staying, was hit by a strike on Saturday.

"One of our colleagues is unaccounted for, while another two have been taken to hospital for treatment," the agency said.

"Three other colleagues have been accounted for. We are urgently seeking more information, working with the authorities in Kramatorsk, and supporting our colleagues and their families. We will give an update when we have more information," it added.

US PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Harris raises $540m since launching her campaign

REUTERS, *Washington*

Democrat Kamala Harris has raised $540 million in little more than a month since she began her race for US president, with a surge of donations flowing in during the Democratic National Convention last week, her campaign said yesterday.

A memo released by Harris' campaign manager, Jen O'Malley Dillon, said the $540 million raised included $82 million that came in during convention week and is a sign of Democratic enthusiasm for her candidacy.

"This is the most ever for any presidential campaign in this time span," she said.

Vice President Harris became a candidate for president on July 21 when President Joe Biden stepped aside under pressure from fellow Democrats concerned about his cognitive ability after he stumbled during a June 27 debate against Republican Donald Trump.

SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW

China, Philippines clash in disputed waters

REUTERS, *Manila*

The Philippines and China clashed in disputed waters of the South China Sea yesterday over what Manila said was a resupply mission for fishermen, the latest in a series of sea and air confrontations in the strategic waterway.

The incident overshadows efforts by both nations to rebuild trust and better manage disputes after months of confrontations, including a violent clash in June, in which a Filipino sailor lost a finger.

The Philippines yesterday accused China of "aggressive and dangerous manoeuvres" to block the resupply mission. China's coast guard, meanwhile, said it had taken "control measures" against a vessel that had "illegally" entered the waters and repeatedly approached Chinese ships in a dangerous manner.

In the incident near the Sabina Shoal, the Philippine South China Sea task force said Chinese vessels rammed and used water cannons against a Philippine Bureau of Fisheries ship transporting food, fuel and medical supplies for Filipino fishermen.

For its part, the Chinese coast guard said the Philippine ship "ignored repeated serious warnings and deliberately approached and rammed" China's law enforcement boat, resulting in a collision. It added that responsibility for the collision lies entirely on the Philippine side.

No contingency system despite available funds

FROM PAGE 1

After September 2022, when the initiative was taken, Bangladesh faced a number of cyclones and floods that severely disrupted telecommunication. If an emergency system had been in place, people's suffering from lack of communication would have been much less.

For instance, Cyclone Mocha in May 2023 knocked down most of the towers in Cox's Bazar, while Cyclone Remal in May left more than 55 percent of the mobile towers dysfunctional.

Were the NETS in place, the government would not have needed to spend about Tk 50 lakh to provide diesel to keep network towers operational in flood-affected areas in Feni at present.

The posts and telecommunication secretary was the convener of the committee and the director general of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission's systems and services division was assigned as the member secretary.

The Director General of the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) was also made a member of the committee.

Razwanur Rahman, the DDM DG, told The Daily Star he has not been made aware of such an initiative.

Md Mushfiqur Rahman, secretary for Posts and Telecommunications, could not be reached for comment. However, a senior official in the ministry said the initiative hasn't progressed much.

The committee was also supposed to present a budget proposal for the NETS in the social obligation fund (SoF) council meeting.

SoF of the BTRC is a fund designed to support the expansion of telecommunication services in underserved areas. And the major contributors to the SoF are telecom operators.

But no such proposal has been placed at the meeting of the SOF council in the last two years, according to the meeting minutes.

At the meeting of the SoF council in April this year, which took place after one and half years of the formation of the committee, a project for NETS was proposed.

But in the next meeting, in late July, there was no mention of the project.

The meeting discussed the projected cost of Tk 835 crore for different projects in fiscal 2024-25. However, the NETS was not included in the list of projects, according to the document.

"The prolonged delay in implementing the NETS is a critical oversight, especially when the SoF is readily available," said Abu Nazam M Tanveer Hossain, a telecom policy expert.

Given Bangladesh's vulnerability to natural calamities, a national telecommunications emergency plan (NETP) and system are essential for coordinating relief efforts and saving lives, he said.

Immediate action is needed prioritising high-risk areas, network neutrality and tailored contingency plans for different emergencies.

"This will enhance our disaster response and safeguard our citizens effectively," he said, adding that the International Telecommunication Union's Strategic Target 3.5 mandates that all countries have a National Emergency Telecommunication Plan by 2023.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a specialised agency of the UN responsible for many matters related to information and communication technologies.

The ITU provided a deadline to the respective national telecommunication operators to come up with a detailed NETP by 2023, said Shahed Alam, chief corporate and regulatory officer at Robi.

The NETP is an overall document that includes not only the regulatory framework for disaster risk management but also all activities and actions that need to be developed and implemented in each of the phases of the disaster management cycle beyond the ICT sector.

In the case of any global pandemic or any other natural calamities, NETP plays a pivotal role in dealing with specific crises for a country.

Against this backdrop, the BTRC arranged a workshop with relevant stakeholders for developing a NETP for Bangladesh, according to Alam.

"Unfortunately, no effective measures have been implemented yet based on the recommendations that came up from the workshop. We believe that immediate implementation of NETP will pave the way for smoothly implementing the NETS."

Forcing people

FROM PAGE 1

according to a press release from the ministry.

He also highlighted the potential consequences of administrative disruptions, noting that teachers and staffers could face delays in receiving their salaries and allowances if the system falters.

Wahiduddin reiterated the need to maintain stability in the education sector with the goal of restoring discipline in educational institutions amid the ongoing transition.

He further emphasised the importance of maintaining proper relationships between teachers and students, saying that no one should be personally humiliated.

Mazumder, Sarafat's bank accounts to be frozen

FROM PAGE 1

are the owners of the Bangla daily Dainik Bangla.

Both men are big beneficiaries of the Awami League government of the past 15 years.

Mazumder leveraged his position as the BAB chairman to change critical policies for the banking sector such that it favoured his businesses as well as take loans bypassing rules and regulations, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

For instance, at the 654th board meeting of Janata Bank in 2021, a Tk 261 crore interest waiver facility was approved for two concerns of Mazumder's Nassa Group: Nassa Taipei Spinners and Nassa Spinners.

The central bank initially rejected the facility as Janata approved the waiver violating banking norms but later walked back on the decision.

To ensure his access to the power centre, he would collect funds from banks and personally hand the cheque over to the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he said.

Sarafat, who hails from Gopalganj like Hasina, exerted his influence to get a host of facilities for the cash-strapped Padma Bank and get a licence for a non-bank financial institution in a crowded sector.

The Anti-Corruption Commission recently started investigating Sarafat over allegations of seizing the Padma bank and embezzling Tk 800 crore from the stock market.

বাংলাদেশ কৃষি উন্নয়ন কর্পোরেশন
উপপরিচালক (খামার)এর কার্যালয়
ডোমার ভিত্তি বীজআলু উৎপাদন খামার
সোনারায়, নীলফামারী
website: www.badc.gov.bd

স্মারক নং- ১২.০৬.৭৩১৫.৬৭৬.৯৯.০০১.২৪.১২২ তারিখঃ ২২/০৮/২০২৪

"দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

০১	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০১/২০২৪-২৫	তারিখ ঃ ২২/০৮/২০২৪
০২	দরপত্রের বিবরণ	পুকুর, নিষ্কাশন খাল ও বোরোধানের নীচু জমির মাছ বিক্রয়
০৩	দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা	বাংলাদেশের যে কোন স্বচ্ছল ঠিকাদার/ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠান
০৪	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির স্থান	ক) যুগ্মপরিচালক (বীপ্রঃ), বিএডিসি,রংপুর এর দপ্তর খ) উপপরিচালক (খামার) ডোমার ভিত্তি বীজআলু উৎপাদন খামার, বিএডিসি, সোনারায়, নীলফামারী এর দপ্তর গ) সিনিয়র সহকারী পরিচালক(খামার), বিএডিসি, নীলফামারী এর দপ্তর
০৫	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের সময়সীমা	১১/০৯/২০২৪ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালিন পর্যন্ত ৪নং ক্রমিকে বর্ণিত অফিসসমূহে দরপত্র সিডিউল পাওয়া যাইবে।
০৬	দরপত্র সিডিউল জমাদানের স্থান	৪নং ক্রমিকে বর্ণিত অফিসসমূহে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাক্সে
০৭	দরপত্র সিডিউল গ্রহণ, খোলার তারিখ ও সময়সূচী	১২/০৯/২০২৪ তারিখ দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ৪ (চার) নং ক্রমিকে বর্ণিত অফিসসমূহে দরপত্র সিডিউল গ্রহণ করা হইবে এবং একই দিন বিকাল ৩:০০ ঘটিকায় যুগ্মপরিচালক (বীপ্রঃ), বিএডিসি, রংপুর এর দপ্তরে উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেহ থাকেন) দরপত্র বাক্স খোলা হইবে।
০৮	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	প্রতি সেট ১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা অফেরৎযোগ্য।
০৯	আমানতের পরিমাণ	উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ১০%
১০	দরপত্র কমিটি কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র বাতিল কিংবা গ্রহণের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	
১১	Website: www.badc.gov.bd	

22/08/2024
(কৃষিবিদ মোঃ আবু তালেব মিয়া)
পরিচিতি নং-০২০২৯২
উপপরিচালক (খামার)
ডোমার ভিত্তি বীজআলু উৎপাদন খামার
বিএডিসি,সোনারায়, নীলফামারী

BADC= 35(6x3)
GD- 253

We had no clue

FROM PAGE 1

In Feni, several remote upazilas remained inaccessible by road, even as waters were receding. Mobile networks have not yet been fully restored, and many areas are still without electricity.

Locals said there is now a severe shortage of drinking water and food.

Meanwhile, three new deaths -- one each in Noakhali, Cumilla, and Rangamati -- were reported yesterday, taking the toll from the floods to 21. Two people were reported missing in Moulvibazar.

People started returning to their villages in Brahmanbaria, Lakshmipur, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Khagrachhari, Chattogram, and Cox's Bazar as the flood situation was improving there.

Many huts have collapsed and thousands have lost almost all their belongings, including farm animals and stored crops.

According to the disaster management ministry, the floods marooned over 10 lakh people in 11 districts and the total number of those directly affected was over 52 lakh.

At least 73 upazilas have been severely impacted. The authorities opened 3,654 shelters, providing refuge to over 4 lakh people.

MISERABLE CONDITION

Yunus Sikder, a resident of the Bangla Bazar area in Begumganj, Noakhali, said thousands were suffering from a shortage of food.

"I spent all my savings on food and water. Now we are forced to drink dirty water," he said.

Although the water has been receding, the situation remains particularly dire in Feni and Cumilla, where relief materials have not reached many remote areas because trucks broke down on flooded roads, and there is no boat to carry them.

People stranded in Cumilla were also suffering from shortage of food and drinking water.

In some places of Feni, helicopters of the army, navy, air force, RAB, and BGB are delivering relief goods to remote areas.

The floods have caused extensive damage to fish farms and livestock, with losses estimated at Tk 411 crore, according to the government.

[Anwarul Haider from Noakhali, and Khalid Bin Nazrul from Cumilla contributed to this report.]

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of The Executive Engineer, RHD
Chattogram South Road Division, Dohazari, Chattogram.
e-mail: eedoh@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.1582.414.36.01.01.24-1451 Date: 25-08-2024

e-Tender Corrigendum Notice

This is to notify for all concerns that e-Tenders are invited the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for procurement of works for the following Tenders. Interested persons/firms can see details by visiting the website *www.eprocure.gov.bd*.

This is to notify all concerned that the following tender has been published through the e-GP portal.

1. Construction of 04 Nos. PC Girder/RCC Girder Bridge, 35 Nos. RCC Box Culvert and others ancillary work at Chaturi (Chowmohoni) - CUFL - Karnaphuli Dry Dock (Marine Academy) - Fakirnirhat National Highway (N-121) (Chainage: 00+000 - 15+000) with improvement of appropriate & standard width under Chattogram South Road Division during the year 2024-2025. (WP-01)

Tender ID. 1005037, Tender Reference No. e-GP/OSTETM/CSRD/DEV-01/CUFL/2024-2025.
Publishing: 29.07.2024.

Corrigendum Details

Sl. No.	Field Name	Old Date & Time	New Date & Time
1.	Tender/ Proposal Document last selling/ downloading Date and Time :	28.08.2024, Up to 16.00	18.09.2024 Up to 16.00
2.	Tender Security Submission Date and Time:	29.08.2024, Up to 10.30	19.09.2024 Up to 10.30
3.	Tender/ Proposal Closing Date and Time :	29.08.2024 Up to 11.00	19.09.2024 Up to 11.00
4.	Tender/ Proposal Opening Date and Time :	29.08.2024 Up to 11.00	19.09.2024 Up to 11.00

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged this addendum will be considered as part of the tender documents.

(Pintu Chakma)
ID No. 602219
Project Director
&
Executive Engineer, RHD
Chattogram South Road Division
Dohazari, Chattogram.

GD- 243

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

BJMC is still incurring losses!

Govt must overhaul the jute sector, revive its past glory

It is surprising that more than four years after the Awami League government closed the 25 state-run jute mills, the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) is still counting losses for them. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, in FY 2023-24, the corporation incurred a loss of over Tk 180 crore, while over Tk 137 crore was spent on salaries and allowances for employees who are sitting idle. For instance, the Demra-based Latif Bawani Jute Mills Limited, which was shut down in July 2020, is still having to pay its 184 staff members. A similar situation prevails in other closed jute mills. The question is, why has the BJMC failed to take a decision about its idle workforce in all these years?

Back in 2020, the government had promised that all the mills would be reopened after equipping them with modern technologies under different types of ventures such as public-private partnership, etc. It also promised to give jobs to the laid-off workers once the mills reopened. However, we have not seen any such initiatives since. What BJMC did instead was that it leased out 14 of the 25 mills to different private organisations. Unfortunately, half of them reportedly do not even have the expertise to run such facilities, and therefore couldn't start their production. On what basis were those mills leased out then? Also, isn't leasing them out to private entities without modernising them a clear breach of the government promise?

Given the worldwide demand for jute-based products and the potential of this sector within the country, we think the interim government should take urgent initiatives to revive this sector. Of course, if needed, the government can work together with private institutions but there is no alternative to revamping the BJMC so that it can take the lead in this regard. This would also create job opportunities for thousands of workers including those who used to work in the sector and are now living in dire conditions.

Reviving the sector is all the more important because of the global campaign to reduce the use of plastic products. Bangladesh can be a part of this drive by rejuvenating the sector since jute-based products can actually be a great alternative to plastic goods and bags. Our scientists have invented some jute-based products, such as the biodegradable Sonali Bag, which has a great potential. However, we have not succeeded in popularising them due to the reluctance of the relevant authorities. Such attitudes must change.

About the idle BJMC workforce, we think the government should take a quick decision about transferring them to other government factories or institutions. Another option is to let go of these officials by paying them their dues since the BJMC should not be incurring such huge losses year after year. However, the government's long-term goal should be to completely overhaul the BJMC and the jute sector so that the latter can make profits again.

We must undo legacy of data distortion

BBS must be able to provide accurate data

Bangladesh has long suffered from a lack of reliable official data thanks to the Awami League regime that often fabricated data to align with its political narratives and cover up unflattering truths. From economy to public health to education to energy, this trend was allegedly prevalent across key policy areas. While we are yet to learn of the full extent of data manipulation or the damage caused by it, a report by *Bonik Barta* digs deep into the economic sector, highlighting how top officials were involved in such practices.

Reportedly, former finance minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, particularly during his tenure as planning minister in 2014-2019, played an active role in this regard. Under his leadership, an influential syndicate within the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) controlled data processing to manipulate key economic indicators such as inflation and growth, leading to misguided policies that failed to address the real economic conditions and ultimately hurt the country. For example, from 2015 to 2019, Bangladesh's growth was overstated by 3.5 percent, according to World Bank. Such manipulations allowed the government to show continuous growth in line with its Five-Year Plans. The BBS also manipulated the Consumer Price Index (CPI) by increasing the number of items in the inflation basket from 420 to 749, thus diluting the impact of rising prices for essential goods and keeping inflation figures artificially low.

The trend of data distortion was not limited to Kamal's period at the planning ministry, nor was BBS the only party complicit in it. In fact, many key state institutions were also similarly compromised, which shows how centrally planned this whole data propaganda campaign was. It was only in July that we got to learn of a shocking discrepancy of $14 billion in our export data, which was apparently orchestrated by officials at the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and Export Promotion Bureau (EPB). Instances like this likely abound, even if those were not always reported. It is because of such statistical manipulations that the World Bank's Statistical Capacity Indicator showed a fall in Bangladesh's methodology score from 70 in 2014 to 30 in 2020.

Against this backdrop, the importance of overhauling our entire data regime cannot be overstated. Accurate data are the backbone of effective policy-making, whereas manipulated data can lead to disastrous consequences, as it has in our case. To address this problem, experts have made various recommendations including establishing an independent data commission to oversee the data evaluation processes; appointing seasoned statisticians to key positions in BBS instead of admin cadre officers; conducting regular external audits of official data to detect discrepancies; and implementing legal reforms to criminalise data manipulation. These steps have become essential to undo the damage done by the previous regime and put Bangladesh back on a path of progress.

Charting a new course

Political settlement and constitutional reform in post-autocratic Bangladesh

Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb
writes on sustainable development and is a public policy critic. He has several books to his credit, including 'Fourth Industrial Revolution and Bangladesh,' 'Bangladesh: Development Trajectory And Democracy Deficit,' and '50 Years of Bangladesh Economy.'

FAIZ AHMAD TAIYEB

Bangladesh stands at a critical juncture following the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime, with renewed discussions on state reform and political settlement. The process of constitutional reform is crucial to re-establish democratic governance and stability. Currently, three schools of thought dominate the discourse: revolutionary constitution-building, standard constitutional reform coupled with a referendum, and reform based on Professor Mushtaq Khan's political settlement theory. Here, I would like to explore each approach in detail, highlighting their implications for Bangladesh's future.

Revolutionary constitution building

Revolutionary constitution building involves drafting a new constitution by the parties that led the revolutionary movement. This approach allows the architects of the revolution to embed fundamental changes that address systemic issues and rectify power imbalances. Advocates of this method argue that it can create a constitution that is truly reflective of the revolutionary ethos and aspirations of the populace.

Nevertheless, this approach is fraught with challenges. The exclusion of other political forces in the drafting process can lead to a lack of consensus and national unity. Moreover, the revolutionaries may lack experience in statecraft, leading to practical difficulties in governance. There is also the risk of replacing one form of autocracy with another, as the new constitution could entrench the power of the revolutionaries without adequate checks and balances.

Proponents argue that while constitutional change was not the initial target of the movement, the dire need for reform has emerged following mass killings and severe human rights abuses under the previous regime. These actions transformed the state into a one-party system, undermining democratic rights and stifling opposition through extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances.

Given these circumstances, scholars supporting this school of thought contend that a revolutionary constitution is necessary to eradicate the old power structures and prevent a recurrence of such autocratic practices. This approach aims to embed new democratic values and frameworks reflective of the people's aspirations for a just and equitable society.

Standard constitutional reform with referendum

Standard constitutional reform involves amending the existing constitution through legal procedures and ratifying these changes through a public referendum. This process ensures that the populace has a direct say in the governance structures that affect their lives. Proponents argue that this method enhances the legitimacy of the government and ensures that reforms reflect the will of the people. Moreover, it allows for gradual change, which can maintain stability during the transition period.

However, this approach faces significant challenges. There is a risk that entrenched political interests may influence the reform process, potentially undermining the democratic aspirations of the population. Additionally, public opinion can be swayed by populist rhetoric, which may lead to decisions that do not necessarily reflect long-term national interests.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের
সংবিধান

VISUAL: **FATIMA JAHAN ENA**

After the mass upheaval and the interim government's rise to power, the urgency for constitutional reform has intensified. Advocates argue that reforms validated through a referendum will have legitimacy and sustainability. This method emphasises the political process, highlighting the importance of political parties and the elite power nexus in adhering to new legal frameworks.

This school of thought stresses the necessity of integrating reforms across society and politics, ensuring that changes are not only top-down but also enjoy grassroots support. Political parties must pledge to implement these reforms as part of a broader political settlement, involving businessmen, bureaucrats, agencies, and civil society. This comprehensive approach aims to foster a participatory democratic process where students and labour groups can protest against misdeeds, keeping the political settlement open and accountable.

Reform based on the political settlement theory

Professor Mushtaq Khan's political settlement theory offers a different lens for constitutional reform. This theory emphasises the importance of acknowledging the distribution of power and interests among various groups in society. By considering the existing power dynamics, reforms can be more inclusive and pragmatic, potentially leading to greater political and economic stability.

Implementing this theory involves complex negotiations among different power holders, ensuring that reforms are inclusive and pragmatic. However, this approach faces resistance from dominant groups reluctant to cede power. Despite these challenges, Khan's theory provides a pathway to achieving a balanced and stable political settlement.

However, in the process of implementation, there are several questions to be raised and points to be considered.

When it comes to state reform versus political settlement through exercise of power, how can a well-crafted constitution mitigate the tendency of the current power structure in Bangladesh to foster dictatorial governance? Additionally, can a near-perfect constitution eliminate authoritarian rule, financial exploitation, and discrimination?

The power players in Bangladesh—politicians, businessmen, bureaucrats, and other influential power elites (partners in crime)—often operate beyond the bounds of existing laws and institutions. How can this concentration of power be disrupted, and what mechanisms can achieve a more equitable shift in power dynamics?

For organisational and institutional reform, firstly, the questions of what exactly constitutes an institution, according to theoretical frameworks, and how are institutions currently organised in Bangladesh must be addressed. Is there any institution at all, are not they mere organisations? What are the strengths and weaknesses of formal and informal institutions in Bangladesh, and how do they function within the broader institutional framework?

Given the monopolisation and inefficiency in various institutions such as the judiciary, public administration, and the Bangladesh Bank, how can a political settlement positively influence these institutions to enhance their effectiveness and reduce corruption?

Unlike a constitution, a political settlement is not a formal document. What practical foundations construct a political settlement? How does a political settlement impact policy design? What types of institutions are necessary to create effective policies that are free from the influence of powerful groups?

Lastly, political settlement should be linked with development. How can a political settlement contribute to political stability and economic development? What measures can be taken to accelerate development in Bangladesh? With Bangladesh experiencing jobless growth and a Gini coefficient of about 0.5, how can economic growth be balanced with efforts to reduce inequality? What strategies can be recommended to resolve the current economic crisis and restore both political and macroeconomic stability in Bangladesh?

I am inviting Bangladeshi intellectuals to navigate constitutional reforms, power balances, and inclusive development pathways through such questions.

A comparative analysis of these approaches reveals their respective strengths and weaknesses. Revolutionary constitution-building offers comprehensive change but risks exclusion and potential autocracy. Standard reform with a referendum provides legitimacy but may be susceptible to manipulation by entrenched interests. Khan's political settlement theory seeks a nuanced balance of power but is challenging to implement. A hybrid model that incorporates elements of each, engaging public participation, revolutionary ideals, and pragmatic power-sharing, could pave the way for a more inclusive, stable, and democratic Bangladesh.

What made the flood so severe

M Inamul Haque
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M INAMUL HAQUE

In the case of the recent flooding, the precipitation centre that caused it is in Tripura. As a result, the areas surrounding Tripura are experiencing severe floods. Brahmanbaria is situated to the south of Tripura, while Moulvibazar and Habiganj are located to the east.

This situation has led to widespread flooding across these regions. The intense precipitation in Tripura has caused several rivers to overflow. Some rivers have flowed towards the south, some to the north, and others to the southeast, creating an unusual situation.

Rivers in Bangladesh typically flow from the north to the south towards the Bay of Bengal, but that is not always the case. For example, the Gomati River flows from the eastern side of Tripura, through the Dhalai district, passing between two mountain ranges. There is a dam on the first mountain range, where water is collected to produce electricity. Such reservoirs are also used as flood control mechanisms. In the event of heavy precipitation, the dam gates can be opened slowly to release some water, but this has a limit. When the water exceeds this limit, the dam overflows, leading to flooding.

However, the flooding is not solely due to the dam overflow. For instance, the Khowai River originates in Tripura, and there is a barrage at its mouth. There is also a barrage at the origin of the Gomti River. These barrages don't hold much water, so opening or closing them does not directly cause flooding. The flooding is more connected to the opening of gates at the Teesta River, which is connected to the Ganges and the Farakka Barrage. These barrages can hold a significant amount of water, and when they are opened, the heavy flow contributes to flooding downstream.

This time, the flooding was primarily caused by excess rainfall. The army, when mobilised with proper resources and coordination from the state, can play a crucial role in managing such disasters by providing logistical support, such as speed boats and other necessary equipment. However, the current government, being newly in power, may not be fully prepared to take immediate and decisive action. Instead, it is engaging in heavy rhetoric, often adopting an aggressive stance toward India, which is not the right approach.

The situation should be handled diplomatically, with a proper understanding of the hydrological dynamics of the Ganges, Teesta, and other rivers. A well-informed strategy is essential. The government should consider ratifying the United Nations Watercourses Convention of 1997, which has been pending in Bangladesh for a long time. This could be a significant step forward. The interim government's adviser on environment and water resources, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, has suggested taking the river sharing issue onto international platforms, but to do that, Bangladesh first needs to ratify the convention, as going to the UN without accepting the convention will not be effective. Some have alleged that the previous government did not accept the convention due to India's influence, but this government should not adopt the same stance.

> **The situation should be handled diplomatically, with a proper understanding of the hydrological dynamics of the Ganges, Teesta, and other rivers. A well-informed strategy is essential. The government should consider ratifying the United Nations Watercourses Convention of 1997, which has been pending in Bangladesh for a long time.**

As for our roles as ordinary citizens, first, we must refrain from panicking, as difficult as it may be. In situations like this, panicking can often cause further trouble. People who have their own families to look after should treat them as a first priority. Apart from that, individuals whose families are not dependent on them may engage in volunteering in the flood-affected areas, if they have a financial surplus or can collect funds for flood relief.

As for precautionary measures for future disasters, there isn't a lot to be done on an individual level. As flooding is a recurring natural event in Bangladesh, it is often difficult to avoid it completely.

In recent years, the number of young children who cannot swim has gone down significantly compared to the number from a few decades ago. Therefore, parents should take the initiative to teach their children how to swim, which is an essential life skill even without considering the floods. Being more proactive in learning how to swim, as well as teaching others, is something all of us can focus on.

On an institutional level, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, as well as the Ministry of Youth and Sports, should utilise their resources to provide relief and support. The army has already assisted in rescue operations, which should inspire the relevant ministries to use their resources and use self-motivation to help in any way possible.

Even though the interim government is still in its early stages, they should guide the individual efforts by different groups of volunteers in conjecture with utilising the state apparatus. This can ensure that the flood-affected victims are getting the help that they need.

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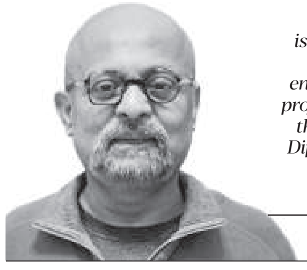
VISUAL: **ANWAR SOHEL**

Bangladesh's path to principled governance



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SHAFIQUL ISLAM

The 2024 uprising and the regime's exit were dramatic. While the country has seen other uprisings in 1952, 1969, and 1990, each unique in its own way, the current situation is still evolving. It is too early to determine what lessons can or can't be learned from similar uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Sudan. The question isn't just about drawing inspiration from these examples but understanding what will work in Bangladesh and why. Many ideas abound, but which ones will work in Bangladesh?

Diagnosing the problem

There is a deep and growing disconnect between the elites and the vast majority of Bangladeshis—a gap that has widened over the decades. But this divide isn't just economic or cultural; it's moral. The moral fabric of the nation has been ruptured, with integrity taking a backseat to self-interest and corruption.

This disconnect is perhaps best captured by the metaphor of the "*sheeter pakhee*"—a term often used to describe expatriates, who return to Bangladesh when it's convenient, much like snowbirds who migrate to warmer climates during winter. To those who live through the harsh realities year-round, western expatriates are seen as outsiders who swoop in and out, offering opinions and solutions without truly understanding the day-to-day struggles of the common people.

The "*sheeter pakhee*" metaphor also reflects the behaviour of many elites within Bangladesh who, much like the rich family in the film *Parasite*, have detached themselves from the realities of the common people, living in a bubble of privilege. These elites have often acted as parasites, thriving off the resources and labour of the masses while contributing little to the well-being of the broader society.

Many Bangladeshi elites have funnelled billions of hard-earned foreign currencies—earned primarily from the remittance of expatriate labourers and the sweat of ready-made garment workers—into securing their "second home" in a foreign land, whether it be in Dubai, the United States, Canada, or elsewhere. This parasitic relationship has only exacerbated the divide, creating a system where the few prosper at the expense of the many.

Ahmed Sofa, a revered Bangladeshi writer, highlighted this disconnect years ago, noting how the urban elites, who wield significant power, have become increasingly detached from the realities of the common people. These elites are more foreign in Bangladesh than foreigners or expats. This detachment has only grown as technology and social media have made the lifestyles of the elite more visible, amplifying the sense of injustice and inequality.

Over the years, this divide has become more pronounced. The elites have funnelled their looted wealth into securing foreign havens, while the common people have struggled to survive on meagre incomes. This isn't just about money; it's about the erosion of a shared national morality. As my late father often remarked, "The question isn't which elite can be bought, but at what price." This sentiment reflects a broader decline in values where almost anything—and anyone—can be bought.

Reflecting on this decline, it's important to remember where Bangladesh started. In 1976, a book titled *Bangladesh: The Test Case of Development* captured global attention. At that time, many feared Bangladesh wouldn't survive as an independent nation. Yet, after a famine, several military coups, catastrophic floods, and disastrous cyclones, Bangladesh not only survived but has prospered, defying the dire predictions of the 1970s.

So, how did Bangladesh transition from a "test case" to a model of development, ingenuity, and resilience? The answer lies in the collective spirit, adaptability, and resilience of its people—qualities that must now be harnessed to address the moral and institutional crises that threaten to undermine these hard-won gains. This moral decline has seeped into the very core of Bangladesh's institutions, leading to widespread cynicism and a loss of trust in those who are supposed to lead. The disconnect between the elite decision-makers and the common people is not just a symptom; it's a crisis.

Thesis-antithesis-synthesis

Imagine a new Bangladesh by first acknowledging the extent and impact of this disconnect. The prevailing thesis is that the problems stem from autocratic governance, while the emerging antithesis suggests that democracy will solve all issues. However, democracy isn't a cure-all. Aristotle recognised this dilemma thousands of years ago—democracies can become tools for the elites, oppressive to the common people.

There are broadly two types of democracies: 1) where foundational principles like the rule of law, popular sovereignty, and the separation of powers are upheld; and 2) where these ideals are abused. Bangladesh, despite 12 national elections, falls into the latter category. The 2024 uprising was a manifestation of the people's frustration with a system that served the elites.

Even the first type of democracy is not without its flaws. Take the United States, for example, where basic rights are more or less secured, but the democratic process is heavily influenced by elite interests. Lobbyists wield significant power, and incumbents enjoy an overwhelming advantage, with re-election rates often exceeding 90 percent. This raises questions about how much power truly resides with the people.

What can Bangladesh learn from other recent uprisings? For example, what happened in Tunisia between 2011 and 2024, why the Islamic Brotherhood in Egypt only stayed in power for 300 days after overwhelmingly winning a fair election, and why a massive popular uprising in 2018 in Sudan led to a brutal civil war?

By carefully examining examples of the two types of democracies in other countries and focusing on actionable, context-specific strategies, Bangladesh can synthesise a governance model that works for its people—Boishamma Birodhee Jonogan (BBJ)—a regime that upholds equity, inclusion, and justice while remaining pragmatic in its implementation. This is where the idea of principled pragmatism comes into play. The BBJ model must be rooted in core principles like fairness and justice, but it should also be adaptable. This approach requires flexibility in applying principles to real-world situations, ensuring that interventions are not only ideal in theory but also viable in practice.

Two actionable ideas

With BBJ, it is crucial to question both the thesis of autocracy and the antithesis of democracy, and instead, imagine a synthesis that mirrors President Lincoln's ideal of a government "of the people, by the people, for the people."

Assuming unbridled corruption and a compromised judiciary as two of the most pressing issues, two actionable ideas can be suggested. First, a community protection platform could incorporate the principles of an ombudsman. An independent and empowered Office of Ombudsman can play a pivotal role in curbing corruption. For instance, in Tanzania, the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau has made significant strides in reducing corruption. Similarly, the Philippines' ombudsman has been instrumental in holding public officials accountable, with the office being responsible for the prosecution of several high-profile corruption cases. In Bangladesh, such a platform could not only serve as a watchdog but also actively engage citizens in reporting corrupt practices.

Second, the judiciary in Bangladesh must be strengthened to ensure its independence, transparency, and accountability. The judiciary needs to be independent from and accountable to the other branches of government. For example, in South Africa, the Constitutional Court has played a crucial role in safeguarding democracy by making landmark decisions that uphold the constitution, even against the wishes of powerful political figures. In Bangladesh, judicial reforms may focus on: a) introducing a more transparent and merit-based judicial appointment process, similar to the Senate confirmation process in the US; b) developing mechanisms for greater transparency in judicial proceedings, such as publishing court decisions, detailed opinions including majority, and dissenting opinions; and c) providing a clear mandate to the judiciary to prevent it from being co-opted by political parties.

In designing and implementing these reforms, the BBJ needs to recognise that any reform will require creative thinking and the fallibility to admit that many initial interventions may not work as anticipated. This means being flexible to adapt to changing circumstances and learning by doing to continuously improve processes and mechanism that serve the interests of all citizens. I invite all to suggest actionable ideas, using real-world examples, on how best to initiate a systemic reform in Bangladesh with trackable and measurable impacts. With collective input and wisdom, at this opportune time, it is possible to create a BBJ Manifesto of governance that is neither autocratic nor democratic but a synthesis of both. Such a synthesis must focus on crafting and safeguarding institutions that are independent, principled, and pragmatic.

Banking sector issues that the new governor should address

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MD MAIN UDDIN

The economy of Bangladesh is heavily dependent on the banking sector as 86 percent of financial intermediation is conducted through banks. But this reliance has led to many problems for the economy in general and the banking sector in particular. Commercial banks typically provide small and short-term loans to a wide range of borrowers. By offering small loans to many borrowers, banks can build a well-diversified portfolio, which is crucial for minimising risk. A short-term loan with high turnover rate can be issued multiple times a year, increasing profit. However, instead of granting small loans, our banks tend to prioritise large loans, which they are able to do within the legal framework.

A large loan is defined as one that constitutes at least 10 percent of a bank's capital. A bank can sanction a loan of up to 25 percent of its capital to finance power sector projects. Within this framework, just four such borrowers could take up all of the bank's capital. If these borrowers default, the bank would become insolvent.

A bank can grant a borrower 15 percent of its capital as funded loans, which require immediate disbursement, and 20 percent as non-funded loans, which require delayed disbursement. As such, a borrower can get a loan of up to 35 percent of the bank's capital. In such a scenario, only three borrowers can deplete the bank's entire capital. In case of export financing, a borrower can receive a loan of up to 50 percent of the bank's capital, with the funded exposure not exceeding 15 percent of the bank's capital. In this case, only two borrowers could consume the bank's capital. When banks issue large loans, they fail to build a diversified investment portfolio, leading to an imbalance between risk and return.

The availability of large loans hinders the growth of our stock market. Banks are involved in indirect finance, where they collect funds from depositors and lend them to borrowers. Borrowing from banks is easier because borrowers are accountable to banks, not to the depositors. In contrast, stock markets are involved in direct finance where borrowers have to obtain funds directly from the suppliers of capital. Here, borrowing firms have to win over suppliers of funds through their performance, ultimately reflected in their share prices. In an efficient market, it is very difficult for less creditworthy borrowers to raise funds. However, due to our banking sector being plagued by ill-governance, less creditworthy borrowers—with political connections—can easily convince banks to grant loans.

When banks provide long-term loans from their short-term deposits, it imposes major risks on their depositors. Granting large loans goes against the basic principle of bank lending, as it creates maturity mismatch wherein depositors' claims to the bank mature earlier than banks' claims to borrowers. This can lead to liquidity problems, making it difficult for banks to honour customers' cheques. Large loans are also more likely to default. In contrast, small loans contribute significantly to the economy by reducing income inequality between the rich and the poor, and the default rate for small loans is low. Therefore, every bank should allocate a certain percentage of its funds for small loans.

Restrictions should be placed on single-borrower exposure and large loans from banks. As a result, large borrowers will turn to the stock market—and policymakers will be more diligent in developing this market from its precarious condition.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) regularly discloses non-performing loans (NPLs)—the latest reported amount is Tk 1,82,295 crore, compared to just Tk 22,481 crore in 2009. However, there is always doubt about the accuracy of its reported NPL figures. A true picture of distressed assets should include not only NPLs but also write-off loans, rescheduled loans, and loans stuck in courts. This would provide a more accurate assessment of the banking sector's asset quality. The NPL rate of 10.11 percent in 2023, as reported by BB, would increase to roughly 30 percent if all distressed assets were considered. In an attempt to reduce the ever-growing NPLs, the central bank has frequently changed loan classification rules, deviating from international standards. Despite these efforts, the usual growth of NPLs has not been curbed.

When a loan becomes non-performing, BB permits loan rescheduling where a loan is renewed or extended under circumstances that are beyond the control of the borrower. The rescheduling is allowed a maximum of three times, examining the causes for the loan's non-performance. The down payment for rescheduling ranges between 10 and 30 percent of the outstanding loan and the time limit never exceeds three years.

For the past decade, loan rescheduling has been permitted by breaking existing rules. Moreover, in 2015, a loan restructuring facility was provided to 15 large borrowers with loans of Tk 500 crore and above, upon receiving a down payment of only 2 percent of the outstanding loan amount. The loan terms were extended to 10 years.

There are huge political repercussions when NPLs rise. While there is less fuss about write-off loans, a write-off loan represents the worst state of NPLs. The amount of write-off loans stood at Tk 51,560 crore in 2023, up from Tk 15,300 crore in 2009. BB also relaxed the rules for loan write-off. Earlier, to write a loan off, it needed to remain unpaid for five years, a 100-percent provision needed to be maintained, and a case was required to be filed against the borrower. Later, the unpaid period of an NPL was reduced from five to three years, allowing banks to quickly remove their worst loans from the balance sheet.

If BB wants to reduce NPLs, the nexus between business and politics must be broken so that politically connected individuals cannot intentionally default on loans. Good governance and adequate legal infrastructure—relevant laws, courts and impartial judges—need to be established. Borrowers have to be evaluated properly before loan sanctioning. Rules for loan rescheduling, restructuring and write-off must be strictly enforced.

According to the Basel Accords, banks in Bangladesh need to maintain a minimum capital of 12.5 percent of risk-weighted assets. Some banks consistently face capital deficit. Data shows that the capital shortfall of 10 private and public banks in the country reached Tk 39,655 crore in 2023.The capital base of our banks is also relatively low because of high NPLs and low reinvestment of profits. Bank owners are more interested in taking profits as dividends rather than reinvesting them as retained earnings.

There is also continuous capital flight from rural to urban areas. Data shows that even though rural areas supplied nearly 13 percent of deposits in 2010, they obtained only 8 percent of advances. The supply of deposits by rural people increased to 21 percent in 2023, but they received only 12 percent of advances—a capital flight of 9 percentage points to urban areas. The misuse of loans by wilful defaulters in urban areas poses a threat to rural depositors. To address this, more opportunities for using loans in rural areas should be created.

The overall expenditure management of banks is still not efficient. Data indicates that the expenditure-income ratio was around 99 percent on average between 1991 and 2000. It declined considerably to 73 percent in 2010 before increasing to 81 percent in 2023. These high ratios may be attributed to high staff salaries, provision for default loans, and high corporate tax rates. The elevated expenditure should be controlled as it is offset mainly against low pay to depositors.

Despite the large number of banks in our country, many people are still outside the banking network. This is a contradiction. The rural poor are less interested in maintaining bank accounts, while the urban poor keep their money in semi-formal and informal repositories. So, should we reduce the number of banks through merger and acquisition? Once the number of banks is reduced, it might be beneficial to increase their branches to spread services to remote areas and take advantage of economies of scale. These decisions should be made prudently.

According to the Basel Accords, banks in Bangladesh need to maintain a minimum capital of 12.5 percent of risk-weighted assets. PHOTO: **STAR**

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
সামাজিক বন বিভাগ, দিনাজপুর

পুনঃ ইজারা দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এ মর্মে সকলকে অবগত করা যাচ্ছে যে, নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী কর্তৃক নিম্নের ছকের বর্ণনা এবং পুনঃ ইজারার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্ত মোতাবেক সীলমোহরকৃত খামে উপযুক্ত দরদাতার নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং ও তারিখ	কাজের নাম	দরপত্রের ছকপত্র বিক্রয়ের স্থান	দরপত্রের ছকপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	প্রতিটি ছকপত্রের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	ইজারা দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	ইজারা দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	ইজারা দরপত্র খোলার স্থান তারিখ ও সময়
পুনঃ ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৬/২০২৪-২৫ (২য় বার) তারিখ-২৫/০৮/২৪খ্রিঃ	রামসাগর জাতীয় উদ্যানের অভ্যন্তরস্থ শিশু পার্কে প্রবেশ ফি আদায়	রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, সদর রেঞ্জ ও তত্ত্বাবধায়কের কার্যালয় রামসাগর জাতীয় উদ্যান, দিনাজপুর।	১৭/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত অফিস চলাকালীন	১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মাত্র।	১৮/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০.০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১.০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় এবং জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, দিনাজপুর	নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় ১৮/০৯/২৪খ্রিঃ বিকাল ২.০ ঘটিকা
পুনঃ ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৭/২০২৪-২৫ (৩য় বার), তারিখ-২৫/০৮/২০১৪	রামসাগর জাতীয় উদ্যানের প্রধান প্রবেশ গেট এর প্রবেশ ফি আদায়।						
পুনঃ ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৮/২০২৪-২৫ (৫ম বার), তারিখ-২৫/০৮/২০২৪	তেঁতুলিয়া ইকো-পার্কের প্রধান প্রবেশ গেট এর প্রবেশ ফি আদায়	ভারপ্রাপ্ত কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, পঞ্চগড় এস এফ এন টি সি ও রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, সদর রেঞ্জ,দিনাজপুর।					

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বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তা
সামাজিক বন বিভাগ, দিনাজপুর

GD-250

NAYAKRAJ RAZZAK

A new man in the 1960s

MOHAMMAD AFZALUR RAHMAN

> **While the elite group relished the cosmopolitanism of the Ayub regime, on the other end were the grim and emaciated masses—workers, porters, peasants, and rickshaw pullers with bidis tucked behind their ears, street urchins staring into the glass windows of toy stores, and angry, impoverished students with little hope for jobs and a better future. In this situation, seeing a young man in his early twenties like Razzak—jolly, full of life, and pleasant—was definitely refreshing.**

In the often-treacherous world of showbiz, there is always "something else" beyond mere skill, charisma, and looks that contributes to stardom. A hero is unique, irreplaceable, and reigns until the time of another hero arrives. A hero representing a specific era in film often signals something new, marking the arrival of his time and distinguishing him from the hero of the previous generation. The identifiable traits in a star usually cannot be replaced by those of another, as in a Fordist-Taylorist model of enforced standardized methods. Therefore, there is an element of irreplaceability in a star.

Irving A. Thalberg, Hollywood's "boy wonder" producer, saw this in stars. He famously said that in movies, more than anything else, the actor is "the thing." If Thalberg is one of the founders of what André Bazin called the "genius of the system," there is another strand of filmmaking. François Truffaut learned from Jean Renoir that the actor portraying a character is more important than the character itself.

Representative film stars, particularly those who play leading roles, frequently embody larger-than-life or deeply relatable characters on screen, so these portrayals and the presence of the stars allow us to explore the historical contexts in which such heroes became possible.

Nayakraj Razzak (January 23, 1942 - August 21, 2017)

Razzak, who earned the honorific title of Nayakraj, meaning "the king of heroes," is widely recognized as the most famous and successful movie star in the Bangladeshi film industry. By the mid-1960s, his presence loomed large on the silver screen of Bengali cinema in East Pakistan, and it never "got small." Over a career spanning more than half a century, in addition to immense cinematic success, Razzak achieved the status of a cultural icon. What kind of hero was Razzak, considering his arrival, rise, and elevation to prominence coincided with a time when the political and cultural life of Pakistan's eastern province was undergoing unprecedented changes? Razzak's significance is related to and needs to be understood in the context of the time when the political and cultural realities of East Pakistan were presenting new possibilities.

A scene from *Behula*

> **Razzak's life itself tells the story of a tumultuous and fascinating time when national identity, belonging, and prospects were in flux.**

After a period of struggle and uncertainty upon arriving in East Pakistan as a refugee from West Bengal, Razzak's first major cinematic break came with *Behula*. Based on the *Mangal-Kavya* and directed by Zaheer Raihan, this movie is one of the most significant cinematic creations in East Bengal. Razzak's entry in the film was not marked by the typical dazzling, low-angle shot often reserved for heroes. His entrance was rather natural and spontaneous. As Lakhindor, the beloved youngest and only surviving son of the wealthy merchant Chand Saudagar, Razzak walks into the frame unwittingly and, without much care, enters the realm ruled by the snake-goddess Manasa Devi, carrying a peacock—an animal that the deity views as an arch-enemy.

Behula was an instant blockbuster. In this movie, Razzak as Lakhindor is cursed by the snake goddess Manasa due to her wrath against his father. From halfway through the film, Razzak had to portray a dead character whose body is taken to heaven by his wife, Behula. Yet the audience felt deep sympathy for this character and discovered the star they had longed for. Rafiuddin Babu, the writer of the only biography available on Razzak, has rightly said, "From the cursed Lakhindor, there occurred his radiant rise." It was a significant film not only for Razzak's career but also for revitalising Bengali cinema. The success of *Behula*, much like *Rupban*, released a year earlier, helped sustain Bengali cinema and played a crucial role in rekindling Bengali cultural nationalism. Coincidentally, both the famous Six-Point Demands and *Behula* appeared in the same year—1966.

Bengali film enthusiasts had been trying to establish a film industry in East Bengal since the early 1950s. From the mid-1950s to 1962, most of the films produced in East Bengal were Bengali. However, during the heyday of Ayub Khan's rule, many Bengali film producers turned to making Urdu films, as Bengali cinema faced hostility from the government, both in terms of opportunities and censorship. For instance, in 1963, there were sixteen films under production in East Pakistan, but only three were in Bengali.

At this juncture, Zaheer Raihan and Salahuddin turned the tide for Bengali cinema by deciding to make folk-fantasy genre films. It seems that while Bengali filmmakers were struggling, they figured out that films based on folklore and legends lent an element of originality and authenticity, making them distinct from others' stories. Hegel identified legends, ballads, and traditions as fugitive, shadowy elements, and poetic expressions belonging to a nation's half-awakened state. Perhaps these "dim and hazy forms" have a profound connection to the people's psyche, which explains *Behula*'s success. Equally significant was the role played by Razzak. Filmmakers and movie lovers discovered in Razzak a hero they could capitalise on and relate to. Zaheer Raihan understood this, which is why he was adamant about casting Razzak, despite reservations from many.

Razzak may not have been the most manly actor in the traditional sense, nor even the best in terms of acting skill. When he arrived in Dhaka, the film scene was not empty—there were already good actors who had a certain degree of acceptance in romantic, tragic, or social hero roles. Yet, at a time when Bengali cinema was struggling to carve out a niche in East Pakistan, Razzak brought a unique affective quality to the screen that resonated with the masses. All the established stars before him were involved in both Bengali and Urdu films. Razzak was the first star who concentrated solely on Bengali films.

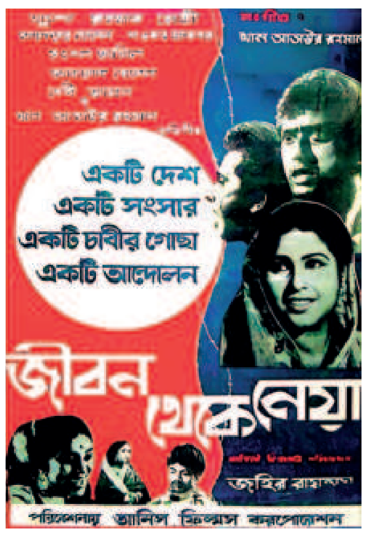
Razzak's immense popularity among the masses and the high demand from filmmakers can be gauged by the fact that between Behula in 1966 and 1970, he was cast in nearly 45 leading roles, with almost all of them being commercially successful. By 1972, he had completed his 100th film—a testament to his popularity and inevitability in the industry.

It is true that Razzak was, on the surface, modelled after other heroes of the subcontinent, most notably Uttam Kumar. Directors likely cast him with the image of those heroes in mind, seeing a resemblance or shadow of them in Razzak. Even his fans and cinema-goers noticed similarities between Razzak and these established movie stars. However, despite the outer resemblance to other stars, the characters he portrayed—righteous youngest sons, unemployed youths, writers, and protesting students—brought originality and authenticity to his roles, shaped by the specific historical and sociological context of the time.

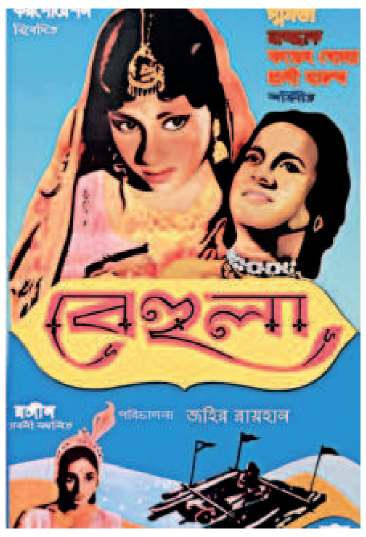
To understand what Razzak brought to the screen, we need to look at 1960s East Pakistan. The 1960s in East Pakistan were marked by stark contrasts, despite Ayub Khan's well-publicised narrative of development and progress. Signs of modernisation and the availability of modern amenities were evident. However, only a select few could bask in the affluence generated by the military-bureaucratic dictatorship—primarily upper-echelon government employees, a few businessmen, and successful professionals like doctors and university professors.

While the elite group relished the cosmopolitanism of the Ayub regime, on the other end were the grim and emaciated masses—workers, porters, peasants, and rickshaw pullers with bidis tucked behind their ears, street urchins staring into the glass windows of toy stores, and angry, impoverished students with little hope for jobs and a better future. In this situation, seeing a young man in his early twenties like Razzak—jolly, full of life, and pleasant—was definitely refreshing.

A star represents social reality and thus reflects the desires of the people. When we see Razzak in the films of the 1960s, it's impossible not to notice his fresh and jovial presence. We see him coming back from university, dancing and singing to "Neel Aakasher Niche Ami Rasta Cholechi Eka." He is going out with Kabori, Sujata, or Shabnam on romantic and amatory adventures in the Garden of Ramna, on a boat on the river, or in a popular couple's spot on the outskirts of Dhaka. Razzak exudes a sense of newness. He often arrives late to a rendezvous, playfully coaxing and cajoling his sweetheart for making her wait. The song of persuasion and flattery by a prospective lover, "Aynate Oi Mukh Dekhbe Jakhon," or the beautifully poetic and romantic song of courtship, "Tumi Je Amar Kobita," embody something new for the audience. These culturally and aesthetically significant songs encapsulate this new spirit and possibility.



Poster of *Jiban Theke Neya*



Poster of *Behula*

What I want to convey about Razzak's acceptance becomes more tangible in *Jibon Theke Newa*, another Zaheer Raihan film that stands as the most significant cinematic creation in the history of Bangladeshi cinema. This powerful political film was set against the backdrop of the mass movements of 1969 and was released in 1971. Razzak, as part of an ensemble cast, plays one of the main characters—a student leader living under the oppressive rule of his autocratic sister, who governs the household with an iron fist, much like Ayub Khan ruled the country. The film was an allegory for the military dictatorship of Ayub.

Although Razzak's character is crucial to the movie, he has less screen time than some of the other key characters. Yet, the way his character is portrayed is both distinctive and indicative of something new. He first appears during the *Prabhat Pherry* on February 21st, singing the anthem of the language movement. Throughout the film, he is rarely seen inside the house. Instead, he is always outside—at the Shaheed Minar, at Curzon Hall, or leading protests with fellow students, workers, and peasants. When he returns home from the *Prabhat Pherry*, barefoot, he enters without tiptoeing. When his domineering sister scolds him for being out and threatens to end his education, he barely pays attention. Unlike others in the family, Razzak's character is distinctively defiant, shrugging off the house's prescribed strict rules and norms.

His character in *Jibon Theke Newa* embodies the spirit that poet Shamsur Rahman eloquently wrote about in his poem, where the grandfather, astonished, wonders, "Who is it that frequents this old house?" He is like the character Rahman cast from the resounding streets of 1969—the teenagers, full of life, who ignored the cautionary tales of their elders, rolled up their shirt sleeves, and swiftly joined the unadulterated exultation of the endless processions. It is worth noting that in 1971, much like his movie character, Razzak took to the streets to protest against the military dictators of Pakistan.

If we are to use the hackneyed but relevant phrase that social change is first reflected in the arts, then it can be said that Razzak, as a star, was contemporaneous with—or even a progenitor of—the youths who would soon participate in mass movements and the liberation war. If workers, students, writers, and intellectuals were agents of the changing sixties, so too was Razzak through the more popular medium of cinema. We cannot downplay the political and cultural significance of the popular cultural expressions embodied in the characters Razzak portrayed in his movies during the sixties.

Razzak's life itself tells the story of a tumultuous and fascinating time when national identity, belonging, and prospects were in flux. Born in 1942 into a well-to-do Muslim family in the predominantly Hindu neighbourhood of Naktala in Kolkata, he lost both parents at a young age. This void was filled by the care of his elder siblings and the avuncular love of his neighbours, both Hindu and Muslim. As a lively and energetic adolescent, Razzak was a natural choice for school sports, recitations, and annual plays.

Before long, it was acting that captivated him the most, fuelled by the vibrant theatre and cultural activities in his neighbourhood. Razzak often recalled with pride that cultural luminaries like Chhabi Biswas, Sabitri Chatterjee, Manju Dey, and Ravi Bhattacharya lived in his para. He reminisced that the theatre and cultural milieu of his locality ignited his passion for acting. Not only did he observe these figures, but he also had the opportunity to learn from them. He fondly remembered that after his first school theatre performance, where Chhabi Biswas was the guest of honour, Biswas gently admonished him for turning his back on the audience while on stage. For some time thereafter, Razzak learned recitation and acting techniques from Chhabi Biswas.

Although it was his school teacher who introduced him to the world of theatre and acting, it was Piyush Bose, the founder and director of Rangasabha, who became his true mentor in the art of acting. Once Razzak became involved in theatre activities, it wasn't long before he fell in love with the craft, making acting his passion. The enchanting world of performance, which would later bring him fame, may have also provided refuge for the orphaned Razzak. In a television interview, he shared that during his adolescent and early adult years, acting was all he could think about. He spent countless days and nights rehearsing, honing his craft with unwavering dedication.

It was with Piyush Bose that Razzak first visited the film studios in Kolkata's Tollygunge, where he met his screen idol and the iconic star of the time, Uttam Kumar. These visits sparked in Razzak the dream of becoming a movie star. In the meantime, he once fled to Mumbai, where he completed a nine-month course to hone his acting skills.

In Satyajit Ray's *Nayak*, the protagonist Arindam Mukherjee's theatre guru, Shankar Da, warns his talented disciple about the lures and traps of the dazzling but hollow life of the film industry. "You will become a puppet in the hands of the director," he cautions. Shankar Da, a stern moralist, is convinced of the pure and high art of the theatre world, contrasting it with the money, corruption, and treachery of the film industry. Unlike the Shankar Da of real life, Razzak's real-life Shankar Da, Piyush Bose, took the middle path. While deeply invested in theatre, Piyush Bose was also involved in filmmaking. He cast Razzak in a few minor and uncredited film roles. He wanted his disciple to be successful, but at the same time, he seemed acutely aware of the challenges a Bengali Muslim youth would face in the Kolkata film industry, which was already saturated with established and talented actors.

As Razzak struggled to find opportunities in Tollygunge, Piyush Bose suggested that he try his luck in East Pakistan, a burgeoning film industry. Bose introduced him to several members of the East Pakistani film fraternity who frequented Kolkata for film-related work. Anyone familiar with the post-partition social and cultural realities of East and West Bengal would understand the implications of Bose's advice. In a Muslim-majority country, it would likely be easier for a Muslim youth like Razzak to succeed as an actor. Given the political and cultural milieu of the time, such advice from experienced individuals to the younger generation was common, considered pragmatic, and offered in good faith.

However, to Razzak, despite East Pakistan being just across the border, it seemed like a far and wild country. Naturally, the glittering film studios of Kolkata or Mumbai were far more enchanting to him than the unknown prospects in East Pakistan.

In interviews and autobiographical essays, Razzak often reflected on his upbringing in a predominantly Hindu neighborhood, emphasising that he never experienced any discrimination nor harboured ill feelings towards Hindus. He was everyone's favourite "Raja." However, in an autobiographical essay published in Bichitra in 1992, he did hint at noticing a Hindu-Muslim divide within the film industry.

Razzak's decision to migrate to East Pakistan after the riots of 1964 mirrors the experiences of many others who were heartbroken, saddened, and deeply affected by witnessing how long-familiar communities could turn hostile during communal riots. Initially, Razzak planned to move to Mumbai, the heart of India's film industry. However, Piyush Bose convinced him otherwise, noting that Mumbai was already overcrowded and that Bengalis were not faring particularly well there. Consequently, Razzak arrived in East Pakistan as a refugee at a time when many were moving in the opposite direction—from East Pakistan to West Bengal.

As a young boy, Razzak regularly acted in Salil Sen's immensely popular partition-based play *Notun Ihudi*, which was staged in major theatres across Kolkata as well as in various neighbourhoods. Razzak gained popularity and praise for his portrayal of Mohan, the youngest child of an East Bengali Hindu refugee family in Kolkata, who struggles to help his family survive in the cruel post-1947 days. It is both interesting and ironic that, to some extent, Razzak played the role of Mohan in real life as well.

In the aftermath of Partition, many artists migrated from one country to another. While they left behind their birthplace and familiar surroundings, they also played a pivotal role in rebuilding the new societies they arrived in, which were often scarred by division and bitterness. Against this backdrop of loss, these artists made immense contributions to the process of recovery by creating beauty through their art. We often overlook this aspect of the subcontinent's history. Even as these artists enriched their adopted countries, their personal views of leaving behind home remained untainted. Over time, they became loved and accepted by all, transcending borders and divisions. Razzak is a shining example of this group of artists.

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What to WATCH
SONY SPORTS 2 AND 5
US Open
First round
Live from 9:00 pm

TIGERS ROAR

- Bangladesh's **10**-wicket in Rawalpindi yesterday is the Tigers' first Test win in **14** overall meetings against Pakistan. The Tigers drew one in **13** before this contest.
- This is the first time that Bangladesh won a game against Pakistan in Pakistan in **21** matches across formats.
- The win also saw Bangladesh jump from eighth to sixth position in the World Test Championship points table.
- Bangladesh have now won against nine Test-playing nations. Only India and South Africa remain unbeaten against the Tigers.
- Pakistan have suffered a **10**-wicket loss at home for the very first time in Tests.
- Pakistan were bundled out for **146** in the third innings -- their lowest team total against Bangladesh in Tests.
- Bangladesh's first innings total of **565** is now the highest for the Tigers in a winning cause.
- Shakib Al Hasan is now the most successful left-arm spinner in cricket's hostory with **707** wickets, surpassing New Zealand's Daniel Vettori who has **705**.
- Mushfiqur Rahim, who was adjudged player of the match for his **191**-run knock, has now won seven POTMs -- most by a Bangladeshi player.

Bangladesh players, all 16 in the two-match Test series against Pakistan, were in a jubilant mood at the dressing room following their historic 10-wicket victory against Pakistan on the fifth day of the first Test at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: **FACEBOOK**

Bangladesh's Tiger-like HUNT IN PINDI

ASHFAQ-UL-ALAM

For years, the moniker of 'The Tigers' has been a point of derision for the Bangladesh cricket team.

Online trolls have pounced on every opportunity to mock the Bangladesh team by using this nickname, scoffing at the players by calling them plastic Tigers and in some cases 'Toygers'.

The underlying theme of all of these mockeries is the same – the trolls draw attention to the irony of calling Bangladesh, a team that often falls short against top opponents, 'The Tigers', one of the deadliest predators on planet earth.

However, the presumed deadliness of tigers is often exaggerated. In reality, tigers are far from the most efficient predators in the wild. The success rate of Bengal Tigers is estimated to be around 10-20 percent, making them in a sense an apt symbol for the Bangladesh cricket team, especially in Tests.

Across three formats, Bangladesh's average win percentage is 32.67 percent, but in Tests, the percentage comes down to 13.98 percent, inside the success range of the Bengal Tigers.

And much like how a successful hunt of a tiger is no less than a spectacle, when Bangladesh finally manage to win a Test match after many unsuccessful attempts, it becomes a sight for sore eyes.

On Sunday at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, the Najmul Hossain Shanto-led Bangladesh side presented one such spectacle when they defeated Pakistan in a Test match for the very first time.

And, in a sense, the 10-wicket win in Rawalpindi was not too different from how tigers hunt in the wild.

A tiger stealthily closes in before cinching its incisors on the neck of its prey, and Bangladesh did something similar, making slow progress for four days before going for the kill on Day 5.

After winning the toss, the pacers did their job on the rain-hit opening day, reducing Pakistan to 21-3 at one point.

The Pakistan batters fought back on Day two on the placid surface but Bangladesh ended the day with the satisfaction of foiling Pakistan's plan of taking wickets late in the day.

The third and fourth day saw Mushfiqur Rahim script his epic 191, and four other batters stepping up with half-centuries to power Bangladesh to a first innings lead of 117.

Heading into the final day, Bangladesh had their noses slightly ahead in the contest, however, the likeliest conclusion was still a draw.

But the match suddenly sprung into life in the morning of Day five when, like hungry predators, the Bangladesh bowlers pounced on the Pakistan batters.

Aided by the fifth day wicket and by some careless shot-making from the Pakistanis, the Bangladesh attack, led by spinners Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Shakib Al Hasan, bundled out Pakistan for 146, setting up a 30-run target which the batters chased without breaking a sweat. After 13 unsuccessful attempts, Bangladesh finally managed to triumph over Pakistan in Tests. However, if Bangladesh want to at least match a tigers' hunting success rate in Tests against Pakistan, they will have to win the next match and sweep the series 2-0.

> **Inzamam [Ul Haq] was extraordinary and a few umpiring decisions did not go our way. It was bad luck overall. It bothered us for quite a while. Everything could've been different if we won. I think this win could be the start of a new dawn for Bangladesh in Tests because winning away from home, especially against Pakistan in Pakistan is a big thing. We don't play well consistently in Tests; it can be a start.**
>
> **Alok Kapali**

> **I've been asked a lot whether I've been able to forget the sorrow of the Multan Test. To that, I say no. That was a special Test. We were in the first three years of our Test status. But I am proud of this victory. Our team beat Pakistan by dominating them. We've won a thrilling Test. Nothing drastic happened with the pitch, apart from the Shaheen [Shah Afridi] dismissal. We must be proud of the bowling on the fifth day.**
>
> **Habibul Bashar**

Shanto lauds Shakib's 'unique' way of turning things around

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto lauded the team effort in Rawalpindi following a 10-wicket win -- the very first Test win in Pakistan – and signified the effort the players put during preparations.

The birthday boy lauded special performances such as Mushfiqur Rahim's 191, Mehedi Hasan Miraz's four-wicket haul and a three-for from Shakib Al Hasan.

"Really special moment for us and we are really happy because of the way everyone showed their character in these hot conditions. The way we practised over the last 15 days, did all the right things off the field are why we got the results.

"Obviously it was a team effort. Mushfiq bhai's innings was outstanding and it helped our team go forward but overall if you see the match and our batting and bowling and fielding, it was a team effort," Shanto said when focus was drawn to Mushfiqur's knock, Mehedi Hasan Miraz's spells and the pacers' grit.

What Shakib attained, though, was true to his cricketing spirits, fit for a legend. Accused in a murder case back home, criticisms of his performances getting more vocal, Shakib overcame his personal situation and pulled out a special performance.

Bangladesh's team selection had put faith on their spinners and the spinners finally came into play on Day 5. Shakib bowled 16 overs on the trot between morning and tea sessions: his variations, mind games all being employed to pacify Pakistan's resistance. He brought his flight and trajectory into play to bag both Saud Shakeel and Abdullah Shafique, arguably the backbone of the Pakistan batting.

A spin web in conjunction with Miraz saw the duo pick up seven wickets together, with Miraz bagging four for 21 and Shakib getting three for 44.

Shanto was asked about Shakib's mentality, which helps him turn things around. Shanto said it was what the team expected.

"When he [Shakib] takes the field to represent the country, from what I understand, he is very dedicated as a person. He does everything that's required to win. He pushes aside everything in his personal life to one side to think and focus on what he can do for the team, what he can do to help a junior cricketer and things like that," Shanto said.

"Doing these sorts of things in a unique way to be in a situation like that and still being able to bring out a performance like that and to give his inputs, especially in bowling, is outstanding. This is what we expect from him and hopefully in the next game we are expecting something even better," he added on Shakib.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN
1st innings: 448-6 dec (Rizwan 171, Shakeel 141; Mahmud 2-70, Shoriful 2-77)

BANGLADESH
1st innings: 565 all out (Mushfiqur 191, Shadman 93, Miraz 77, Naseem 3-93)

PAKISTAN
2nd innings: 146 all out (Rizwan 51, Shafique 37; Miraz 4-21, Shakib 3-44)

Result: **Bangladesh won by 10 wickets and lead the two-match series 1-0**

Player of the match: **Mushfiqur Rahim**

SAFF U-20 CHAMPIONSHIP

Bangladesh face strong India in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Hoping to bounce back from their defeat against Nepal in their final group match a couple of days ago, Bangladesh will be taking on tournament favourites India in the second semifinal of the SAFF U-20 Championship at the ANFA Complex in Lalitpur, Nepal today.

The match will kick off at 3:15 pm (Bangladesh Time), with the winners playing hosts Nepal, who yesterday beat Bhutan 4-1 in a shootout following a 1-1 draw in regulation time, in the final on August 28.

Before leaving for Nepal, Bangladesh coach and players vowed to play the final and win the regional youth championship in which they finished runners-up three times out of five editions.

However, getting to the final now seems to be an uphill task, especially since the way Bangladesh played in their 2-1 defeat against Nepal. In that game, a fumble from captain and goalkeeper Mehedi Hasan Srabon saw Nepal score the opener and then extend the lead just minutes later. Bangladesh did manage to pull a goal back that was not enough.

Since that defeat, Bangladesh coach Maruful Haque held a few mental-recovery and tactical sessions to boost the players.

According to Maruful, Bangladesh can make it into the final if they go into the match hungry for a positive outcome.

"The players showed their dedication, hard work, and effort in the last two days and they have really been hungry for victory," said Maruful.

"If they can take this hunger into the match against India, I believe we can move into the final If the boys can start the match with the mentality of bouncing back, then we hope we can advance to the final," Maruful added.

Captain Srabon also sounded optimistic.

"If we can play in line with the tactic of the coach, we can hope to leave the ground with a positive result," said Srabon, adding that the players must stick to the plan and not get driven by their emotion.

Bangladesh have won only twice against India, losing thrice and drawing twice in the eight matches they played in the previous five editions.

Djokovic eyes Slam record

AFP, *New York*

Novak Djokovic, fueled by an emotional Olympic triumph, has new Grand Slam records in his sights at the US Open, where title rival Jannik Sinner hopes to shake off a doping controversy.

Defending champion Djokovic can become the oldest Open era champion at the tournament if he secures a fifth title, a record he would share with Jimmy Connors, Pete Sampras and Roger Federer.

The 37-year-old would also move to 25 Grand Slam triumphs, taking him clear of the 24 he currently shares with Margaret Court.

The final Grand Slam of the year comes at a critical time for Djokovic. This year he was succeeded as Australian Open champion by Sinner who also relieved him of his world number one ranking.

Carlos Alcaraz took his French Open title with the Spanish crowd-pleaser then sweeping Djokovic off court in a one-sided Wimbledon final.

However, Djokovic, returned to the clay courts of Roland Garros to stun Alcaraz in the Olympic final.

Sinner, meanwhile, arrives after an emotionally draining doping investigation, in which he escaped a lengthy ban after officials accepted his explanation that the banned substance entered his system as a result of contamination from a support team member.

The 23-year-old Italian had twice tested positive for clostebol, a banned anabolic agent, back in March. The International Tennis Integrity Agency announced this week he had been cleared of wrongdoing -- a day after he won the Cincinnati Masters.

"I'm just happy that it's finally out," said Sinner, who fired his physiotherapist and trainer in the wake of the affair.

Alcaraz, who won his first major at the US Open in 2022, was badly bruised by his defeat to Djokovic in the Olympic final.

He lost his cool in a second-round exit at Cincinnati and tweaked an ankle in practice at Flushing Meadows, but insisted he'd be "100 percent" for his first-round match on Tuesday.

Defending women's champion Coco Gauff has endured a worrying dip in form in recent weeks, raising doubts over whether she could become the first woman since Serena Williams in 2014 to successfully defend her US Open crown.

A stormy third-round exit from the Olympics was followed by early defeats in Toronto and Cincinnati.

Five-time major winner and world number one Iga Swiatek, the 2022 champion, made the Cincinnati semi-finals where she was defeated by Aryna Sabalenka.

Sabalenka, the Australian Open champion and runner-up to Gauff in New York last year, is another contender in a wide-open field that also features Wimbledon winner Barbora Krejcikova and Olympic gold medallist Zheng Qinwen.

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Now Social Islami Bank freed from S Alam Group

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

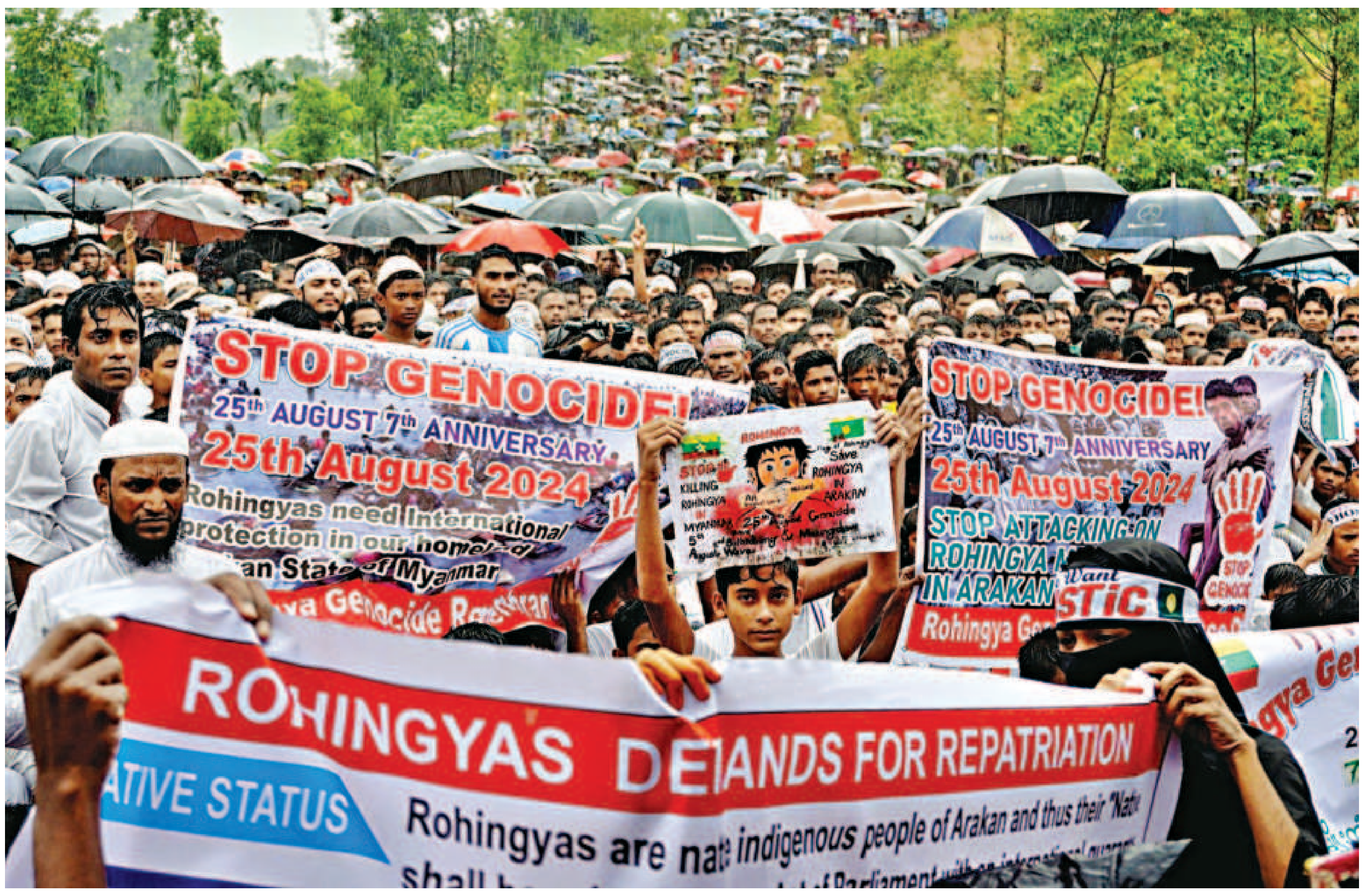
After Islami Bank, S Alam Group's control over Social Islami Bank ended yesterday after the Bangladesh Bank decided to dissolve the board of the Shariah-based bank that was heavily dominated by individuals linked to the conglomerate.

The central bank dissolved the previous 11-member board, whose chairman Belal Ahmed is the son-in-law of S Alam Group chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam. Five more relatives of Alam including his sister Badrun Nessa Alam and nephew Mahmudul Alam were on the board of SIBL.

The Bangladesh Bank also constituted a five-member board including Rezaul Haque, a sponsor-director of the bank.

The other directors are Maqsuda Begum, former BB executive director; M Sadiqul Islam, professor at the department of finance at the University of Dhaka; Md Morshed Alam Khandakar, former deputy managing director of Rupali Bank; and Md Anwar Hossain, a chartered accountant.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4


STOP GENOCIDE!
25th AUGUST 7th ANNIVERSARY
25th August 2024
Rohingyas need international protection in our home of Arakan State of Myanmar
STOP ATTACKING ON ROHINGYA IN ARAKAN
ROHINGYAS DEMANDS FOR REPATRIATION
Rohingyas are native indigenous people of Arakan

Marking seven years since the Myanmar military launched a brutal crackdown in Rakhine state, leading to a mass exodus of the Rohingya people to Bangladesh, the refugees yesterday held a rally at a camp in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar.

PHOTO: **MOKAMMEL SHUVO**

Hasina made accused in 12 more cases

10 filed over killings during protests, 1 over ex-BDR official's death

STAR REPORT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was accused in 12 more cases filed in Dhaka and elsewhere yesterday.

Ten of these cases were filed over killings that took place during the recent student protest.

Besides, a case was filed over the death of a former official of the then Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in 2010 while the father of a victim of enforced disappearance filed an abduction case.

Hasina is now facing 61 cases, including 51 for murder, seven for crimes against humanity and genocide, and two for abduction.

Former Awami League ministers Obaidul Quader, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, Anisul Huq, and Jahangir Kabir Nanak, and former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun are among the accused in the cases.

Hasina, former army chief Aziz Ahmed, and 11 others were sued yesterday over the death of Abdur Rahim, the former deputy

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Janmashtami today

BSS, *Dhaka*

Janmashtami, one of the major festivals of the Hindu community commemorating the birth of Lord Sri Krishna, will be celebrated countrywide today with due religious fervour and gaiety.

According to Hindu mythology, Lord Vishnu incarnated in this world as Sri Krishna in the prison of Raja Kangsa on this day -- the eighth day of the dark fortnight in the Bangla month of Bhadra. Lord Vishnu has taken on mortal form through the ages to protect the good and pious from malevolent forces by establishing truth, justice, and beauty in society.

Sri Krishna's birth is usually observed on the eighth day (ashtami) of the Krishna Paksha (dark fortnight) in the month of Shraban or Bhadra.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

ROHINGYA REFUGEES

UN calls for stepping up funding

Urges donors to do more, says Bangladeshis can't be left to shoulder the crisis alone

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations has called for sustained commitment from international partners to support the protection of nearly one million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and to help secure solutions for a lasting end to their plight.

The call came as the world observed Rohingya Genocide Remembrance Day yesterday, seven years after about 750,000 members of Rohingya ethic minority group fled a brutal military crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine State and took shelter in Bangladesh.

The UN Refugee Agency UNHCR in a statement yesterday said the international community supported Bangladesh in ensuring protection and basic needs, but in recent months security issues and funding uncertainties undermined all but the most critical and life-saving assistance.

It urged donors and private actors to step up their funding to the Rohingya response, mentioning that humanitarian agencies have appealed for $852 million to assist 1.35 million people, including Rohingya refugees and hosting Bangladeshi communities, in 2024.

"The Rohingya people deserve our best, as do the generous people of Bangladesh who cannot be left to shoulder this crisis alone."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

131 officials promoted to addl secys

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The public administration ministry has promoted 131 joint secretaries to additional secretaries.

The ministry issued a gazette yesterday saying that the officers promoted to the post of additional secretary can directly join at the ministry or send their joining letter by e-mail (sa1@mopa.gov.bd). The gazette was signed by Deputy Secretary Alamgir Kabir.

The notification stated that if any allegation is raised against any of the promoted additional secretaries in future, the government reserved the right to amend or cancel this order.

The interim government has so far promoted 223 officers from deputy secretary to joint secretary in two phases as the promoted officials claimed that most of them were deprived of promotions during the rule of Awami League.

On August 5, Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister and fled to India following a massive uprising.

Fears of all-out ME war grow

Israel, Hezbollah in Lebanon trade missiles across border

AGENCIES

Hezbollah launched hundreds of rockets and drones at Israel early yesterday, as Israel's military said it struck Lebanon with around 100 jets to thwart a bigger attack, in one of the biggest clashes in more than 10 months of border warfare.

Missiles were visible curling up through the dawn sky, dark vapour trails behind them, as an air raid siren sounded in Israel and a distant blast lit the horizon, while smoke rose over houses in Khiam in southern Lebanon.

The extent of damage was not immediately clear and Hezbollah indicated it was not planning further strikes yet, while Israel's foreign minister said the country did not seek a full-scale war.

Lebanon's health ministry said three people were killed in the Israeli raids in the country's south. One Israel navy soldier was killed and two wounded during combat in northern Israel, the Israeli military said.

Any major escalation in the fighting, which began in parallel with the offensive in Gaza, risks morphing into a regional conflagration drawing in Hezbollah's backer Iran and Israel's main ally the United States.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned that the strikes in Lebanon were "not the final word" in his country's military campaign against Hezbollah.

Yesterday's strikes came as negotiators were meeting in Cairo in a last-ditch effort to conclude a halt to the fighting in Gaza.

- » Hezbollah attacks follow murder of its commander
- » Netanyahu warns strikes in Lebanon 'not the final word'
- » Egypt hosting talks aimed at brokering Gaza truce

The Iran-backed Lebanese group said it had fired 320 Katyusha rockets towards Israel and hit 11 military targets in what it called the first phase of its retaliation for Israel's assassination of Fuad Shukr, a senior commander, last month.

Israel's military said it had foiled a much larger attack with pre-emptive airstrikes after assessing that Hezbollah was preparing to launch the barrage, using 100 jets to strike more than 40 Hezbollah launch sites in southern Lebanon, reports Reuters.

Hasina urges all to stand by flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged countrymen to stand by the flood-affected people.

She also called upon leaders, activists, supporters of her party and its front and associate organisations, and people of all sociocultural backgrounds and professions to unite and support the flood victims.

Expressing concerns over the recent floods, Hasina said that the flood has suddenly taken a serious turn in some south-eastern districts of the country.

Hasina, the immediate-past prime minister of the country who resigned and fled to India in the face of a student-led mass uprising, said she had directed all to prepare in early July to tackle a severe flood.

"Earlier, we successfully helped the flood victims and handled the post-flood situation as leaders and activists of the Awami League and its associate bodies came forward."

Ex-minister Dastagir Gazi, Golap arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Textile and Jute Minister Golam Dastagir Gazi and Awami League Central Publicity and Publications Secretary Abdus Sobhan Golap were arrested in Dhaka yesterday.

Police arrested Golam Dastagir from a house in Pirergoli area of Shantinagar in the capital around 3:00am, said Mollah Mohammad Khalid Hussain, officer-in-charge of Paltan Police Station.

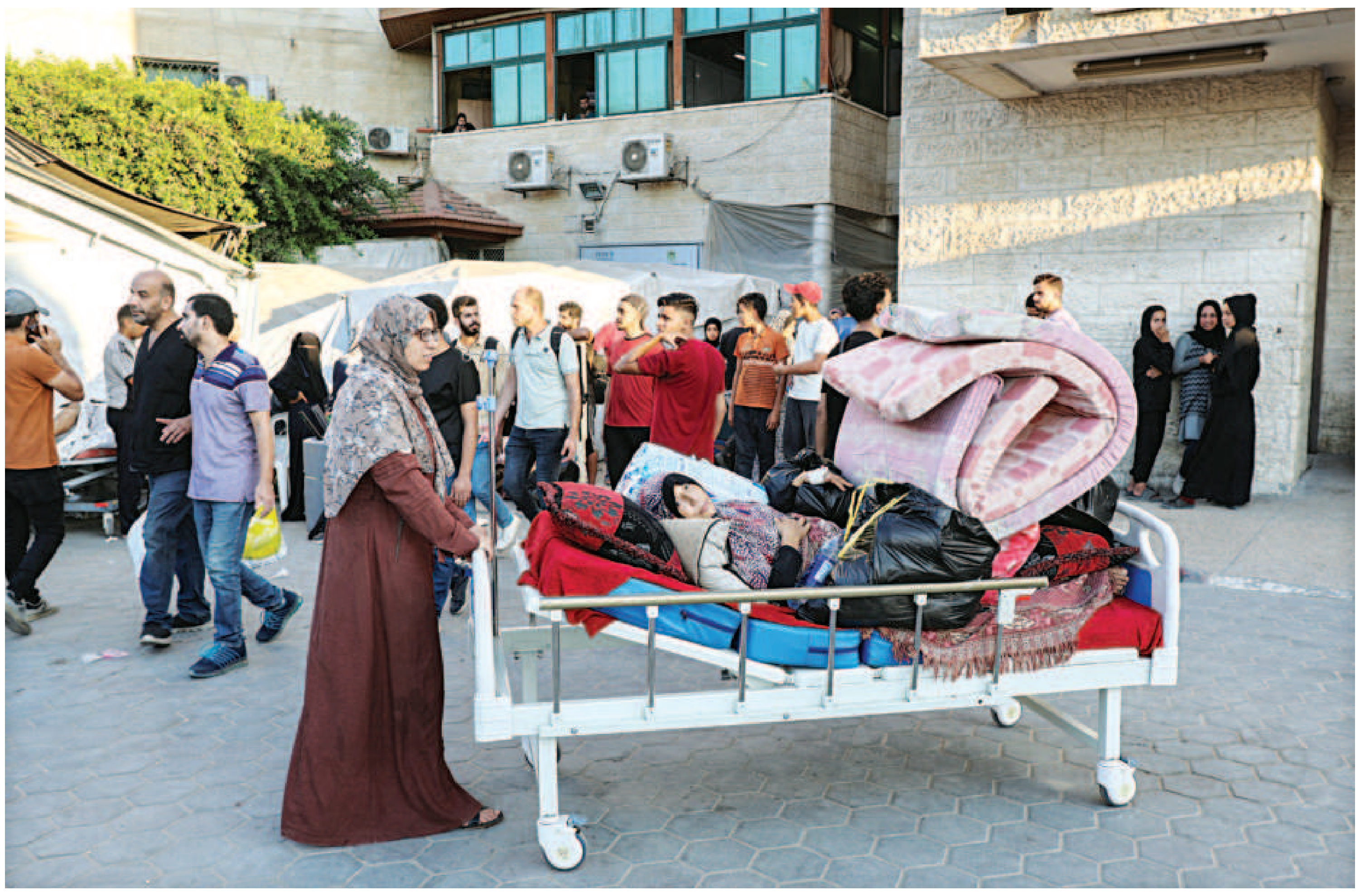
Golam Dastagir was kept at the DB office as the Paltan Police Station remains badly damaged after it was vandalised during the recent violence, the OC said. "A group of people besieged the house after knowing his location there. On information, police rushed there and arrested him," he added.

He is accused in a case filed in Narayanganj, the OC added.

Gazi Group Chairman, Golam Dastagir Gazi, an industrialist turned politician, was elected from Narayanganj-1 for four consecutive terms.

For his contributions in the Liberation

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



A Palestinian patient is assisted to flee Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital after the Israeli army ordered the evacuation of nearby areas in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Interim govt to be given reasonable, not unlimited time

Fakhrul says about holding election

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

The BNP wants to give the interim government reasonable but specific time to hold an acceptable election by reforming all the institutions, the party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

He made the remarks at a discussion with journalists organised by district and city units of BNP at a conference hall in Sylhet.

"The interim government headed by Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus is leading the country towards stability. While the country is turning around, Sheikh Hasina, residing in India, is plotting a deep conspiracy. But the conspiracy will not succeed," Fakhrul said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

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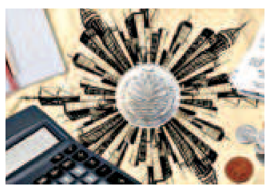


Stabilising prices is the immediate priority
P8

Discourse on flood: Power, politics and people
P9

Local coaches deserve recognition, opportunity
P11

Relief delivery is now the challenge

4 more die; new areas flooded in Noakhali, Cumilla

MD ABBAS, ANWARUL HAIDER *and* **KHALID BIN NAZRUL**

- 5.71 million people affected
- Some got relief materials multiple times
- Many didn't get any over the last six days

People wishing to distribute relief materials among the flood victims are finding it very difficult to reach remote areas due to a lack of boats.

All major roads in the 12 flood-affected districts have been flooded at places.

People in the hardest-hit districts -- Noakhali, Feni, Cumilla, and Laxmipur -- blamed a lack of coordination between government agencies for their plight.

Many in the four districts said relief was being distributed among those living close to the main roads and some people received relief materials multiple times. They called for a more equitable distribution of relief.

The water levels of all major rivers in the 10 districts dropped yesterday. However, some new areas went under water in Cumilla, and Noakhali.

Four more flood-related deaths were reported yesterday, including two minors in Cumilla's Burichang upazila, raising the death toll to 23.

Two people were reported missing in Moulvibazar.

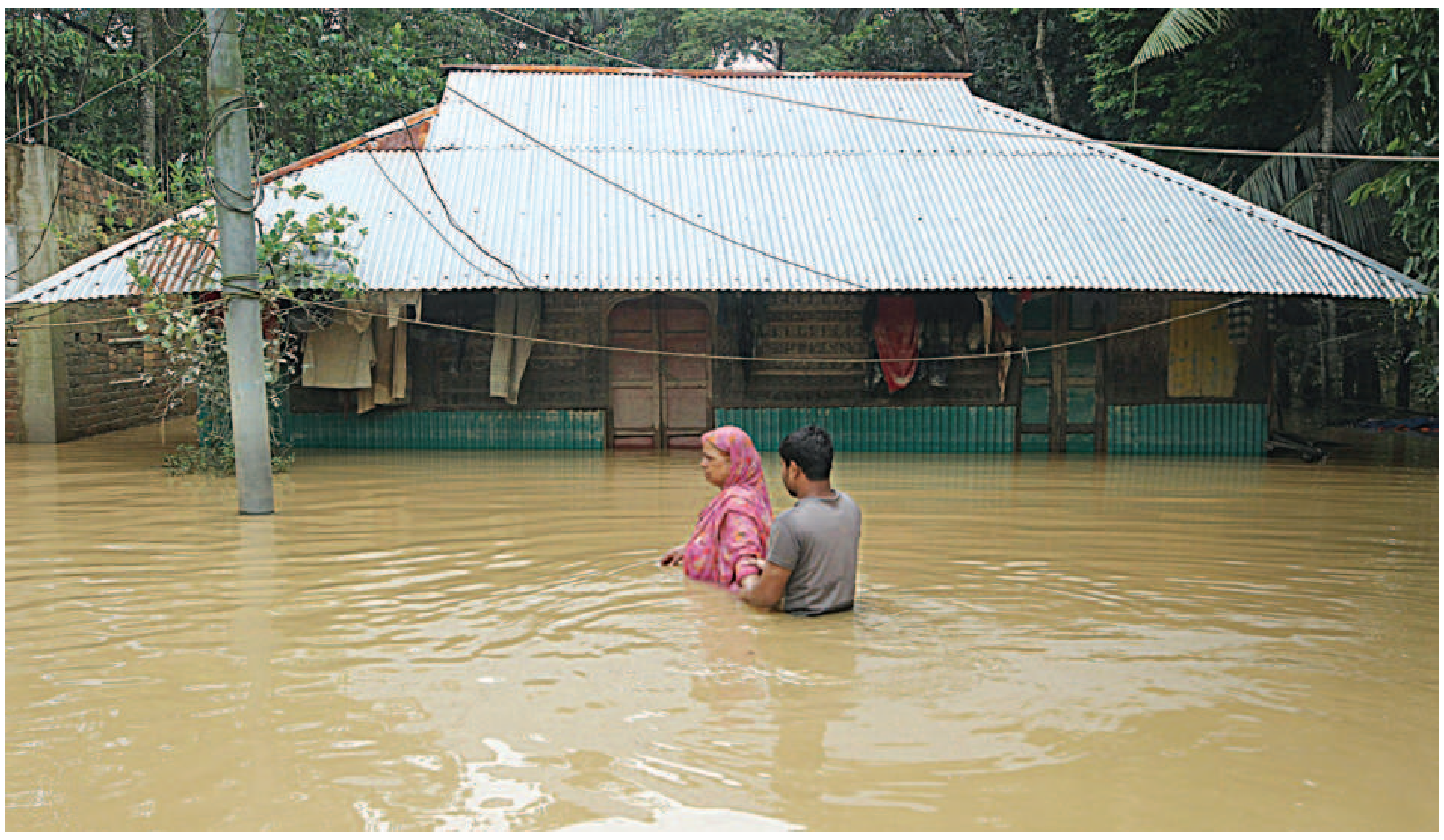
Israt Jahan, of Feni's Parshuram upazila, said despite being hit by floods six days ago, no relief materials reached them.

"We badly need food and drinking water as our stock has run out. No one in my neighbourhood has received aid," she said yesterday.

Volunteers said they could not access remote areas due to a shortage of boats.

"We wanted to distribute relief in Bhaluka and Ghopal areas, but we could not go past Shuvapur because of a scarcity of boats," said Shihab Jisan Anik, a

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 3
SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Nurul Absar along with his mother Bibi Sakhina navigates through floodwaters on their way home in Feni Sadar upazila's Purba Fazilpur yesterday. They would move their furniture and belongings at home before heading back to a shelter. Flooding has inundated hundreds of villages in Feni.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

S Alam barred from fund transfer, cashout, LC opening

MD MEHEDI HASAN

The Bangladesh Bank yesterday instructed six S Alam-owned banks to stop any money going out of the accounts in the name of the Chattogram-based business giant, its associates' companies and related persons.

However, all types of deposits can be accepted in their accounts, according to the letter from BB's banking inspection department-7.

Islami Bank, First Security Islami Bank (FSIBL), Social Islami Bank (SIBL), Union Bank, Global Islami Bank (GIB) and Bangladesh Commerce Bank (BCB) have already passed on the BB instruction to their branches and sub-branches.

The instruction was given as the central bank has started to reconstruct the board of directors of the banks linked to the business group, said BB spokesman Md Mezbaul Haque,

Once the banks' boards are reconstituted, the instruction to bar any withdrawals from the accounts would be relaxed, he added.

The BB has verbally instructed the other banks to suspend fund transfer and withdrawal requests of S Alam Group, its associates' companies and related persons, The Daily Star has learnt from the managing directors of three leading banks.

Banks have been asked to not renew any investment facilities or stop any new investment. They have been instructed to suspend any new disbursement or withdrawal.

The lenders will not be able to disburse and withdraw any new investment from the investment accounts that are previously approved in their name, the BB letter said.

The banks have also been asked not to open letters of credit (LC) in favour of the companies of the business group and its associates' companies.

However, banks can open LC in favour of the companies at a 100 percent margin.

Banks have also been asked to disallow bill discounts or purchases in their name; not to make any application to the central bank for any refinance scheme; ban credit card transactions; and decline requests for fund transfers outside of Bangladesh in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Roadmap for transition to democracy not there

Fakhrul on chief adviser's address to the nation

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday expressed frustration that Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus' address to the nation lacked a roadmap for transition to democracy.

Speaking at a discussion, the BNP leader hoped the interim government will soon engage in talks with political parties to make a decision on the next national election and state reforms.

"We are still confused as things remain unclear. We had anticipated that the chief adviser would present a roadmap. But we didn't find that roadmap for moving to democracy in his speech," Fakhrul said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

GAZI TYRES FACTORY

Blaze under control after 22 hours

Factory looted; locals claim many who went there are missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *N'ganj*

Firefighters after 22 hours of frantic efforts brought the blaze at Gazi Tyres factory in Rupganj of Narayanganj under control at 7:05pm yesterday.

The fire was yet to be doused at 12:30am today, when this report was filed. There have been no reports of casualties.

Criminals set fire to the factory, owned by former Awami League minister Golam Dastagir Gazi, around 9:00pm Sunday, hours after the arrest of Gazi.

Factory officials claimed that hundreds of people in two groups stormed the six-storey building in the Rupshi area beside Dhaka-Sylhet highway and resorted to vandalism and looting Sunday afternoon.

Saiful Islam, assistant general manager at Gazi Tyres, said the criminals set fire to the ground floor around 9:00pm. Fire service reached the scene around 11:40pm.

Locals and family members of factory workers started gathering in front of the building yesterday morning and reported to the fire service about their loved ones being missing.

They claimed that those missing were at the factory during the mob attack.

Locals also claimed that they reported to the fire service about missing individuals who had gone into the building "to see what was going on" during the melee on Sunday.

Saiful said none of the factory employees were missing. "Some looters were still inside the building when it was set on fire. Some are claiming that their relatives are trapped in the building," he said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Protecting rights of every citizen govt's responsibility

Says chief adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser to the interim government, Prof Muhammad Yunus, yesterday said Bangladesh is like a large family, and the government bears the responsibility of protecting the rights of every citizen.

The chief adviser made the remarks while exchanging greetings with leaders of Bangladesh's Hindu community on the occasion of Janmashtami,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Hasanul Haq Inu arrested in Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hasanul Haq Inu, president of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and former information minister, was arrested at one of his relatives' house in Uttara yesterday afternoon in connection with a murder case filed with the New Market Police Station on August 21.

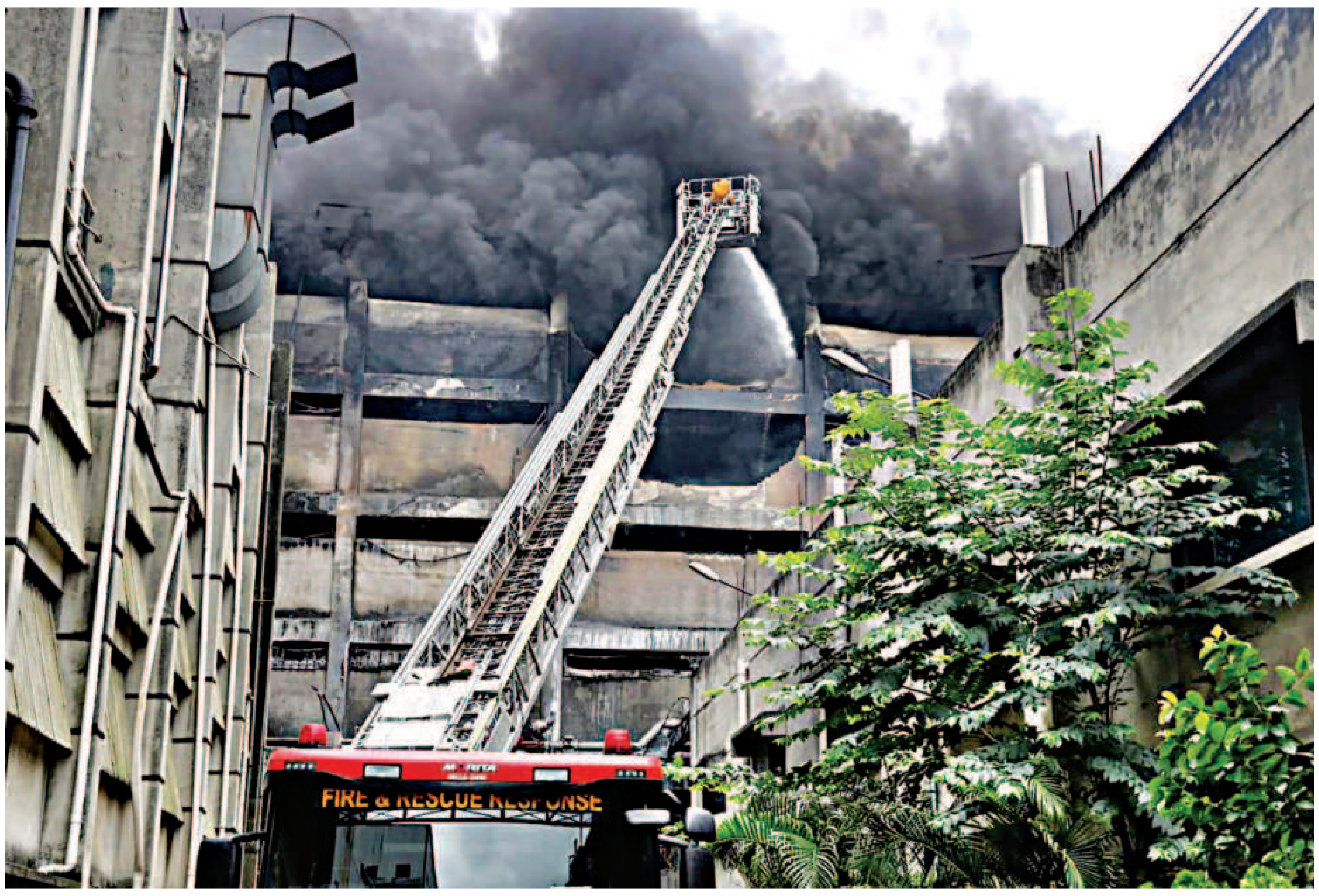
Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina is the main accused in the case, while Inu is accused number 29.

One Abdur Rahman filed the case over the death of his brother-in-law Abdul Wadud in the New Market area on July 19.

The complaint alleged that Inu along with the other accused ordered law enforcers to open fire on protestors.

JSD in a statement, urged the interim

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Firefighters fight blaze in a six-storey building of Gazi Auto Tyres Factory in Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila yesterday afternoon. Factory officials said arsonists set fire to the building around 9:00pm on Sunday.

PHOTO: **STAR**

437 Ansars sued over clashes near Secretariat

11,100 unnamed people made accused in 4 cases filed by cops; 377 Ansars sent to jail

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN *and* **EMRUL HASAN BAPPI**

A total of 437 Ansar personnel have been named as suspects in four cases that also accuse 11,100 unidentified people over clashes between the members of the force and students outside the Secretariat in Dhaka on Sunday night.

The cases were filed at Shahbagh, Ramna, Airport, and Paltan police stations on charges related to attempted murder, grievous injury, illegal gathering, rioting, and assaulting law enforcers.

As many as 377 Ansar members, including two women, were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka in these cases yesterday. The court sent all of them to jail after hearing the police forwarding reports submitted by the investigators.

A total of 191 Ansar members were arrested in the case filed at Shahbagh Police Station, 85 at Ramna, 95 at Paltan and six were arrested in the case filed at Airport Police Station.

According to the case statements, the Ansar personnel carrying sticks and brick chunks were instigated by some unidentified people in a planned attack on police and students with the intent to kill.

The suspects are also accused of obstructing police

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

MY DHAKA

UNITED IN CRISIS

People's resilient response to devastating floods

STAR DIGITAL REPORT

The ongoing floods in Bangladesh have left many rural communities devastated. Children and women are among the most vulnerable in this crisis. Every time a natural calamity strikes, we triumph through our resilient life forces. People from all walks of life rise to the occasion and stand beside our fellow people who are in distress. All our small efforts from general individuals and charity organisations add up to building a substantial relief operation that complements efforts by the government.

Faiza Ahmed, Creative head of Manas and Shanchayita, is raising funds to provide essential items like food, powdered milk, vitamin C, supplements, clothing, mosquito nets, bedsheets, toys, and blankets for young victims. There are many such general people like her, who are trying to collect contributions, no matter how small, to make a significant difference in a child's life during this difficult time.

The Rizq Project, is another such effort, helping people in the worst-affected areas in Parshuram, Feni Sadar, Sonagazi, and Chagalnaiya, by working with local volunteers involved in rescue and food relief operations. Also, in Mirsharai, where volunteers from neighbouring Sitakunda are helping out. Soup kitchens, catering to people who have sought shelter on higher grounds, are a very important part of the relief programme and The Rizq Project has mobilised funds to support ongoing relief efforts by the SAJIDA Foundation in Dhaka and Ghashful bd in Chattogram.

"Geology and earth sciences are my passions, so, naturally, I'm very inclined towards worldwide weather-related phenomena. The night before the waters from upstream started descending and engulfing the flat lands of Bangladesh, I was monitoring the rain using Bing Maps, a free app that anyone can install. So, my question is, if a novice can forecast, where were our concerned personnel in charge of this?" says Shafin Ahmed of The Rizq Project, adding that using social media platforms was most effective in quickly organising funds.

SAJIDA Foundation is providing emergency relief to thousands of families affected, prioritising the safety of the elderly, pregnant women, and children, and transporting them to safe, dry locations.

The Azimur Rokia Rahman Trust and Community Resource Development Centre (CRDC), in collaboration with multiple volunteering teams and individuals who have generously contributed to the relief efforts, have been able to support the 5,000 families in remote areas of Baghaichari Upazilla in Rangamati district. The Bangladesh Marma Students Council-BMSC, Rangamati branch is volunteering to deliver essential supplies like food, clothes, and sanitary napkins to this severely flood-affected area. However, it takes around four to five hours to reach the destination by boat.

There are many livestock animals stranded in the flood waters. The Animal Welfare Team of Dhaka University is requesting the rescue operation team to look out for these unfortunate domestic animals. Their request on their official Facebook page to collect donations for animals, generated around Tk 78,304 and counting to buy fodder for cows, goats, poultry feed, as well as cat and dog food.

In a rare gesture, The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has been instructed to supply free diesel to keep network towers operational in flood-affected areas in Feni, according to a press release, reported in The Daily Star.

Biden, Modi discuss situation in Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday spoke to US President Joe Biden over the phone to discuss the situation in Bangladesh.

During the phone call initiated by Biden, "The two leaders expressed their shared concern over the situation in Bangladesh and emphasised the restoration of law and order and ensuring the safety of minorities, particularly Hindus, in Bangladesh," said a readout issued by the Indian Prime Minister's Office.

India has expressed repeated concerns over a series of attacks on minority establishments in the days following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5.

This was the first time Modi and Biden spoke to each other on the issue of Bangladesh since the ouster of Hasina as prime minister.

China ready to work with interim govt

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

China wishes Bangladesh political stability and economic development and is ready to work with the interim government to strengthen exchanges and cooperation in various fields, said Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong.

Welcoming the interim government, Weidong said China wants to pursue high-quality Belt and Road cooperation and greater development of China-Bangladesh relations.

The minister made the comment when he met the outgoing Bangladeshi Ambassador to China Md Jashim Uddin in Beijing on Sunday, according to a statement by the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

Stating that China and Bangladesh have been traditionally friendly neighbours and comprehensive strategic partners, Weidong said China remains committed to developing relations with Bangladesh based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, respecting Bangladesh's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the development path independently chosen by the Bangladeshi people.

Jashim Uddin said Bangladesh will adhere to independence, actively explore a development path that suits its national conditions, and is ready to deepen friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation with China in various fields.

Bangladesh will also take the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries next year as an opportunity to push bilateral relations forward continuously, he added.

S Alam barred from fund transfer

FROM PAGE 1

their name.

Founded in 1985 by Mohammad Saiful Alam, a relative of former Awami League politician Akhtaruzzanan Chowdhury Babu and former Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, S Alam Group has grown into one of the largest conglomerates in Bangladesh.

For instance, S Alam is one of the four edible oil importers and processors along with TK Group, City Group and Meghna Group. Together, they control 80 percent of the total edible oil market in Bangladesh, according to import data from the National Bureau of Revenue.

Its subsidiary S Alam Refined Sugar Industries was the third-largest importer of sugar in 2023, accounting for a fifth of the country's demand.

S Alam Group and its associate companies took out Tk 95,331 crore between 2017 and June this year from six banks, with 79 percent of the sum coming from Islami Bank, data showed.

Documents pieced together by The Daily Star show that most of the loans were taken by bypassing banking rules and regulations, in a testament to how the Chattogram-based conglomerate exerted its influence on the country's banking sector.

In a separate letter, the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) on Sunday sought detailed information on the overall banking activities of Alam, his 12 family members and their companies.

The 12 family members include his wife Farzana Parveen, his two older sons Ahsanul Alam and Ashraful Alam, and his brothers Osman Ghani, Abdus Samad, Rashedul Alam, Shahidul Alam, Mohammed Abdullah Hasan and Morshedul Alam, who passed away in May 2020 from Covid-19.

The account details of Ghani's wife Farzana Begum and Samad's wife Shahana Ferdous were sought too.

Hasanul Haq Inu arrested in Uttara

FROM PAGE 1

government to ensure Inu's legal rights and security in police custody, adding that his named has been added to some murder cases without conducting primary investigation.

Besides this case, Inu has been accused in several other cases after Hasina resigned and fled on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising.

He is also facing charges of crimes against humanity along with Hasina at the International Crimes Tribunal.

Inu was a key partner of the Awami League-led 14-party coalition that was in power from January 6, 2009, to August 5, 2024.

He was information minister from September 2012 till the first week of January 2019. Before he was appointed the information minister, he served as the chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee for the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications from 2008 to September 2012.

He also served on the parliamentary standing committee for the information ministry from February 2019 to January 2024.

Inu is a three-time MP from the Kushtia-2 constituency. However, he lost in the last parliamentary election to an independent candidate.

Inu was vocal about announcing a nationwide curfew when the leaders of the 14-party alliance met with Hasina on July 19, amid the student protest. The meeting eventually agreed on imposing a curfew the next day.

Blaze under control after 22 hours

FROM PAGE 1

Lt Col Rezaul Karim, director of Fire Service and Civil Defence (Dhaka), told The Daily Star in the afternoon that relatives were claiming that their family members, who were in the factory during the fire, were missing.

"We are noting down the names and addresses provided by the relatives. So far, we have 174 names."

However, the fire service in a text message sent to the media around 5:50pm said they were not officially maintaining any list of the missing. Some locals gave their phone numbers and requested them to inform them if any victim was found.

While briefing reporters in the evening, Rezaul said the responsibility of preparing a list of victims lies with the local administration and the police.

The fire spread quickly as flammable materials like tyres, rubber, and plastic were inside the factory, he said, adding that they rescued 14 people trapped inside.

He said the rescued were not factory workers.

Rezaul said when the fire is fully out, they will conduct a search.

THE LOOTING

As the six-story building continued to burn yesterday, looting was going on at other parts of the factory.

This is the second attack on the factory since Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled to India on August 5. The factory had then suspended operations and only some security personnel were present, according to factory officials.

Md Asaduzzaman, additional DIG of Industrial Police, said the factory lacked proper security, including guards and boundary walls, making it vulnerable.

"A significant number of people looted goods and machines. They even took the commodes from toilets," he said.

Locals told this newspaper that the factory was on disputed land and after the news of Gazi's arrest spread, locals formed a human chain demanding the land be given back to them.

Gazi's arrest was announced over a mosque's horn speaker around 11:30am on Sunday.

Lutfar Rahman, the imam of the mosque, told The Daily Star, "A few individuals came before Zuhr prayers and announced over the mosque's horn speaker about Gazi's arrest. They urged landowners to gather at Rupshi. Although they requested not to resort to looting, pillaging began immediately after the announcement."

Locals claimed that an armed group arrived at the scene around 4:00pm and clashed with the locals, but the armed group eventually retreated.

They said by 9:00pm on Sunday, hundreds of people were looting the factory.

The situation at the scene was chaotic throughout yesterday despite the presence of many law enforcement personnel inside and outside the factory.

Locals said that they saw looting in the unguarded areas of the factory compound.

This correspondent also saw people removing machine parts, steel, plastic, and copper. A few were breaking windows to steal from the outside.

When confronted, many refused to speak and some became aggressive.

One unidentified youth said, "Gazi took a lot from us. This is ours now."

Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police Habibur Rahman assured that the police were making every effort to secure the factory.

Rupganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer Ahsan Mahmud Russell urged people to have a stronger stance against looting.

THE 'MISSING'

This correspondent spoke to the families of 14 "missing" individuals. They said their loved ones were not factory workers and that they had gone to the factory during the vandalism and looting on Sunday.

They said they could not contact them over phone since then.

Moni Akter, a resident of Kalabagan, said her husband, Md Rashed, a mason, had gone to the factory around 8:30pm on Sunday. When he did not return, she tried calling him, but his phone was off.

"I've been searching for my husband all night, but I can't find him."

Md Mizan said his brother, Bellal Hossain, 36, also went to the factory on Sunday night and has been missing since.

Relief delivery is now the challenge

FROM PAGE 1

volunteer from Prothom Alo Bandhushava and Prothom Alo Trust working in Feni.

He said people in those remote areas have yet to receive any assistance.

Admitting the problem, Feni Deputy Commissioner Shahina Akhter said they will coordinate with the UNOs from today to ensure all flood victims receive the necessary aid.

In Noakhali, people in remote areas are also suffering due to poor supply of relief materials.

Nurnabi Bachchu, of Senbagh, said their area has been waterlogged for several days.

"People living close to the roads have received relief multiple times, but those in remote areas have got nothing," he said.

Md Shahid Ullah, a resident of Arjuntala village in Senbagh upazila, said vehicles supplied relief materials in the upazila town and the municipality area.

"Some people had 8-10 packs, but those who could not reach those areas are struggling to survive with their families," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

In Cumilla, volunteers could not distribute relief in most of the areas of Chauddagram, Nangalkot and Burichang upazilas yesterday due to a lack of boats.

Salauddin Khandaker, a volunteer, said they somehow managed a boat, but most volunteers could not access remote areas.

Denying any lack of coordination among the government agencies, Pangkaj Barua, additional deputy commissioner of Cumilla, said they were working together to supply relief.

He urged the volunteers to contact the district administration for any assistance in relief distribution.

NEW AREAS FLOODED

New areas in Noakhali were flooded yesterday as 23 gates of Musapur regulator in Companiganj upazila collapsed due to the pressure of water, said Munshi Amir Faisal, executive engineer at Water Development Board.

This is likely to aggravate the flooding in Companiganj and Kabirhat upazilas, he said.

The flood situation in 82 unions across seven municipalities and eight upazilas of Noakhali worsened yesterday due to incessant rains since Saturday.

Noakhali Additional Deputy Commissioner Sharmin Ara said about two million people have been marooned in the district. Of them, 182,000 have taken shelter in 1,098 centres.

Fatehpur, Subil, and Boroshalghal unions in Debidwer upazila of Cumilla were inundated in 24 hours.

The overall flood situation in the 10 other districts improved significantly yesterday as the floodwaters started receding.

The Disaster Management Ministry in a release yesterday said floods have directly affected over 5.71 million people in 11 districts

At least 74 upazilas have been severely impacted. The authorities have opened 3,834 shelters, providing refuge to over 4.69 lakh people.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) yesterday said the water levels of the rivers in the flood-hit districts were falling.

"Rivers were previously flowing above the danger levels in at least 13 points. But only the Gumti river is now flowing above the danger level at one point. I think the situation will improve further tomorrow [today]," said Sarder Udoy Raihan, executive engineer of FFWC.

Asked about the situation in the Ganges basin, he said there is no chance of flooding in the Ganges basin over the next one week as the water level there was still below the danger level.

HOME ADVISER DISTRIBUTES RELIEF

Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday said the country is facing severe floods. But if the people remain united, all problems can be resolved.

He was speaking to journalists after distributing relief and medical supplies among the flood victims at the Noakhali Police Training Centre.

The adviser said there would be no shortage of relief materials and medicines. He said the authorities were facing difficulties in accessing some areas, but those problems would be over soon.

He urged all to cooperate with the authorities to ensure that relief reaches all flood-hit areas.

In a press statement, the Inter Services Public Relation Directorate (ISPR) yesterday detailed the Bangladesh Army's rescue operations and relief distribution.

The Army Aviation Group conducted rescue and relief missions using 15 helicopter. Eleven critically ill patients were rescued and transferred to hospitals, while 24 individuals were relocated to safety.

Despite adverse weather conditions, the Army distributed 4,839 relief packages, 50,400 liters of fresh water, 500 mobile phones, and one lakh water purification tablets via helicopters in Sylhet, Chattogram, and Feni, said the ISPR statement.

437 Ansars sued over clashes

FROM PAGE 1

duty, vandalising vehicles, and throwing brick chunks at the Secretariat. The law enforcers requested the court to keep the arrestees in jail until the end of the investigation so that the actual reasons behind continuing the protests could be unearthed.

Despite the assurance of fulfilling their demands, Ansar members continued to block the Secretariat gates before the clashes that left at least 50 people injured.

Maj Gen Abdul Motaleb Sazzad Mahmud, director general of the Ansar and Village Defence Party, told The Daily Star, "We were trying to find a possible solution, and a committee was formed for this, but those people [protesters] were not interested in it."

They did not even know what "nationalisation" meant, according to him. "They were just protesting for what they were taught. Their target was to destabilise the nation."

He said the authorities had information that those from outside Dhaka were instructed to bring extra uniforms for those without these dresses. "I know my force members, but those faces were unknown," said the Ansar DG.

He alleged irrational recruitment over the last 10 years allowed Ansar to swell to a 90,000-strong force despite having around 50,000 posts. "This was done in a very organised manner," he said.

Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul also said those who came "in the guise of Ansar members had a different agenda behind their demands and a plan to create a terrible situation".

"Creating chaos was their main objective. They had a stock of sticks, and we saw how they attacked the students," he told reporters while visiting the injured at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. "They besieged the Secretariat to cause disruption for an unrealistic and impossible demand."

Asif Nazrul further mentioned that the students are vigilant, and the government will take legal action against anyone attempting to sabotage the interim government's work in the name of protests.

Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan and Education and Planning Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud also visited the injured students.

DMCH Director Maj Gen Asaduzzaman said the condition of Hasnat Abdullah, a coordinator of the student movement who was injured in the clashes, was now stable and under 48-hour observation for head injuries, he said.

The clashes also left six army officials injured, one of them critically, the Inter-Services Public Relation Directorate (ISPR) said in a press release yesterday. It said the demonstrators refused to leave the area and confined seven advisers of the interim government, the Ansar DG, and other senior officials to the Secretariat even after the authorities accepted their demands.

The army soldiers fired 27 rounds of warning shots after their bid to make the protesters desist failed. Later, additional troops were deployed in the area and they brought the situation under control, the release added.

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DHAKA-CTG HIGHWAY

Flood water recedes, traffic resumes

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Vehicular movement on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway, often referred to as the lifeline of the country, fully resumed on Sunday night after floodwaters receded from various sections in Feni and Mirsarai upazila of Chattogram.

However, traffic remains slow due to numerous potholes and large ditches that have formed after the highway was submerged for an extended period.

The Dhaka-Chattogram highway is crucial for the nation, facilitating the movement of goods and passengers between the capital and the country's largest port.

The recent floods had brought this key artery to a standstill, with trucks, buses, and other vehicles stranded on the Feni portion of the highway for three days, creating a dire humanitarian situation.

Drivers and passengers endured significant hardships during the standstill, with limited access to food, water, and basic amenities. "It was a nightmare," said one truck driver who had been stranded for 72 hours.

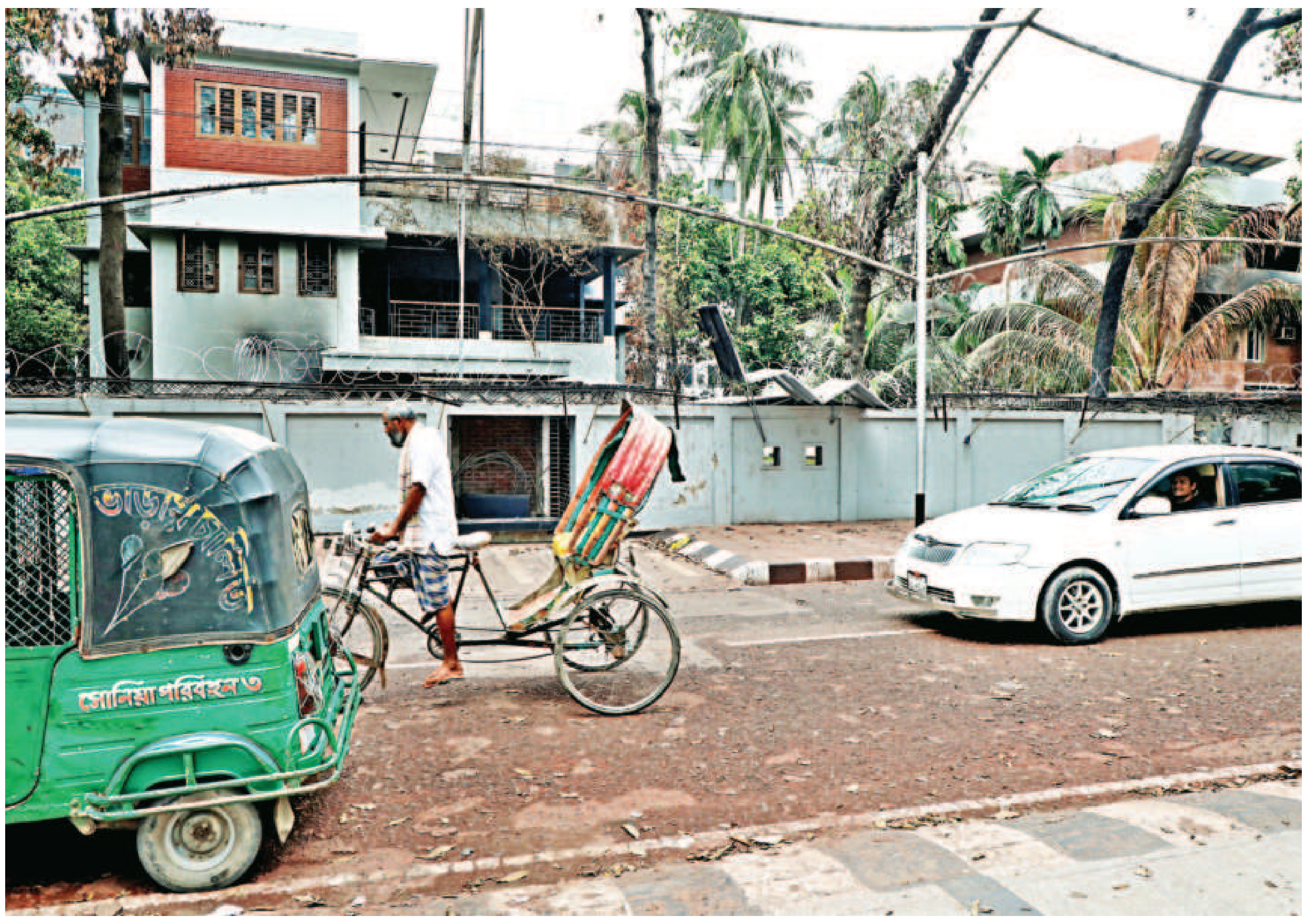
"We ran out of food, and the heat was unbearable. Many of us had no choice but to sleep in our vehicles."

The floodwaters receded enough by Sunday night to allow the resumption of traffic, but the road remains in poor condition.

Numerous potholes and large ditches have formed, particularly in Feni, making travel slow and hazardous.

Md Khairul Islam, Superintendent of Police (SP) of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Vehicles ply in front of the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi 32, as the road was opened for vehicle movement yesterday after more than 15 years. The museum, however, remains in a damaged state as it was vandalised following the fall of Sheikh Hasina on August 5.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

More than just NUMBERS

A 24-year-old was fatally shot in Dhaka's Laxmibazar. A 10th-grader was gunned down in a similar manner in Savar. A 20-year-old was shot in the chest in Narayanganj. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

A budding philanthropist gone too soon

24-year-old Omar was shot by law enforcers in Dhaka

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Omar Faruq, 24, a third-year honours student of the Bengali Department at Kabi Nazrul Government College, was fatally shot when law enforcers opened fire on protesters in Dhaka's Laxmibazar area on the afternoon of July 19.

Omar sustained multiple bullet wounds and was immediately rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead upon arrival.

His body was taken to his home village, Singha, in Netrakona's Durgapur upazila and was buried in the family graveyard on July 22.

Omar, who aspired to become a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'Has Hasina fallen yet?'

Sajan died in peace knowing the 'dictator' was gone, claims his brother

SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM, *Narayanganj*

Abul Hossain Sajan, 20, had just regained consciousness lying in the Intensive Care Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital after a seven-hour-long surgery at 3:00am on August 6. Finding his elder brother Md Anik, beside the bed, he asked, "Has the Hasina-government fallen yet?"

"It irked me a bit and I told him to rest. He had just gone through a critical surgery to remove a bullet that hit him in his chest the day before," Anik said.

"Leaving Sajan inside the ICU

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

'Mother, let me go... if I die, I'll become a martyr'

10th grader Siam was gunned down by cops on August 5

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH, *Savar*

Alif Ahmed Siam, a 10th grader at Savar Dairy Farm High School, had aspirations of becoming a pilot and joining the aviation sector. But his dreams were cut short when he was gunned down by police in Savar on August 5.

Siam, who lived with his parents and younger sister in a rented house in Savar's Islamnagar area, left home that morning with three friends to join the Long March to Dhaka organised by the Anti-discriminatory Students' Movement.

Despite his mother's hesitation, Siam was determined to join the protest.

"Mother, let me go. If I die, you will be filled with pride knowing your son died a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Ban on Jamaat and Shibir may be lifted today

Says party's lawyer

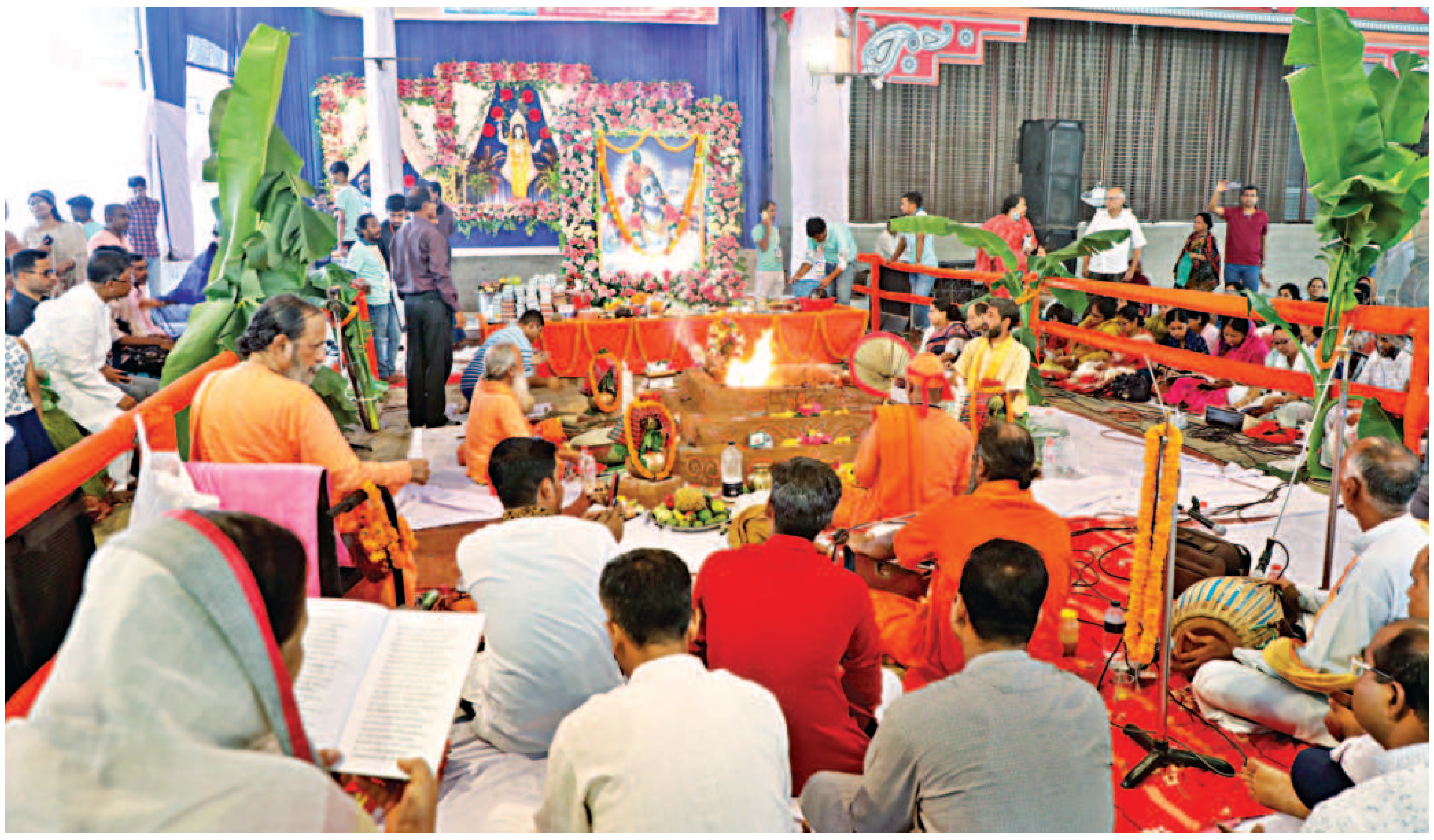
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government may issue a circular today revoking the former Awami League government's decree to ban Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir, said lawyers of Jamaat yesterday.

"As this is a legal issue, Jamaat-appointed lawyers held a series of discussions with the high-ups of the government department and advisers concerned. At one stage, we requested the home ministry and talked about the legal steps that can be taken to solve the issue," said Shishir Manir, a lawyer for Jamaat-e-Islami, while talking to reporters on Supreme Court premises.

"Following the request, they told us all the administrative work is complete... The order to ban Jamaat-Shibir will be withdrawn within the quickest possible time, or

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Devotees offer prayers at Dhakeshwari Temple in the capital on the occasion of Janmashtami, marking the birth of Lord Krishna. While Janmashtami, one of the biggest Hindu festivals, was celebrated yesterday with due religious fervour, the temple authority cancelled the festive procession this year, as they cut the cost and donated the money to help flood-affected people in the country.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Farakka water release poses no threat to Bangladesh: India

STAR REPORT

India yesterday said the release of water from the Ganges/Padma through the Farakka barrage occurs every season and the opening of the gates of the barrage poses no immediate worries of flooding in Bangladesh.

"We have seen media reports on the opening of Farraka barrage gates that will allow the flow of over 11 lakh cusecs of water downstream of the river in its natural course into the Ganga/Padma river," official spokesperson at the Indian Ministry of External Affairs Randhir Jaiswal said yesterday in response to reporters' queries.

His comment came after media in Bangladesh widely published

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Hajj registration to begin Sept 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The primary registration for the 2025 hajj will begin on September 1 and continue till November 30 through both public and private channels, the religious affairs ministry said yesterday.

The deadline for the registration will not be extended, said a ministry press release.

Any previous or new pre-registered person can do primary registration by depositing Tk 3 lakh. The remaining amount of the hajj package price must be paid within the time specified in the package.

The pre-registration fee for both public and private channels is Tk 30,000.

The quota for pilgrims from Bangladesh is 1.27 lakh.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Ensure better security for visa centre

Indian High Commission asks foreign ministry after demo

UNB, *Dhaka*

The Indian High Commission in Dhaka has sought enhanced security after a demonstration inside the key Indian visa centre yesterday.

"We have taken this up with the MoFA [the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]. We have sent a note verbale. We need enhanced security. Such a situation should not arise," an Indian official at the High Commission told UNB last night.

The official said yesterday's development does not give them confidence, noting that they were

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Pedal rickshaw pullers block Shahbagh

Demand a ban on battery-operated rickshaws

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pedal rickshaw pullers blocked the Shahbagh intersection yesterday morning, demanding a ban on battery-operated rickshaws on main roads.

They said battery-operated rickshaws should be restricted to feeder roads, as was the practice in the past.

Witnesses reported that several hundred rickshaw pullers began arriving in Shahbagh around 8:00am and blocked the road with their rickshaws around 9:00am.

The intersection was completely

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Ban on Jamaat

FROM PAGE 3

even by tomorrow (today)," he added.

Asked on which ground they demanded the withdrawal of the ban, Shishir Manir said the AL government banned Jamaat-Shibir, saying the parties are involved in terrorist activities.

But it did not specify or give any explanation about the criminal activities, he added.

Contacted, a top home ministry official told The Daily Star that a process is underway to withdraw the order, which need some time.

"We will send a proposal to the law ministry and later the final decision will come from there," he said.

On August 1, the then government banned Jamaat-e-Islami, its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir, and all of its associated organisations as political entities under the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009.

According to the gazette notification, the decision was taken as per Section 18 (1) of the act, and enlisted Jamaat and associates as banned entities in the second schedule of the act.

The Election Commission on October 29, 2018 scrapped the registration of Jamaat following a High Court verdict that declared its registration illegal.

On August 1, 2013, the HC declared Jamaat's registration with the EC illegal.

The EC had suspended Jamaat's registration the same year.

Although Jamaat later filed an appeal with the apex court challenging the HC verdict, the SC upheld it.

No scope

FROM PAGE 5

processes and reforms must go hand in hand, asserting that only an elected government can set the necessary political direction for the country.

Commenting on the Chief Advisor's address, the party remarked, "Prof Yunus expressed his stance and proposed a road map. He sought cooperation from the public, which he continues to receive from people and political parties. However, the situation is being complicated by the resignation of teachers, business leaders, and workers in various sectors under pressure."

The Workers Party also demanded the immediate release of their president, Rashed Khan Menon, urging the withdrawal of all charges against him.

Ensure better

FROM PAGE 3

basically returning passports as requested by people.

Visa seekers, who went there to collect their passports, suddenly demonstrated at the Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) in Dhaka's Jamuna Future Park, demanding Indian visas.

Meanwhile, in a press release on its website yesterday, Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC) Bangladesh stated that IVAC Dhaka and Satkhira centers will be closed today.

In other IVACs, only delivery operations will continue as usual, it added.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

FLOOD RELIEF CAMPAIGN AT DU

25,000 packs of relief items dispatched in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The relief campaign, set up by students at Dhaka University's TSC, sent 25,000 packets of relief to flood-affected people across the country yesterday.

The packages include dry foods, baby food, sanitary napkins, first aid supplies, and medicine.

Besides, the campaign booths collected Tk 85.68 lakh yesterday, and with that, the total amount of money collected stood at Tk 5.23 crore.

The total amount of funds that they received via online and banking channels yesterday could not be known, said Lutfor Rahman, one of the coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

The TSC cafeteria and games room have been filled with relief items, and hundreds of students were seen packing items while sitting on the floor.

A human chain was formed from the TSC gate to the cafeteria, with volunteers passing items hand-to-hand, packing them, and loading trucks from the backyard area.

Mahbubur Rahman, a former student at Dhaka University, was seen volunteering in the TSC area yesterday.

Mahbubur said they have been working with district administrators in the flooded areas, along with the Bangladesh Army, Navy, and Coast Guard.

"We can pack relief for 25,000 families a day here [TSC and Central Field]. We are ensuring that each package contains sufficient relief items to meet a family's needs for 3-4 days," he said.

They are prioritising the most affected areas and have formed separate groups in those areas, incorporating local students and organisers of the mass uprising, he added.

"It has become impossible to reach some remote areas as well. We are taking help from the local administrations there. Some of our assistance has been sent to the air base camp in Dhaka's Kurmitola, from where the Air Force is transporting them by helicopter," he said.

Red Cross China donates

FROM PAGE 3

Tk 100,000 to the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund for the flood-affected people. The Bangladesh Foreign Service Association also pledged to donate one day's salary of its members to support flood victims.

Additionally, the BFSA will contribute 2.5 percent of each member's salary to the Foreign Adviser for the treatment of students and others injured during the recent protests that led to the ouster of the Awami League regime.

Has Hasina fallen yet?

FROM PAGE 3

to let him rest and recuperate, I went out and found out that Sheikh Hasina had resigned and fled."

"Half-an-hour later, I went back to Sajan and told him that Shaikh Hasina had resigned. My brother smiled as I told him this, and he closed his eyes. I thought he went back to sleep, but after some time, the on-duty doctor checked on him and said he was gone..." Anik also said.

"My brother died in peace knowing that the dictator was gone," he added.

Abul Hossain Sajan, a 20-year-old from Kushiara village in Narayanganj, had been a committed participant in the ongoing student protests against the government.

Despite the risks, he joined the movement alongside his elder brother, Md Anik, on August 5.

Their destination was Chashara Intersection, where they planned to join others in the "March to Dhaka" event, organised by the Anti-discriminatory Students' Movement.

As they approached the intersection, the group of 11 protestors was ambushed by a mob of 50-60 men, believed to be Awami League supporters.

Armed with firearms and sharp weapons, the attackers chased and fired at the protesters.

In the chaos, Sajan became separated from his brother and was struck by a bullet in his chest.

Sajan was initially rushed to Narayanganj General Hospital before being transferred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Sajan completed his HSC in 2022 but could not continue studying as his father Jakir Hossain passed away.

He went on to join a soft drink manufacturing company as a sales representative, and eventually took the entire responsibility of the family after his elder brother became unemployed six months back.

Meanwhile, Anik has filed a case accusing former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, along with former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan and 46 others over his brother's death.

Former MP AKM Shamim Osman, his brother former MP AKM Selim Osman, son Imtinan Osman Ayon, nephew Azmery Osman were also among the accused.

Pedal rickshaw

FROM PAGE 3

blocked, and around 11:30am vehicles going to the southern parts of the city could be seen diverting through Hare Road.

Abdur Rashid, a rickshaw puller from Uttara, said they took to the streets because law enforcement authorities have not taken action against battery-operated rickshaws plying major roads.

"Our income has drastically reduced. Battery-operated rickshaws should only be allowed on feeder roads and lanes," he told The Daily Star.

Md Uzzal, another rickshaw puller, said they cannot compete with battery-operated rickshaws due to their speed.

The excessive speed of these three-wheelers is also causing accidents, he said, adding, "We will continue to protest until battery-operated rickshaws are banned from the main roads."

Although battery-operated rickshaws typically operate on lanes and feeder roads, they have lately started using main thoroughfares, including important routes like Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, due to the inaction of traffic police.

No permanent

FROM PAGE 5

"Khulna's Bastuhara Colony is home to the city's marginalised people. It is unfortunate that they are yet to get permanent allotment of their lands," said Prof Anwarul Kadir, an educationist and civil society member in Khulna.

Contacted, KCC mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque said, "I have been trying to settle the issue consulting with the authorities concerned. The minister for housing and public works had also visited the colony and assured us of completing the registration process."

Flood water recedes

FROM PAGE 3

Highway Police, Cumilla Region, confirmed that all types of vehicles are now moving on the highway. "Traffic jams are still occurring due to slow driving over potholes and ditches," he explained. "The slow movement and damaged roads have created congestion, but otherwise, things are improving."

Md Ataur Rahman, Additional Chief Engineer of the Roads and Highway Department (RHD) in Chattogram, said while the road in his zone is in relatively good condition, the situation in Feni is more problematic. "We've repaired some potholes, but the floodwater has significantly damaged the highway in Feni," he said.

Earlier concerns about the Lemua Bridge in Feni, which was reported to be damaged by floodwaters, were alleviated after RHD officials inspected the structure and declared it safe. However, Sub-Assistant Engineer Muhaiminul Sohag of RHD Feni acknowledged that the full extent of the highway's damage is still under assessment.

"Our immediate focus has been on repairs, but a comprehensive evaluation is yet to be done," he noted.

Mother, let me go

FROM PAGE 3

martyr," he said before leaving.

The procession, which started from Dairy Gate at Jahangirnagar University, was first stopped by police and Awami League activists at Savar Bazar bus stand.

As the crowd continued to march after hearing of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation, they were fired upon again near Savar Police Station around 2:30 pm.

Siam was shot in the head.

He was initially taken to Labzone Hospital in an unconscious state and later shifted to Enam Medical College Hospital.

After battling for his life for two days, Siam passed away on August 7.

Siam's father, Bulbul Kabir, who runs a clothing store near Jahangirnagar University, said, "Siam was a brilliant student and a sports champion at his school. He chose the science group with the dream of becoming a pilot. He worked hard, won numerous awards, and did not deserve this end."

Bulbul also mentioned that Supreme Court lawyer Gazi MH Tamim has filed a case on his behalf with the International Crimes Tribunal, accusing former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and eight others of genocide and crimes against humanity committed between July 15 and August 5.

"I want all those involved in the killing of my son to be brought to justice," Siam's mother, Tanya Akhter, said through tears.

"My son had so many dreams, and they were taken away in an instant. I demand justice for his killing."

75pc telecom

FROM PAGE 5

provided to Sonagazi upazila in the district in coordination with mobile operators Grameenphone and Robi, along with Summit and Edotco, to hasten the restoration of network services.

In Chhagalnaiya upazila, two speedboats have also been allocated to support network restoration operations, coordinated with Grameenphone and Summit and Edotco.

Vehicles have been provided to mobile operator Banglalink in Fulgazi and Chhagalnaiya upazilas to assist with their restoration activities, said the telecom regulator.

Farakka water release

FROM PAGE 3

reports on the opening of all 109 gates of the barrage without providing enough details.

According to media reports, the barrage's gates were opened on August 24 to release water when the water level crossed the danger level.

"The release of water is a routine seasonal development due to increased inflow from heavy rainfall in the Ganga river basin catchment areas upstream," Jaiswal explained.

He said the Farakka structure is a barrage, not a dam, and its primary function is to divert 40,000 cusecs of water into the Farakka canal, while the remaining water flows naturally downstream into the Padma river.

Jaiswal also assured that water flow data is regularly shared with Joint Rivers Commission officials in Bangladesh as per bilateral protocol.

"We have seen fake videos and rumours being spread to create misunderstandings. These should be firmly countered with facts," Jaiswal added.

Experts in Bangladesh yesterday also said the opening of the gates of Farakka is a regular annual event.

Mohammed Abul Hossen, a member of Bangladesh's Joint Rivers Commission, explained that the water-sharing treaty between Bangladesh and India remains effective from January to May.

"During that period, India provides water to Bangladesh as per the treaty," he said.

The rest of the time, India diverts 40,000 cusecs of water through a bypass feeder canal to the Hooghly river, while the remaining water flows into the Padma.

All the gates of the Farakka barrage usually remain open during the monsoon, he added.

When asked about the situation, Sarder Udoy Raihan, executive engineer of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre, said the water level of the Ganges had crossed the danger level in India last week but is currently flowing below the danger level.

"So, we are not expecting any floods in the Ganges basin within the next week or so," he said.

Eminent citizens

FROM PAGE 5

marginalised groups such as women, children, the elderly, the disabled, Dalits, Indigenous people, and the third gender.

They also emphasised the need to monitor human rights violations, including potential sexual harassment during the disaster, and recommended collaboration with law enforcement and human rights organisations to address these issues.

Additionally, the statement called for a thorough assessment and planning for medium- and long-term needs, including education, shelter, and healthcare for flood victims.

The signatories to the statement include rights activist Sultana Kamal, Coordinator of Nijera Kori Khushi Kabir, Supreme Court lawyer ZI Khan Panna, Dhaka University Professor of Mass Communication and Journalism Robaet Ferdous, and Executive Director of the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) Shamsul Huda, among others.

A budding philanthropist gone

FROM PAGE 3

philanthropist, was well-known in his community for his selfless dedication.

In 2018, he founded the Durgapur Blood Donors' Society, a platform that now includes around 2,000 blood donors. The society, which Omar led from the front, also distributed relief during natural disasters and provided essentials to the underprivileged during Eids and Puja festivals.

"Omar's untimely demise is a shock to us all," said Al Sajid Rocky, a close friend.

"He was always at the forefront, helping those in need. Just before the clash, he had told me over the phone about the escalating situation in Dhaka. Half an hour later, I received a call saying he had been shot."

Omar's father, Abdul Khaleque, an expatriate in Dubai, returned home on July 20 after receiving the devastating news.

"Omar was the guide for our family in my absence," Khaleque said.

"With his death, I am at a loss. Who will take care of the family now?"

Omar's younger brother, Abdullah Anik, recalled their last conversation.

"Bhaia told me he would offer Juma prayers at Baitul Mokarram Mosque before joining the protests. I never imagined it would be our final conversation."

Tariqul Islam Rana, a member of the blood donors' society, expressed the collective grief of Omar's community.

"He always wanted to help the marginalised people of Durgapur upazila, where most live below the poverty line," he said.

"His death is an irreparable loss to both his family and society."

Omar's friends and family are demanding justice and a thorough investigation into his killing.

"We have lost a bright light," said Raju Ahmed, another society member. "Omar's dreams of uplifting his community must not die with him."

Hajj registration

FROM PAGE 3

When this quota is filled, the primary registration process will automatically close.

This year's hajj package price will be subject to the costs at the Saudi end and airfare. However, efforts will be made to reduce the price of general hajj packages compared to last year.

In the normal hajj package, a maximum of six seats will be in a room at a home or hotel. However, a package upgradation facility will be available.

Hajj agencies can send pilgrims with special package facilities. The list of agencies initially qualified to conduct hajj activities is available at www.hajj.gov.bd. Moreover, any hajj-related information can be known by calling 16136.

To perform hajj under the government hajj management, one can complete pre hajj registration through e-hajj system (www.hajj.gov.bd), e-hajj BD mobile app, all union digital centre, divisional and district offices of Islamic foundation, Baitul Mokarrom Mosque, or the hajj office at city's Ashkona hajj camp.

To do so under private management, one will have to complete registration through government approved private hajj agencies.

The religious ministry has called upon pregnant women and people suffering from chronic diseases like cancer, advanced cardiac, liver cirrhosis, kidney disease, infectious tuberculosis, and dementia not to register for hajj.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 27

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Request for Quotation: Security Maturity Assessment

BRAC Bank PLC. delivers a full array of banking services to individuals as well as business entities with a network of 187 Branches, 45 Sub-branches, 329 ATMs, 457 SME Unit Offices and 1,080 Agent Banking. Currently the Bank is seeking for vendor(s) to provide Security Maturity Assessment.

A Request for Quotation (RFQ) for Technical Offer Submission is issued for the mentioned purpose. The RFQ along with details of the bidding process can be found on the bank's website **https://www.bracbank.com/en/information/e-tender**

Interested eligible bidders are requested to submit the Technical offer as per the mentioned bidding process.

BRAC BANK
আস্থা অবিচল

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Pirojpur Sadar, Pirojpur.
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No: 46.02.7980.000.14.001.24-741 Date: 25/08/2024

E-Tender Notice-02/2024-25

e- Tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement as bellow: Procurement Method: Open Tendering Method (OTM).

Sl. No	Tender ID & Method	Package No	Name of work	Tender Publication Date	Last selling Date & time	Closing Date & time
01	997815 (NOTM)	e-Tender/PEDP4/PER/SAD/2023-2024/W2A-6993	Construction of Additional Class Room Mula Gram Govt. Under PEDP4.	27/08/2024 10: AM	10/09/2024 17:00 PM	11/09/2024 13:00 PM
02	997816 (NOTM)	e-Tender/PEDP4/PER/SAD/2023-2024/W2A-6994	Construction of Additional Class Room Dakkhin Shankar Pasha Govt. Under PEDP4.	27/08/2024 10: AM	10/09/2024 17:00 PM	11/09/2024 13:00 PM
03	997817 (NOTM)	e-Tender/PEDP4/PER/SAD/2023-2024/W2A-07088	Construction of Additional Class Room Sikder Mallik Govt. Under PEDP4.	27/08/2024 10: AM	10/09/2024 17:00 PM	11/09/2024 13:00 PM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal (http://www. eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the national e-GP system portal have to be deposited through on line at any branches of registered Banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

N.B: 1. Revise RDPP Of PEDP4 is Under Approval Process, So Contract Agreement Can Not be Signed Before RDPP Approval if RDPP (2nd Revision) Does Not Get Approval Then Tender Will Be Cancelled.
2. The Tender Validity Period Shall Be : 180 Days.

(Harashit Sarkar)
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Pirojpur Sadar, Pirojpur.
Telephone: 0461-62504.
e-mail: ue.perojpur-s@lged.gov.bd

GD-262

KHULNA'S BASTUHARA COLONY

No permanent allotment for residents in 52yrs

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

In 1972, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman allotted 33 acres of land for squatters and displaced people in Mujgunni area of Khulna city to reside there.

Back then, the land was largely an abandoned wetland on the outskirts of the city, where the people gradually built settlements over the years. Eventually the area came to be known as Bastuhara Colony.

At present, around 15,000 people from at least three generations are living in the colony. However, they have no permanent land document for their allotments of 450 square feet space for each family.

Apart from the residential establishments, there is a government primary school, an MPO-affiliated secondary school, four mosques, a madrasa and an orphanage in the colony.

Most residents of the colony are low-income people who live hand-to-mouth, working in informal professions such as hawkers, small traders, and day labourers, among others.

Even after more than 50 years, the land has yet to be permanently allotted to the settlers, despite their repeated plea for permanent registration of their plots at nominal value or symbolic value.

Abdur Razzak, a resident of the colony, said without permanent allotment of land, they are being unable to build the structures as per requirement.

"My seven-member family lives in a shabby tin-shed house. In monsoon, almost all belongings get drenched in rain as I could not build any concrete structure while the family continues to grow. If I go to bank for home loan, they want permanent land document, which I cannot produce," he added.

Sabur Mollah, 76, who came from Bakerganj of Barishal with five family members, have been living in the colony since 1972. The extended family members have grown in number to 23 and are now living in two plots.

"How many people can live in a 10-12 feet room? This is the reality of almost families who live here, with their allotted lands yet to be registered to their names," he said.

"If we could afford, we would have purchased land or settle anywhere else in the city. Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to buy land elsewhere as it is too expensive," he expressed frustration.

On September 12, 1998, the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina announced to initiate the registration of plots to the residents of Bastuhara Colony at a public meeting there. Although the registration process was started, it stopped after the government changed in 2001.

Later, in 2013, former state minister for labour and employment Begum Mannujan Sufian, Khulna City Corporation mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque, and then chairman of the Housing Authority pledged to resume the registration process for the colony and rename it as "Bangabandhu Nagar".

Accordingly, an 8-member survey committee consisting of the representatives of the state minister, KCC, deputy commissioner of Khulna, Housing Authority, and Bastuhara Colony Registration Committee was formed to carry out the on-site survey.

The committee prepared a list of 1,502 families living in the colony through field survey and submitted a report. However, no progress was made since then.

Before allotting the land, Bangabandhu had pledged in this regard at an electioneering rally in 1970 at Khulna Circuit House ground.

Under his direction, the process of development and allotment registration of Bastuhara Colony began 1972 onwards, but later stopped after his assassination.

Visiting the colony recently, this correspondent observed that almost all structures are tin-shed houses in a congested, shabby, and dilapidated condition, where poor, working class people are living in a precarious state.

Lack of drainage and sewerage facilities turned the environment largely unhygienic, while almost of the area remains submerged under rain water in monsoon.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

75pc telecom towers in Feni still non-functional

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 75 percent of the mobile telecom towers in Feni are non-functional as of 5pm yesterday, according to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission.

In 11 flood-affected districts, approximately 7 percent of the mobile towers are out of service now.

Of the total 14,551 towers, 1,008 are inactive at present in the flood-affected Feni, Noakhali, Lakshmipur, Cumilla, Brahmanbaria, Chattogram, Khagrachhari, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Sylhet and Cox's Bazar.

The BTRC said it is trying to resume operation of the affected mobile towers in coordination with the army.

The commission said two speedboats have been deployed in Fulgazi upazila of Feni in coordination with mobile operator Robi and tower operators Summit and Edotco to expedite network restoration efforts.

Additionally, two speedboats have been

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

FLASH FLOOD

Eminent citizens urge unity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-seven prominent citizens, including academicians, authors, journalists, and rights activists, have called on the government and the people of Bangladesh to unite and work together to support the victims of the recent devastating floods.

In a statement issued to the media yesterday, they urged civil society, particularly social, cultural, and civic organisations, to take a more proactive role in providing coordinated assistance to those affected.

The statement highlighted that at least 18 people have lost their lives across 12 districts in the floods. It noted that citizens from all walks of life, including students and teachers, have stepped forward to assist flood-hit families.

The interim government has also sent relief items to the affected areas.

The signatories praised the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement for its efforts in crowdfunding and distributing various relief items to those impacted by the floods. They noted that the overwhelming response from the public, with people donating cash and relief materials, demonstrates the deep compassion and commitment of Bangladesh's citizens to support those in need during challenging times.

The statement included a seven-point recommendation, emphasising the importance of encouraging people to assist flood victims according to their capacity by quickly gathering and delivering essential items—such as dry food, drinking water, clothing, emergency medicine, and cash—to nearby relief centres.

It also called for better coordination with local organisations and authorities, suggesting that a coordinated delivery of relief supplies could reduce costs and increase the efficiency of aid distribution.

The signatories urged prioritising aid to remote and hard-to-reach areas, with special attention to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Red Cross China donates $100,000 for flood victims

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Red Cross Society of China has donated $100,000 to support victims of the devastating floods that have affected millions in Bangladesh's eastern and southeastern regions.

The donation was handed over by Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh, Yao Wen, during a meeting with Prof Dr M U Kabir Chowdhury, chairman of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, at their headquarters yesterday.

During the ceremony, Ambassador Yao Wen expressed deep concern and sympathy on behalf of the Chinese government and people for the loss of lives and property in Bangladesh.

"China, which also frequently suffers from natural disasters, extends its sincere sympathies to the people of Bangladesh. Though disasters are ruthless, people are compassionate," he said.

Yao Wen added that China is ready to continue providing assistance based on Bangladesh's needs to aid in disaster relief and reconstruction efforts, further strengthening the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries.

In addition to China's contribution, the UK has announced £33,000 in immediate humanitarian assistance to support over 12,000 people affected by severe flooding in Feni, Khagrachari, and Noakhali.

The aid will be implemented by Start Fund Bangladesh and Save the Children International and will provide search and rescue, food, cash transfers, clean water, sanitation, and hygiene supplies.

Meanwhile, the BCS'81 Forum Bangladesh has announced a donation of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Illegal sand lifting continues unabated in Chowagachha

MOHSIN MILON, *Benapole*

Residents of Jashore's Chowgachha upazila have alleged that the local administration is yet to take any action against a syndicate that has long been illegally extracting sand from Marjad Bawar area in Patibila union.

Hundreds of truckloads of sand are being lifted from the spot using excavator every day, putting the nearby croplands, river-protection dam, roads and other structures and trees at risk, they also alleged.

According to the Sand Quarry and Soil Management Act, 2010, no sand can be extracted from rivers, canals, ponds and other waterbodies within one kilometer of any road, culvert or other structure.

However, some local influential in Patibila union -- Touhid Sheikh, Tito, Farukh Ahmed, Ibrahim Hossain, Liton Hossain, Mithu, Roshan Ali and Ala Uddin -- have been lifting sand without adhering to the law.

Visiting the spot recently, this correspondent observed excavators were engaged in illegal sand extraction on the riverbank.

Ziarul and Kabir Hossain, two workers who were lifting sand using excavator, said Mithu owns the machines.

The extracted sand is sold for different development works including filling up of low-lying lands, and construction works, they also said.

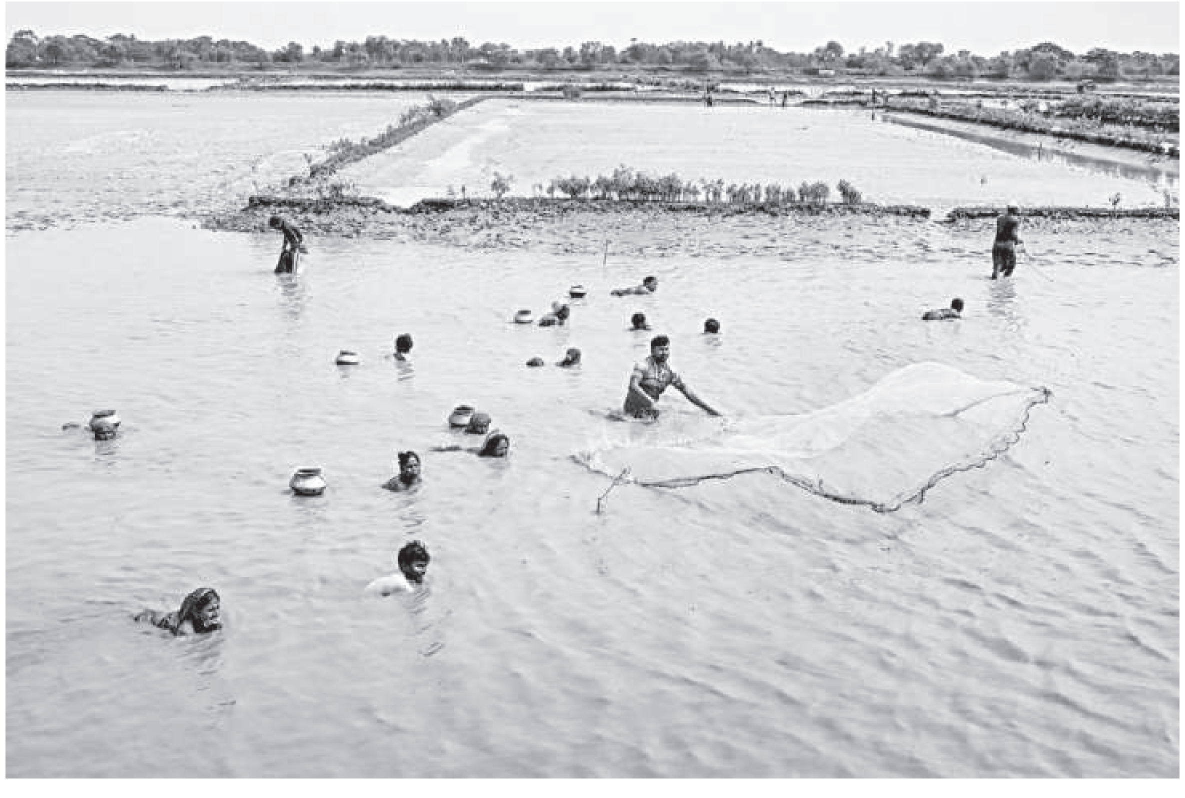
About 100 truckloads of sand are being lifted every day, and each truckload of sand is sold for Tk 2,500-3,000, they added.

Wishing anonymity, a local said sand lifting must be done from a designated sand quarry with the government's approval.

Farooq Hossain, who also owns excavators, said, "We know our activities are illegal. Many others are also running their machines here. We have been lifting and selling sand after managing officials concerned of the administration. We provide sand to different government-run development works at low cost."

Contacted, Chougachha Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sushmita Saha said policemen were sent to stop illegal sand lifting after receiving complaint in this regard.

Legal action will be taken against those involved, she added.



Locals fishing in a canal connected to the Bhadra river in Khulna's Paikgachha upazila. After the tidal water recedes from the canal, many kinds of fish can be found there, prompting people to engage in such fishing activities. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: **HABIBUR RAHMAN**

No scope to delay polls

Says Workers Party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Workers Party of Bangladesh, a key ally of the recently ousted Awami League government, yesterday said that there is no scope to delay the next election.

They said timely election is mandatory to kick start a new democratic process.

In a statement issued yesterday, the party's politburo responded to the Chief Advisor's address to the nation, highlighting the urgency of holding elections.

"The immediate past government failed to create a fair electoral process. Due to the absence of fair elections, there is now a strong public demand for one," the statement said.

The party stressed that democratic political

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়
পুরাতন কোর্ট বিল্ডিং রোড, রাঙ্গামাটি-৪৫০০।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টারে (অক্টোবর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত) রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয়ের নিমিত্ত দি-পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট ২০০৮ অনুসারে প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ি, ঠিকাদার, যোগানদার ও সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৩/২০২৪-২০২৫

১।	মন্ত্রনালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।
২।	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
৩।	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	পুলিশ সুপার, রাঙ্গামাটি পার্বত্য জেলা।
৪।	কি কারনে দরপত্র আহবান	জেলা পুলিশের রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয়।
৫।	দরপত্র সূত্র নং	রেশন/ ৪৪১৬ (১৮)/১ম খন্ড
৬।	তারিখ	২৫ / ০৮ /২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।
কাজের বিবরণ ঃ		
৭।	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	উম্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
অর্থের উৎস ঃ		
৮।	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	রাজস্ব খাত।
তথ্যাদি ঃ		
৯।	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	২৭/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ
১০।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়)	১৯/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।
১১।	দরপত্র সিডিউল জমা প্রদানের/গ্রহনের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২২/০৯/২০২৪ ইং বেলা- ১২.০০ ঘঃ।
১২।	দরপত্র বাক্স খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২৩/০৯/২০২৪ ইং বেলা- ১২.০০ ঘঃ।
১৩।	দরপত্র মূল্যায়ন সভার তারিখ	২৪/০৯/২০২৪ ইং বেলা- ১২.০০ ঘঃ।
অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা ঃ		
১৪।		অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা
	দরপত্র ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী অফিস	১।পুলিশ সুপার রাঙ্গামাটির কার্যালয়। ২। ডিআইজি, চট্টগ্রাম রেঞ্জ এর কার্যালয়।
	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিস	১। পুলিশ সুপার রাঙ্গামাটির কার্যালয়। ২। ডিআইজি, চট্টগ্রাম রেঞ্জ এর কার্যালয়।
	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	১। পুলিশ সুপার রাঙ্গামাটি এর কার্যালয়।
দরপত্র সম্পর্কিত তথ্য ঃ		
১৫।	দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা	হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স,আয়কর সনদ,ভ্যাট রেজিষ্ট্রেশন সনদ,ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী সনদ ও অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী ও দলিলপত্রের বিবরণ যাহা পিজি-৩ এবং এর সাথে সংযুক্ত বাংলায় টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউলে উল্লেখ আছে। দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি ও সিডিউলে বর্ণিত চাহিত দলিলপত্রাদি অবশ্যই দরপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
১৬।	মালামালের বিবরণ ঃ	

ক্রমিক নং	আইটেম	পরিমান (টন/লিটার/কেজি)	দরপত্রের মূল্য (অফেরৎ যোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানত (টাকা)	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময়
১।	উন্নত মানের মসুর ডাল(ছোট দানা) সংরক্ষিত নমুনা মোতাবেক ডাল ক্রয় করা হবে।	চাহিদা মোতাবেক	৭৫০.০০	১,৫০,০০০.০০	কার্যাদেশ মোতাবেক।
২।	সয়াবিন তেল ক্রয়(ভিটামিন "এ" সমৃদ্ধ)।	চাহিদা মোতাবেক ।	৭৫০.০০	১,৫০,০০০.০০	কার্যাদেশ মোতাবেক।
৩।	চিনি ক্রয় (উন্নত মানের)	চাহিদা মোতাবেক	৭৫০.০০	১,৫০,০০০.০০	কার্যাদেশ মোতাবেক।

দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর বিবরন ঃ-

১৭।	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	মীর আবু তৌহিদ বিপিএম (বার)
১৮।	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	পুলিশ সুপার ।
১৯।	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, রাঙ্গামাটি জেলা।
২০।	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	অফিস ফোন-০৩৫১-৬২২০৪। ফ্যাক্স-০৩৫১-৬৩১২৭।

বিশেষ শর্তাবলীঃ-(ক) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে না।
(খ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন।
(গ) দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত যে কোন আইটেমের ক্রয়ের পরিমান বৃদ্ধি অথবা হ্রাস করার বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে।
(ঘ) দরদাতাগণ'কে তাদের নিজস্ব প্যাডে আবেদন করে দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করতে হবে। প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/মালিক ব্যতিত অন্য কোন প্রতিনিধির নিকট দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে না।

২৫/৮/২৪

মীর আবু তৌহিদ বিপিএম (বার)
বিপি নং-৭৯০৬১১৯৭৩২
পুলিশ সুপার
রাঙ্গামাটি পার্বত্য জেলা।
ফোন-৬২২০৪, ফ্যাক্স-৬৩১২৭ ।
ই-মেইল sprangamati@police.gov.bd

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Would have gone myself if not for my two children: **Pori Moni**

Pori Moni, who is one of the most vocal actresses in the country and a humanitarian by her own merits, has recently made a heartfelt plea to the nation, urging everyone to support those affected by the devastating floods that have ravaged parts of Bangladesh.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

While Pori Moni initially planned to visit the affected areas herself, she decided against it due to concerns for her two young children. Instead, she sent a team with essential supplies, including clothes, medicine, and food, to those in need.

"My heart aches for the flood victims," Pori Moni shared with The Daily Star in an exclusive interview. "These people are suffering through no fault of their own."

Pori Moni, who was always seen supporting the underprivileged, explained her decision to send a team rather than visit personally, citing concerns for her children. "With two small kids at home, I couldn't take the risk of travelling to the flood-hit areas."

However, the actress assembled a team of ten people who travelled to the affected regions to distribute aid. "My main concern was ensuring the assistance reached those who needed it directly. The team has been staying with the victims, providing clothes, medicine, and food."

Although initially hesitant to speak publicly about her efforts, the ***Swapnajaal*** famed actress decided to share her story to inspire others, who can come forward to help those in need. "I didn't want to make this public, but then I thought, if people see what I'm doing, it might encourage them to help as well. If I were a flood victim, I would be desperate for any kind of assistance."

She continued, "This is not the time to sit at home. We must all stand by the flood victims and offer whatever support we can, no matter how small."

The actress also expressed her admiration for the students and people who have been actively collecting and distributing aid at Dhaka University's Teacher-Student Centre (TSC). "The student community has shown incredible spirit in gathering supplies and standing by the flood victims. This is the true essence of Bangladesh—everyone rushing to help in times of need."

Amid these challenging times, Pori Moni took a brief respite to celebrate her son Shahim Mohammad Punyo's second birthday in the Sundarbans, far from the ongoing unrest. Reflecting on the celebration, she said, "After the recent mass movement, we've all been through some tough days. I wanted to celebrate my son's birthday in a special way. Although I initially planned to invite journalists and close friends, we ended up having a quiet celebration in the Sundarbans."

She described the experience as deeply memorable. "In the Sundarbans, we explored the jungle, and my son and I had a wonderful time together. We even had matching outfits made, and Punyo was so happy. These are memories that will last a lifetime."

Despite the joyous occasion, Pori Moni faced criticism after sharing photos from the celebration. Addressing the negativity, she remarked, "No matter how much good you do, there will always be a small fraction of people who will criticise. But the majority, I would say 90%, will say positive things. If we focus on the negativity, we won't be able to move forward."

Reflecting on the state of the nation, Pori Moni acknowledged the gravity of the recent events, "The recent mass movement felt like an uprising. We've only gained independence once, and uprisings might have happened before, but it has happened successfully now. The credit goes to the students. My respect goes out to those who lost their lives, and may their souls rest in peace. We will never forget their sacrifice."

As for her professional life, Pori Moni is cautious about returning to work. "I'll think about resuming work once the current political situation calms down. For now, I'm waiting for a more peaceful environment. The projects I've already worked on will be released soon."

PHOTOS: **COLLECTED**

Zayed Khan shocked by lawsuit

A lawsuit was filed against 50 people on Sunday, including three celebrities: Zayed Khan, Shariar Nazim Joy, and Sazu Khadem. The charges stem from an alleged attack on the motorcade of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at the Fakirapool intersection in April 2015.

Upon discovering the news, Zayed spoke to the Daily Prothom Alo, from Canada, where he expressed, "I am shocked. The abrupt involvement of my name in this false case is deliberate."

In response to the case, he stated, "Every artiste is entitled to their political beliefs; they should be personal and subjective. However, I have never engaged in anything improper or controversial."

Bangladeshi short film 'Darkak' wins award at Shimla Int'l Film Festival

Zayed Siddiqui directorial short film ***Darkak*** has earned the Special Critics' Award at the 10th Shimla International Film Festival, India.

The festival took place from August 16 to 18 at the historic Gaiety Theatre Cultural Complex in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, India, where Siddiqui personally received the award on its concluding day.

Previously, ***Darkak*** also vied for the Best International Short Film Award at the festival.

On August 18, the award-winning filmmakers were honoured during the closing ceremony by the festival's chief guest, Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla, according to a press release issued by the production company.

Adding to its success, ***Darkak*** has secured global distribution deals with Australia-based Screen Scope and US-based Seven Palms Entertainment, expanding its reach to international audiences.

NEWS

Cases against Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

According to the case statement, Manju joined the protest called by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement on the road in front of Borobari Bazar on July 20. When some of the accused, being instructed by others, attacked and shot at the protesters, Manju suffered bullet wounds and died.

In Rangpur, another murder case has been filed against Hasina, along with 29 others, over the death of Merajul Islam, a fruit vendor, during the student movement on July 19.

Merajul's wife, Nazmim Islam, filed the case with the Metropolitan Magistrate Court. The court directed Kotwali Police Station to investigate the matter alongside the ongoing investigation into the incident, reports our Dinajpur correspondent.

Quader, Asaduzzaman, former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, former Commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police Md Moniruzzaman and former DIG of Rangpur Range Abdul Baten were among the accused.

Meanwhile, a case has been filed against 30 named persons, including M Iqbalur Rahim, a former AL lawmaker of Dinajpur-3 (Sadar) also a former whip of Jatiya Sangsad, over the death of a student during a protest in Dinajpur on August 4.

Faridul Islam, brother of deceased Rabiul Islam Rahul, filed the case with Dinajpur Sadar Police Station, accusing 300/400 unidentified persons too.

Rahul, 17, a student at Raniganj Ahiya Hossain School and College in Sadar upazila, received bullet wounds during a protest on August 4. He died from his injuries on August 10.

Niaz Ahmed Khan

FROM PAGE 12

Prof Niaz, who will be 30th VC of DU, has a distinguished career in academia and development management. He holds a PhD with distinction from the University of Wales Swansea and has earned numerous scholarships, including the UK Commonwealth Scholarship, according to IUB website.

He studied public (forest) policy studies at University of Oxford and natural resource management at Asian Institute of Technology.

Prof Niaz also served as the Bangladesh Country Representative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Roadmap for transition

FROM PAGE 1

He said the chief adviser hinted at some reforms, but those cannot be implemented in a short time.

Fakhrul, however, expressed optimism that things are moving in a positive direction for the benefit of the people.

He said Yunus correctly stated that the timing of the election is a matter of political decision. "It will surely be a political decision. But for this decision to be made, the government needs to engage in discussions with political parties and politicians."

He hoped that the chief adviser would soon begin talks with the political parties.

Jatiya Party (Zafar) organised the discussion at the Jatiya Press Club, marking the ninth death anniversary of its founder Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

On Sunday evening, Yunus in his address to the nation assured that a free, fair, and participatory election would be arranged after completing necessary reforms in the administration, the judiciary, the Election Commission and electoral system.

Fakhrul yesterday said the BNP aims to give the interim government the opportunity to perform its duties.

He said people will not accept a return to the previous situation when they had lost all their rights.

"So, we are waiting with patience, and the people are waiting. But it must happen within a reasonable time. I believe that within this reasonable time, there will definitely be an election and a government will be formed by the people."

Fakhrul appreciated Yunus for his remark that the interim government will create an environment where no one would be able to turn the country into a police state.

"This is exactly what we have always wanted... If they do this, we will fully support their efforts."

He said Yunus assured that justice must be ensured for all extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. "This is what we want, and we repeatedly state that this justice must be served."

Fakhrul said the interim government must withdraw the false cases filed against BNP and other party leaders and activists filed during the Awami League regime.

"We have seen in the newspaper reports that cases against the chief adviser and an adviser have been withdrawn... We hope that the 145,000 cases against us will also be withdrawn immediately."

Supporting the chief adviser's statement on police reform, Fakhrul said they want the police to be transformed into an ideal force for the people. "We want it to happen very quickly."

He said students along with the ordinary people thwarted an attempt by a group of Ansar members to create chaos by laying siege to the Secretariat. "It's an ominous sign as the defeated forces are trying to undermine the victory of the people by hatching conspiracies."

He called upon the people to stay alert to such plots.

Fakhrul urged different aggrieved groups of people to have patience and refrain from laying siege to the Secretariat and other government establishments.

He also urged the students not to create situations with unnecessary use of force that could disrupt administrative functions.

"We have seen that students in some schools and colleges are putting pressure on teachers to resign. There are proper procedures for this; you can lodge complaints, and if proven, action will be taken. But teachers should be allowed to continue their work."

He said people in the administration who supported and aided the ousted AL government, and were involved in killings are still holding their posts.

"We don't want to see their faces anymore. Please remove those individuals as soon as possible and bring in patriotic people who want to work and those who have been deprived. Ensure that the administration is run by them. Otherwise, the nation will not forgive you for this." Fakhrul said.

Asif sends U-20s

FROM PAGE 12

Earlier, Bangladesh had taken the lead in the 35th minute when Rabby Hossain Rahul raced into the box down the left flank to drive a low shot that was mishandled by India custodian Priyansh Dubley, with forward Asadul Molla driving the rebound home.

India dominated the second half and created at least five chances but Bangladesh's captain and first-choice-keeper Mehedi Hasan Srabon made a couple of saves before he had to leave the pitch due to an injury in the 69th minute.

Asif looked confident right away but could not stop a left-footed shot from Ricky Meetei Haobam in the 75th minute from a scramble followinga poor clearance from the Bangladesh defenders.

Bangladesh were reduced to 10 men just a minute before the final whistle, with defender Kamacai Marma Aky picking up his second yellow card. However, Asif and the penalty takers showed their mettle to help achieve Bangladesh's initial target of playing in the final, where they will take on Nepal on Wednesday.

"I want to thank the players who performed with their willpower and inner instincts because the opponents were India, who have always been a difficult side, especially against Bangladesh," Maruful said at the post-match press conference.

"India played matured football, creating a lot of chances," the UEFA A licenced coach said. "For us, everything was in the right direction after taking the lead but there one thing that is our national crisis (going defensive) -- the players must learn to play attacking football after taking the lead.

"We are now hopeful about the final against Nepal, who are a strong opponent on their home ground but we are optimistic about play a good match against them," Maruful said.

Ansarullah

FROM PAGE 12

objection from the court and the prison authorities," said Farhad.

Rajib, a blogger and activist of the Gonojagoron Mancha movement, was hacked to death on February 15, 2013, near his home in the capital's Mirpur.

He was the first victim of a series of similar attacks on secular writers and bloggers at that time.

A Dhaka court in the case handed death penalties to two people, life-term imprisonment to another, and five-year imprisonment to Rahmani on December 31, 2015.

The convicts other than Rahmani had vowed to kill "atheist bloggers" after reading Rahmani's books and listening to his sermons, the investigation officer said in the charge sheet. They targeted Rajib "for his blog posts under the pseudonym 'Thabababa'".

Rahmani earlier came out of Kashimpur High-Security Jail on January 21 after securing bail in five cases. He was arrested two days later in connection with another case after police, citing a suspected member of the Al Qaeda-linked group, alleged that Rahmani had started plotting sabotage immediately after his release.

Nazrul's 48th death anniv

FROM PAGE 12

Kazi Nazrul was born on 11 Joishttha, 1306 Bonggabdo in the village Churulia, West Bengal of India's Bardhaman district. His father's name was Kazi Faqeer Ahmed and mother was Zahida Khatun. His nickname was 'Dukhu Mia'.

The nation got inspirations from Nazrul's poems and songs during the great Liberation War in 1971 and all other democratic movements and struggles.

Nazrul wrote nearly 3,000 songs and composed many of them which are known as Nazrul-Geeti or Nazrul Sangeet.

After the independence of Bangladesh, Nazrul was brought to Dhaka from Kolkata along with his family.

The family was given a home in Dhanmondi.

Protecting rights

FROM PAGE 1

the birth of Lord Sri Krishna.

Professor Yunus expressed his vision for a Bangladesh where everyone can practice their faith without fear and where religious sites, like temples, do not need to be guarded, said a press release sent by the chief adviser's office.

"Our responsibility is to safeguard the rights of every citizen. It is our duty to ensure justice for all," the chief adviser told Hindu leaders at State Guest House Jamuna.

"There can be no divisions among the people of our country. We are all equal citizens, and this interim government is committed to protecting the rights of every individual," he added.

Hindu leaders, in turn, greeted the chief adviser on the auspicious occasion, sharing that they had prayed for the harmony and prosperity of the nation, as well as for the success of the interim government.

They also noted that Janmashtami celebrations had been suspended in flood-affected regions, and they had focused on sending food and relief to those areas instead.

The Hindu leaders praised Prof Yunus's recent comments at the Dhakeshwari temple, stating that his words would contribute to fostering a non-communal society and ensuring religious harmony across the nation.

During the meeting, the issue of land grabbing, including the seizure of property belonging to Hindu temples, was raised by the leaders.

Among the Hindu leaders present were Kajal Debnath and Monindra Kumar Nath of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, Charu Charan Brahmachari of ISKCON, Basudeb Dhar and Santosh Sharma of the Bangladesh Puja Udjapon Parishad, and Priti Chakraborty, chairperson of Universal Medical College and Hospital.

Suspend co-op treaty with Israel

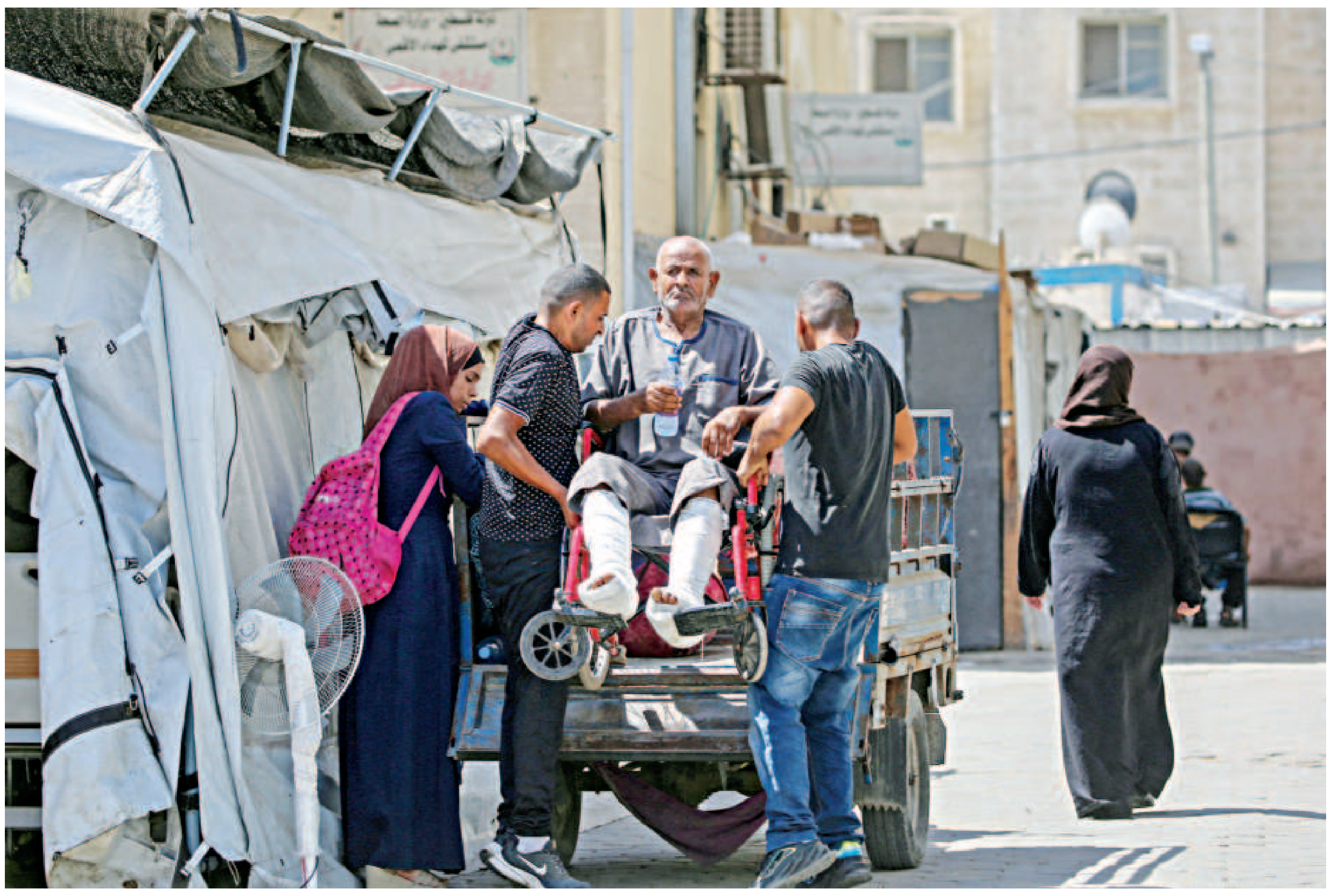
Media groups call on European Union

AFP, *Paris*

Some 60 media and rights organisations yesterday urged the European Union to suspend a co-operation accord with Israel and impose sanctions, accusing it of "massacring journalists" in Gaza.

"In response to the unprecedented number of journalists killed and other repeated press freedom violations by the Israeli authorities since the start of the war with Hamas, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and 59 other organisations are calling on the European Union to suspend its Association Agreement with Israel and to adopt targeted sanctions against those responsible", the groups said in a joint statement.

The call came ahead of a meeting by EU foreign ministers in Brussels on August 29.



Palestinians evacuate patients from the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday following renewed Israeli evacuation orders for the area.
PHOTO: AFP

US polls debate in the balance as Trump cries foul

AFP, *Washington*

A much-anticipated US presidential debate next month appeared in doubt yesterday as Republican candidate Donald Trump questioned whether he would participate, and both camps sparred over the use of live mics.

Trump had already balked at participating in the September 10 showdown with Democratic candidate Kamala Harris, amid ongoing quibbles.

On his Truth Social media platform Sunday, Trump accused TV broadcaster ABC of bias, posting: "I ask, why would I do the Debate against Kamala Harris on that network?

Harris's campaign yesterday said that the two camps were locked in disagreement over whether each candidate's mic would be muted when the other spoke.

During a June 27 debate on CNN between Trump and President Joe Biden, who was the Democratic candidate at that time, microphones were turned off when it was not a candidate's turn to speak.

It was a condition negotiated by Biden, and one that was meant to apply to the September debate on ABC as well.

But Harris, who replaced Biden after his disastrous performance at the CNN debate, prefers a return to the norm of keeping microphones on.

"We believe both candidates' mics should be live throughout the full broadcast," Harris communication director Brian Fallon said in a statement.

Morality law will be 'gently' enforced

Says Afghanistan's Taliban govt

AFP, *Kabul*

Afghanistan's Taliban authorities said yesterday a recently ratified morality law would be enforced "gently", after the international community and Afghans voiced concern over new restrictions.

Women must cover completely and not raise their voices in public, according to a 35-article law announced Wednesday by the justice ministry.

It imposes wide-ranging stipulations from behaviour to dress and social interactions, including rules on men's clothing and beard length as well as bans on homosexuality, animal fighting, playing music in public and non-Muslim holidays.

The UN, rights groups and Afghans have expressed concern that the law could lead to increased enforcement of the rules, many already informally in place since the Taliban authorities took power in 2021 and implemented a strict interpretation of Islamic law -- or sharia.

"I must make it clear that force and oppression won't be used while implementing these rules," said deputy government spokesman Hamdullah Fitrat in a voice message he shared with AFP.

Israel losing its deterrent power

Says Iran amid heightened regional tensions, praises drone and missile assault by Lebanon's Hezbollah group

AFP, *Tehran*

Iran yesterday praised the drone and missile assault by Lebanon's Hezbollah group on Israel, saying its arch-foe had lost the ability to prevent such attacks amid heightened regional tensions.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah on Sunday said the group, which is backed by Tehran, had launched a large-scale attack on Israel, targeting "the Glilot base -- the main Israeli military intelligence base".

Iran's Parliament Speaker compared the attack to the "defeat" of Israeli forces in 2006 war with Hezbollah

Israel's military said the installation was not hit.

"The Zionist regime may be able to hide, distort or censor some facts regarding Lebanese Hezbollah operations, but it knows very well that the existing facts will not change," Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani posted on X.

"The Israeli terrorist army has lost its effective offensive and deterrent power and now must defend itself against strategic strikes."

Kanani noted that the Hezbollah attack "extended deep into the occupied territories", and said the "strategic balance has undergone fundamental changes" to the detriment of Israel.

He also criticised the United States for its "comprehensive" support for Israel, which had failed to "predict the time and place" of Hezbollah's actions.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf on Sunday compared the attack to the "defeat" of Israeli forces in the 2006 war with Hezbollah.

"Today's defeat of the regime was on a par with the defeat in the 2006 operation, and they cannot hide this defeat," he posted on X.

Israel on Sunday launched air strikes into Lebanon, saying it had destroyed "thousands" of Hezbollah rocket launchers and thwarted a major attack.

In a televised address, Nasrallah said his group had carried out a two-phased attack, first launching "340 Katyusha rockets" at 11 military positions in northern Israel and the annexed Golan Heights.

Hezbollah militants have traded near daily cross-border fire with Israel since the offensive began in Gaza on October 7.

Fears grew of a wider regional conflagration after the killing of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukr in Beirut.

Iran and its allies Hamas and Hezbollah have accused Israel of being behind both killings and vowed to seek revenge.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi posted on X late Sunday that Tehran's reaction to Haniyeh's death would be "definitive, and will be measured & well calculated".

"We do not fear escalation, yet do not seek it -- unlike Israel," he added.

Big polluters urged to pay at Pacific summit

AFP, *Nuku'alofa*

Emissions-belching nations were challenged to stump up for climate-related damage as a key Pacific islands summit opened yesterday, with low-lying Tuvalu declaring: "If you pollute, you should pay."

The Pacific Islands Forum got underway in Tonga's capital Nuku'alofa, with leaders hoping to draw global attention to the region's worsening climate plight.

"We really need to ensure that we continue to push for action from countries that are the most polluting," Tuvalu Climate Minister Maina Talia told AFP on the sidelines of the summit.

"Polluter pays should be on the table."

Pacific leaders will mount a renewed push later this week for a climate adaptation fund, an idea that largely hinges on financial contributions from foreign nations. They will also push to speed the transition away from oil, gas and other polluting fuel sources.

"We cannot address climate change without addressing the root cause, which is the fossil fuel industry," Talia said. "It's disaster after disaster, and we are losing the capacity to rebuild, to withstand another cyclone or another flood," he added.

Took 'control measures' against Philippine ships

Says China amid row over a shoal in S China Sea

AFP, *Beijing*

China said yesterday it took "control measures" against two Philippine Coast Guard ships that had entered waters near the disputed Sabina Shoal in the South China Sea.

The China Coast Guard accused Manila of sending two ships to "illegally barge into waters near Xianbin Jiao", using the Chinese name for the Sabina Shoal.

The ships "continued to dangerously approach normally sailing Chinese coast guard ships, inciting hype", it said in a statement.

"The Chinese coast guard took control measures against the Philippine ships in accordance with the law," it added.

Beijing claims most of the strategic South China Sea and has been involved in maritime confrontations with Manila in recent months, sparking fears of armed conflict that could draw in the United States, a Filipino military ally.

Multiple confrontations have taken place in recent days around the Sabina Shoal, located 140 kilometres west of the Philippine island of Palawan and about 1,200 kilometres from Hainan island, China's nearest major landmass.

"The Philippine Government deplores the repeated aggressive, unprofessional and illegal actions displayed by Chinese maritime forces against Philippine vessels and aircraft over the past week," Manila's National Maritime Council said. Both sides have in recent months stationed coast guard vessels near Sabina, where the Philippines fears China is about to build an artificial island.

RIOTS IN BRITAIN

Pak court acquits man charged with cybercrime

REUTERS, *Lahore*

A Pakistani court yesterday acquitted a local man of cybercrime offences involving the spread of fake online information which fuelled riots in Britain, his lawyer said.

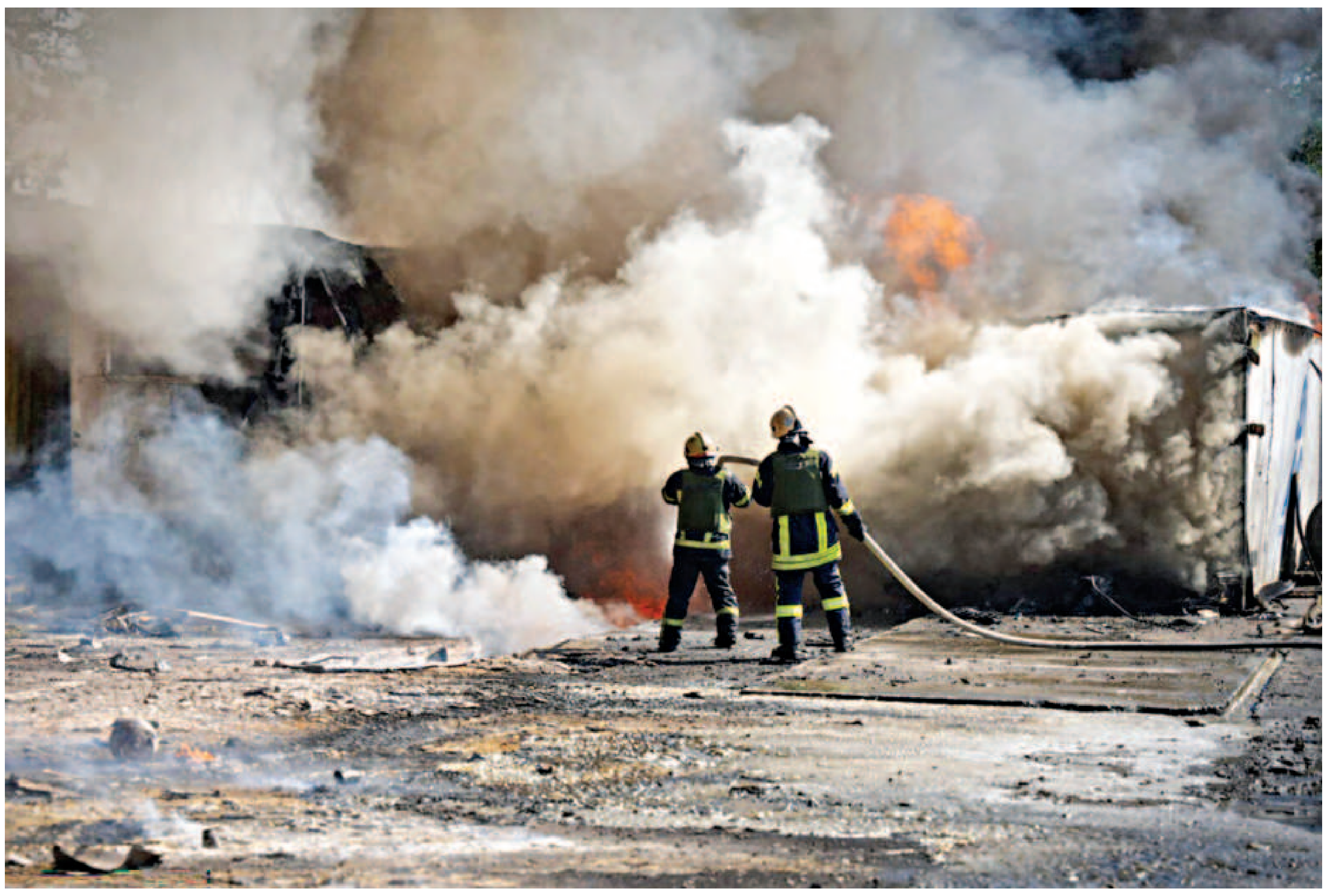
The riots began after false information circulated online wrongly blaming an Islamist migrant for the killing of three young girls in a knife attack in the northern English town of Southport in late July.

Farhan Asif, who ran a web publication, was arrested in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore and charged last week by the country's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

"He has been absolved in the investigation," his lawyer Rana Rizwan Akhtar told Reuters TV, saying the investigation agency could not find any basis to prove that his client was involved in any illegal activity.

The court acquitted the accused after the agency submitted its report, he said. Asif had provided the agency with all of his social media accounts and access to all of his devices, he said. The accused had posted an article on his X social media account which said that the attacker was a Muslim immigrant, and also shared pictures of the killings, according to the case registered against him.

The riots have been characterised as "far right" by public figures from the prime minister downwards. For many people, this description suggests the disorder was somehow organised by named, specific, formal groups or political parties; and the far right's history of protest and violence by organisations like the National Front reinforces this idea.



This handout photograph taken and released by the Ukrainian Emergency Service yesterday shows rescuers working to extinguish a fire following a Russian missile attack at an undisclosed location in the Odesa region of Ukraine.
PHOTO: AFP

Durov has 'nothing to hide'

Says Telegram after France arrest

AFP, *Paris*

France held the Russian-born founder of Telegram Pavel Durov in custody for a second day of questioning yesterday over alleged offences related to the popular messaging app, which insisted he had "nothing to hide".

His arrest after flying into the Le Bourget airport outside Paris late Saturday is the latest extraordinary twist in the career of one of the world's most influential tech icons.

The detention of Durov, 39, was extended beyond Sunday night by the investigating magistrate who is handling the case, according to a source close to the investigation. This initial period of detention for questioning can last up to a maximum of 96 hours.

When this phase of detention ends, the judge can then decide to free Durov.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Dr Yunus's address and the path forward

Must work together for democracy and reforms

In a much-awaited address to the nation, the chief adviser to the interim government, Dr Muhammad Yunus, delivered a timely, thoughtful, and comprehensive message to the citizens. He emphasised the need to implement various reforms to institutionalise democracy in the country, attending to the most pressing demands of our people. However, we would like to remind the interim government that it has not one but two urgent tasks at hand. The first is to administer the country in these turbulent times and, simultaneously, to pursue reforms—both of which together form a mammoth task.

Given the present state of the nation, the number of reforms needed may seem endless. However, pursuing all of them is neither realistic nor achievable in the short to medium term. Nevertheless, the chief adviser mentioned that his administration has planned wide-ranging reforms that resonate with the demands of the student-led mass movement that brought down the autocratic government of Sheikh Hasina. He further stated that these reforms are essential to prevent a return to being a police state, which would be a devastating outcome given the terrible suppression that people endured for 15 years and the sacrifices made by so many to end fascistic rule.

Dr Yunus also mentioned the need to form a police commission to overhaul law enforcement, a bank commission to reform the financial sector, and to conduct fair investigations into the violence that occurred in recent times. He also called for comprehensive reforms in education, the empowerment of local government bodies, and many other initiatives including taking action to ensure press freedom. The government's commitment to ensuring justice for all the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances—both anathema to any civilised society—is also praiseworthy. We will, of course, have to wait to see results. Meanwhile, we will urge the government to undertake institutional reforms that can safeguard citizens from such egregious crimes in the future as well.

Dr Yunus mentioned that the issue of elections was a political decision, and that he would leave it up to the people. Here, we would like to commend him for reminding the nation where the power truly lies—with the people. He said that the advisers of the interim government would hold dialogue with political parties to determine how decisions regarding the holding of elections would be made. He also expressed a desire to involve all stakeholders in discussions about the interim government's tenure. But he did not make it clear how that could be achieved. Here, we believe the interim government needs to form a comprehensive framework for communicating with all stakeholders in society.

In his address, Dr Yunus also invited everyone to come forward and suggest guidelines to help the government gather their input. Therein lies the opportunity for civic engagement. Moving forward, we hope that the people will work together and help in ongoing efforts to ensure that this opportunity for reforming the nation is not squandered again.

Ansar-student clashes quite troubling

Govt must restore discipline in the force, address legitimate demands

Sunday's clash between demonstrating Ansar members and students is a deeply troubling development with potential security implications for the country. Reportedly, the clash occurred after the former kept all five gates of the Secretariat locked throughout the day despite government assurances of addressing their demands, including job nationalisation and abolishing the mandatory, unpaid leave system. Things turned violent around 9:20pm when a large crowd comprising students and general people responded to a call to free trapped officials, leading to at least 50 getting injured, before the army eventually intervened to restore order.

This is but the latest example of the chaos that surfaced across different sectors after the interim government took over on August 9. The frequency and intensity of protests by various interest groups have escalated to a point that police on Sunday night banned all sorts of demonstrations near the Secretariat and the residence of the chief adviser. The Ansar development is particularly alarming as it showed the lack of trust and discipline partly resulting from years of politicisation. One may recall how in 2023 a bill was tabled in parliament that would have given Ansar battalions—an auxiliary force—the authority to detain criminals, search bodies or seize goods, turning them into a parallel police force. The role of Ansar in the bloody clashes that preceded the fall of Awami League also left deep scars within this 55,000-strong force.

There are three branches of Ansar: General Ansar, Battalion Ansar, and Village Defence Party (VDP). Their demands for job nationalisation, rooted in grievances over low pay and lack of benefits, have been brewing for some time. But Sunday's development cannot be seen just as a reaction to the failure to address those grievances. After the incident, Nahid Islam, the information and broadcasting adviser, stated that continued demonstration even after government assurances was "part of a conspiracy". The director general of Ansar and VDP went as far as to say those who protested and clashed were not Ansar members, labelling them "outsiders" with ulterior motives. Investigations are currently under way. Already, 377 Ansars were sent to jail in four cases after being taken to a Dhaka court on Monday, while nine senior officials were transferred. We hope the probe into their activities will unearth any potential conspiracy and lead to actions to restore discipline within the force.

But that doesn't take away from the need to fulfil the legitimate demands of general members of Ansar. The formation of a seven-member committee to examine their demands is a positive step, but it must be followed by concrete actions. The authorities also need to take stern action to prevent such security meltdowns from recurring. Given what has occurred surrounding the Ansar force in recent times, we feel a comprehensive review of the internal situation in the force has become essential. It must be done with an aim to reduce our vulnerability to such incidents in our security landscape in the future.

Stabilising prices is the immediate priority

MACRO MIRROR

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Views expressed in the article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

As the new interim government is trying to settle down, expectations are soaring. People are eagerly waiting to see how the government will address their immediate needs, especially providing respite to the poor, low-income, and fixed-income middle-class people who have been suffering from the devastating effects of high inflation for over two years. Continuous high inflation but no increase in wages and salaries have eroded their purchasing power. Many have also used up their savings to survive due to the high cost of living.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) the point-to-point inflation rate in Bangladesh was 11.66 percent in July 2024 compared to 9.69 percent in July 2023. The non-food inflation has gone up as high as 14.10 percent in July 2024 from 10.42 percent in July 2023, according to BBS. The increase in electricity prices several times also pushed the non-food inflation rate to 9.68 percent in July from 9.15 percent in July 2023.

Inflationary pressure is being felt severely in the face of wage growth declines. The above-mentioned BBS report indicates that wage growth of low-paid and unskilled workers declined to 7.93 percent in July 2024 compared to 7.95 percent in June 2024, though inflation increased from 9.72 percent in June 2024 to 11.66 percent in July 2024.

The former government failed to take effective measures to contain high inflation. Bangladesh Bank (BB) was reluctant to use monetary policy tools to control inflation and continued to impose a cap on both lending and deposit rates from April 2020 to June 2023, even though the inflation rate was much higher than the fixed lending rate. Later, BB introduced a reference lending rate—the six-month moving average rate of treasury bills (SMART), which failed as it did not follow the reality of the market and was not supported by appropriate fiscal policies.

BB's decision to withdraw the interest rate cap and make it a market-led rate in May 2024, taken at the suggestion of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), could not bring any positive results till now due to late adoption. The new governor of the BB has indicated that the policy rate will be increased further to tame inflation. In May 2024, the BB hiked the policy rate to 8.5 percent from 8 percent in January 2024. The policy rate, which is the rate at which commercial banks can borrow money from a country's central bank, was kept the same in the Monetary Policy Statement for July-December 2024. With the intention to increase the policy rate, the governor of BB has signalled the upcoming interest rate hike in commercial banks to the market, thereby slowing down the increase in the money supply to fight inflation.

FILE VISUAL: **STAR**

However, the monetary policy alone cannot contain inflationary pressure and must be implemented with a coherent fiscal policy. The government followed an expansionary policy without any effort to reduce administrative and operational costs and wastage during difficult times. The budget deficit for the FY2025 was kept at 4.6 percent despite high inflation and suggestions from economists. To meet its expenditures, the previous government continued to borrow from commercial banks alongside BB as overdraft. In FY2023, the government borrowed about Tk 98,000 crore from the BB. Before the outgoing governor of BB was appointed in early July 2022, the limit for overdraft for the government from the bank was Tk 6,000 crore. However, upon his appointment, the previous governor increased the overdraft limit for the government to first Tk 8,000 crore and then to Tk 12,000 crore. However, the previous governor continued to cross this limit. The government borrowing high-powered money from BB has contributed to high inflation.

The other reason for high inflation is the imperfect market mechanism and the dominance of a limited number of importers, sellers, and producers. High import prices are frequently blamed for high domestic prices, as Bangladesh relies on fuel and other essential commodity imports. High fuel prices, transportation, and logistical costs impact locally produced items. Besides, the taka has depreciated by about 27 percent from July 2022 to June 2024, which has also increased prices.

International prices have been declining for many months. However, consumers do not see much reduction in the prices of both imported and domestic commodities. There is a large difference in prices at production, wholesale, and retail levels, even if there is no dearth of essential commodity supply in the market. The prevalence of middlemen in the supply chains who take a margin of the price, as well as a weak logistics network, contributes to higher prices.

However, the existence of various malpractices contributes the most to high prices. Rent-seeking by organised groups, including local goons, often belonging to the political party in power, and members of law enforcement agencies collecting money from vehicles carrying products from various districts to the marketplace are common. The creation of artificial shortage of certain commodities by syndicates has been widely discussed. Such unethical practices increase the market prices of commodities which the consumers ultimately bear. Unfortunately, the previous government turned a blind eye to these malpractices as the government existed with support from corrupt individuals and groups.

The recent severe floods in several districts of Bangladesh have taken many lives while affecting thousands of people. The floods have affected agricultural production in the flood-affected districts, and, due to supply shortages, prices of goods have increased exponentially.

While the government has announced that it would focus its efforts in helping the flood-affected people, their food security has to be at the forefront. Unfortunately, the budget for fiscal year 2025, as announced by the previous government, cut the distribution plans for food grains, despite high food inflation. Therefore, food distribution programmes must be enhanced through open market sales (OMS) and food-friendly programmes. The government must also increase cash support to the vulnerable.

As the interim government is committed to undertaking reforms, increasing transparency in the pricing system of goods should be a major concern. Bangladesh Competition Commission (BCC), which plays a crucial role in supervising the price of commodities, should augment its efforts and develop an all-encompassing database on the prices of all commodities across the nation, spanning from the farm to the market. Close surveillance and oversight are needed for effective market regulation in order to maintain control over commodity pricing. BCC should regularly monitor the behaviour of dominant market players, examine instances of market manipulation, and take appropriate action. The Competition Act, 2012 should explicitly tackle the problem of monopolies in the market and provide clear antitrust laws. Individuals who breach the norm should be subjected to legal consequences. Therefore, measures towards inflation control have to be a multi-dimensional and collaborative process.

Legal reforms crucial for justice and fairness

Abdur Razzaq
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ABDUR RAZZAQ

Sheikh Hasina's rise and clinging to power for 15 long years were through certain processes—however flawed those may be—but her fall was quite dramatic. August 5 marked our freedom from the Hasina-led Awami League dictatorship, which comprised of suppression, oppression, and merciless persecution. A new era has begun thanks to the supreme sacrifices of our young generation in particular, and the people in general. It is now the sacred duty of the entire nation to preserve and protect this newfound freedom not only for the present generation, but for future generations as well.

The interim administration, led by Nobel laureate Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus, faces far greater challenges than any of the past caretaker administrations did, starting with the first one led by Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in 1990. On August 18, while meeting foreign diplomats and international agencies, Dr Yunus expressed his intention to reform the election commission, the judiciary, civil administration, security forces, and mass media. The list is long but it is far from exhaustive. The interim government has other things to do as well, such as holding the perpetrators of crimes to account, including financial crimes, and above all, the trial of Sheikh Hasina for committing Crimes Against Humanity (CAH) under the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act, 1973.

The 1973 act, even with its several amendments, is an outdated one. It has been heavily criticised by the international community, including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, International Bar Association, the UK Bar Association, and the European Union for falling far below the international standard. In my capacity as Chief Defence Counsel of the 10 opposition politicians who were indicted under the 1973 act (five of whom were executed), I am fully aware of the international community's criticism.

> **The parliamentary committees under the full control of the party in power have become non-functional. In a parliamentary democracy, the opposition has a very important role to play. Under our constitution, winners take all. Ideally, we need to begin our new journey with a balanced constitution.**

The last nail in the coffin of the act is the very recent UK Supreme Court's verdict on it. In view of the matter, it won't be advisable to proceed with the trial of Sheikh Hasina either in her presence or in absentia with the act as it is. The trial process will not be acceptable to the international community and will rightly face a barrage of criticism.

However bleak Hasina's record may be, the interim administration's objective should not be to exact revenge but to establish rule of law. Hence, this law should be updated to the international standard. Moreover, CAH being a very complicated area of law, it is crucial that the prosecution team is be well-versed in it.

The greatest contribution of the administration would be to clean up the rotten political system, and put an end to divisive politics. Perhaps more importantly, it should open up our decade old political system to new ideas, so that educated and patriotic young people find it comfortable to enter politics and contribute to nation-building. Unhealthy student politics should be cured by national consensus.

The present constitution has become unworkable. By amending it with their brute majority, the Awami League has changed certain sections of the constitution in alignment with their party manifesto. In any event, so much power has been given to the prime minister under the constitution, and so little to the president, that a Roman emperor would envy the powers of the former instead of the latter.

The parliamentary committees under the full control of the party in power have become non-functional. In a parliamentary democracy, the opposition has a very important role to play. Under our constitution, winners take all. Ideally, we need to begin our new journey with a balanced constitution.

This administration certainly does not have the mandate to frame a new constitution for which we need a national consensus. Once a national consensus is reached, a constituent assembly needs to be elected by the people to frame a constitution within a particular period, say within 120 days. After the new constitution has been framed, the constituent assembly needs to be dissolved, and a fresh election should be held for the re-establishment of parliament.

Here, the political parties need to make sacrifices. They have to put the country before their party. Bearing in mind the 15 long years of oppression, misrule, and misuse of powers, we can reasonably expect our political parties to act purely in the nation's interests in this critical juncture of our history.

It is unfortunate that the country which produced leaders such as Shaheed Suhrawardy and AK Fazlul Haque has now become leaderless. In the early days of our independence, the late Abul Mansur Ahmad, who was an Awami Leaguer all throughout his life, used to advise and criticise the Awami League and its leadership, both privately and publicly. We do not have such a wise politician amongst us now, leading to our civil society being divided along party lines.

Finally, this administration is not yet free from external and internal existential threats. This administration matters to each and every Bangladeshis. We cannot and must not allow it to fail.

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DISCOURSE OF FLOOD

Power, politics and people

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PAVEL PARTHA

August saw simultaneous heavy rain and cloudburst in Northeast India, Tripura, Assam and Meghalaya. Subsequently, water overflowed as the gates of hydropower project, barrages and dams were opened. The upstream flow crossed the danger level at 14 points in seven transboundary rivers of Bangladesh. Many flood-control embankments, including the one on Gomati, have collapsed. Feni, Cumilla, Noakhali, Khagrachhari, Habiganj, Chandpur, Cox's Bazar, Munshiganj, Sylhet, Lakshmipur, Chattogram, and Brahmanbaria have flooded. Twenty people have died, while more than five million have been affected, we have no information about livestock and wildlife.

This whole event has started a debate on whether the August floods are natural or politically-caused. Such a question is incorrect because all disasters have both natural and political aspects.

The main cause of the August flood is excessive rainfall in a short period. We witnessed similar floods recently in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Bandarban and even in Dubai. Climatologists maintain floods due to excess rain and meteorological droughts are impacts of climate change. Scientists have also proven that global warming is exacerbating the climate crisis and rich countries with their fossil fuel-dependent neoliberal, consumerist economies and systems are mainly responsible.

The connection between the August floods and the climate crisis is, in no way, apolitical. Floods are political irrespective of India's action of opening gates of power plants, dams, and barrages because the global politics centring the climate is a given. Besides, the unresolved joint river management undertakings between India and Bangladesh are also part of political discourse.

Also, the recent floods have given us a message that whether it rains or not, the avenues for water from upstream to downstream to flow naturally have, over the years, decreased. As rivers and wetlands have been filled up, many canals disappeared, and floodwater, finding no space to flow, spreads all around, inundating the land and caused waterlogging.

A crisis of prediction and preparedness?

For a long time, we have been raising questions about disaster forecasting and preparedness. Lack of will, proactivity and accountability in providing forecasts and warnings has come to the fore many times. The practice of indigenous traditional forecasting—along with preparing for hazards by analysing cloud patterns, wind speed, temperature variations, constellations or various activities of flora and fauna—is now rare. The state never recognised the subaltern knowledge in the mainstream disaster management.

Mostly the Meteorological Department's forecasts are primarily considered now. Moreover, its information does not translate equally across the country, classes, gender and professions. For example, "danger signal-8" does not mean the same thing in coasts, haors, hills and Barind tracts. Besides, we see no early warnings or effective forecasts when haors are severely submerged by flash flood or when Barind tracts are scorched by severe droughts. Interestingly, the Met is under the defence ministry, as the state considers forecasting and warnings to be a "defence" aspect.

Since Cyclone Sidr in 2007, forecasts relating to cyclones have been regularly broadcast. After Cyclone Aila in 2009, forecasts and disaster preparedness became more structured. Previously, disaster broadcasts were disseminated through radio, television, newspaper, and loudspeakers or flag-pulling at the local level. During cyclones Bulbul, Fani, Amphan, Jawad, Roanu, Yaas, Sitrang and Midhili, online platforms and social media are also played an important role in cyclone warning. Besides the Met office, many independent meteorologists and organisations are providing forecast information too.

However, the tradition of disaster preparedness varies across the country with its diversified geography and culture. A social narration of forecasting and disaster preparedness has developed relatively well in the coasts—not in all the 19 coastal districts, but predominantly in the Satkhira-Khulna region. In the Northeast's haors, especially in Sunamganj, Kishoreganj and Netrakona, people only prepare for disasters to harvest paddy in Boro season. In the north, the people of Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari or Gaibandha have many local pre monsoon preparedness. Haors face disaster risks in March-April, coastal areas in May-June and November, and other parts of the country in monsoon. But floods in August are a new phenomenon, at least according to the elders of Feni, Noakhali, Khagrachhari and Cumilla.

So, was there no prediction or advance early warning for the current flood? There was, both before and after the July uprising. At the beginning of August, the Meteorological Department of Bangladesh forecasted short-term floods in north, north-central and southeast regions. It pointed to heavy monsoon rains as the cause. According to the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre of Water Development Board, the waters of seven transboundary rivers were flowing above the danger level. Even the outgoing head of state, at the beginning of July, relayed the possibility of floods. The South Asian Climate Outlook Forum predicted them way back in April.

Even after so many predictions, why weren't our preparations strong enough? I think, the present government had virtually no time to prepare in advance, as many things happened at incredible speed after the uprising. At the same time, India delayed in giving comprehensive advance warning of excessive rainfall and floods. This is a breach of previous transboundary river management related commitments and agreements.

Transboundary river dictatorship

In 2005, when we identified the haor problem as a transboundary crisis, there wasn't a large enough movement on this issue. People in general opposed the Farakka barrage, there were expectations regarding sharing Teesta's water, and some were against the Tipaimukh dam.

I tried to understand the transboundary crisis by visiting the common river-basin villages and towns of Bangladesh and Northeast India. Additionally, I have regularly written about the crises in downstream Bangladesh due to the construction of large dams upstream, hydropower projects, roads, bridges, ecological destruction, deforestation, and harmful mining works in the border hills. In 20 long years, I haven't found any vibrant voices who started now "anti-India" protests by bringing up August floods.

The National River Conservation Commission listed 1,008 rivers in the book *Bangladesh Nod-Nodir Shonga o Shonkha*, published in 2023. The Water Development Board has divided the country's rivers into 17 hydrological regions and identified 57 rivers as common transboundary rivers. However, many more transboundary rivers like Mahadeo or Ganeshwari (Rongdi) are still out of the list. In almost every Trans boundary Rivers and streams, India has built large dams, hydroelectric projects or structures, or blocked the flow of inter-state water flow through different development project or encroachment and pollution. This transboundary dictatorship is endangering not only downstream Bangladesh but also upstream people's lives, wildlife and ecology.

This dictatorship is contrary to international agreements and commitments on transboundary river management. The Bangladesh-India Joint River Commission, formed in 1972, has not yet taken all the necessary decisions about all transboundary Rivers and surrounding water ecosystem. In the 1996 Ganga Water Sharing Treaty, both India and Bangladesh are responsible for equitable and transparent management of the river. According to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD1992), states cannot carry out activities that endanger the biodiversity of neighbouring countries. In the 38th meeting, meeting of the Joint River Commission held in 2022, it was decided that India would inform Bangladesh about floods at the right time. As we have seen in the August flood, people did not have ample opportunity to take preparation for saving lives and property because the authorities concerned have failed to inform on time.

Twenty people have died, while more than five million have been affected in recent floods in Bangladesh. PHOTO: **NAHID MAZHAR**

Flood trauma and water justice

A state's one-sided, authoritarian stance on transboundary rivers inflicts severe disaster and flood-trauma on the people of other states. At the same time, water retention and control from upstream create public discontent in downstream townships. And the narrative to fight for river-democracy and water justice gains momentum.

In 2019, the High Court ruled that rivers are living entities. But both the state of Bangladesh and also India's neoliberal system and colonial attitude do not treat rivers as living entities. Both states chop up rivers, control them by force, and engage in plundering. Although Bangladeshis marched against Farakka barrage, the state of Bangladesh supported the Kaptai dam, which displaced one lakh people from their birth place, submerging homesteads and farmland. Forget the upstream, the downstream is also being butchered, as Bangladesh has also imprisoned rivers through barrages, embankment, encroachment, and pollution.

While there is debate over the release of excess water stored in reservoirs, such incidents are taking place on a smaller scale right inside the country. The rubber dams built on Sukh river in Thakurgaon or Khasiamara in Sunamganj or Ganeswari in Netrakona wrong the villagers living both upstream and downstream by trapping water in dry season or releasing it in monsoon.

While voices from Bangladesh claimed that the opening of India's barrage gates is the cause of August flood, at the same time Bangladesh also had to open the gates of Kaptai Hydropower plant due to overflow. There are many more examples of such water-injustice with the people of upstream and downstream by the river-killing development systems. In 1985, Bangladesh built a dam on Feni river. In 2021, the Maitri Bridge built by India on Feni was inaugurated. Meanwhile, India also constructed the Dumboor dam on Gomati river, which is dangerous, evident by its collapse during the recent floods. All this while, in the name of sand trade, Gomati has been mutilated in Bangladesh.

All these river-killer events profess our anthropocentric development philosophy centring rivers. Neither state has yet stood for the free flow of all kind of water bodies including river. So, it is important to present this philosophy to demand water justice in joint river management discourse. People should urge that all dams and structures be removed from upstream to downstream of transboundary rivers. Water's essence is to flow from top to down, cloud to soil, from upstream to downstream, without any hindrance from the authoritarian powers that be.

Navigating energy efficiency for Bangladesh's energy security

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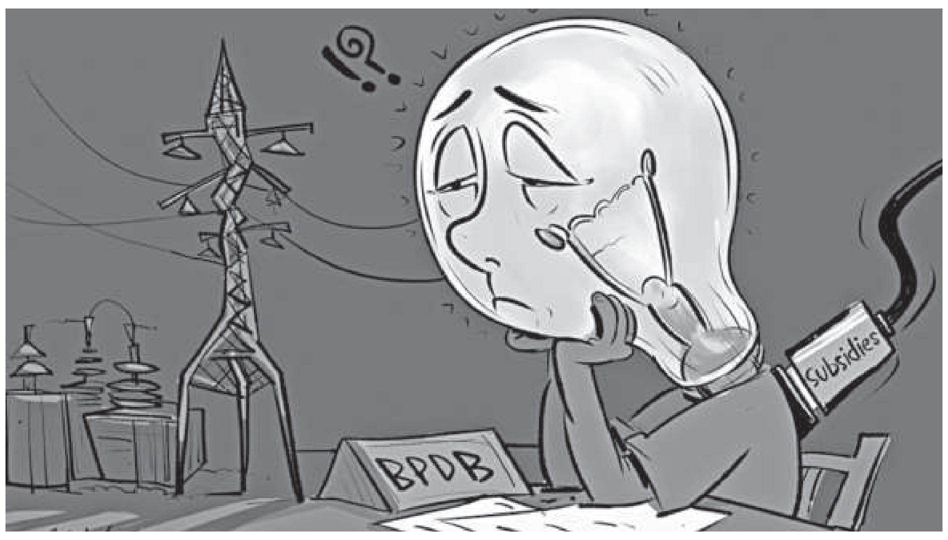
SHAFIQUL ALAM

According to the International Energy Agency, a fundamental tenet of energy security is having a steady supply of energy at reasonable prices. Between 2009 and 2024, Bangladesh primarily focused on scaling up power infrastructure, while efforts to develop energy resources fell short. The country's exposure to the volatile international fossil fuel market increased during this time, leading to challenges in maintaining a steady energy and power supply. Soaring tariffs amid inflationary pressure in the last two years made energy less affordable to the low and lower-middle-income groups.

The government's efforts in the last one and a half decades contributed to economic growth; however, the road ahead is still bumpy, with fuel imports likely to spiral, which in turn might worsen the country's energy security.

At this time, it would be prudent to change the highly import dependent energy model. With different energy-consuming sectors providing significant energy efficiency (EE) opportunities, Bangladesh's approach to accelerating energy security should include EE at its core. Going forward, enforcing EE policy instruments and creating a favourable ecosystem for them to thrive in will be all-important to promote EE. Bangladesh's energy efficiency and conservation master plan up to 2030 shows viable EE and conservation potential of 21 percent and 28.8 percent in the industry and household sectors respectively. However, a 10 percent efficiency gain on grid electricity consumption could lessen the country's power demand between 1,500 megawatts (MW) and 1,700 MW (based on day and evening peak power demands during April to July 2024). Demand management could offer a multitude of benefits, such as the immediate demand for capital-intensive and large fossil-fuel-based power plants, the country can use freed-up resources to bring down T&D losses. This investment appears timely, given that the country registered T&D losses of around 10.3 percent in fiscal year (FY) 2022-23 against the global average of less than eight percent. Analysis by Institute for Energy



FILE ILLUSTRATION: **BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY**

delay or lessen the investment in new and large fossil-fuel-based power plants, and minimise fossil fuel import bills on the back of reduced demand for power.

Usually, Bangladesh has competing priorities in the power sector. It feels the burgeoning pressure to consistently invest in incremental power generation capacity and to improve transmission and distribution (T&D) systems. As EE provides relief by delaying Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) concludes that a one percent improvement in T&D losses will reduce the country's energy generation needs by 884 gigawatt-hours (based on FY2022-23 data). This will help avoid oil import bills worth Tk 12.38 billion ($106.3 million) per annum (assuming the average fuel cost of producing electricity from oil-fired plants is Tk14/kilowatt-hour).

Moreover, industries and households display a notable gas-saving opportunity. IEEFA's study substantiated that EE in industrial captive power generation can reduce liquefied natural gas (LNG) import bills of $460 million per annum. EE in industrial processes demonstrates additional gas-saving potential. Likewise, due to billing systems for gas burners in most households not accounting for consumption quantity, people often exhibit wasteful gas consumption behaviours. If such behaviours are rectified through raising awareness, it could contain spiraling gas consumption and result in substantial national resource savings.

While EE can optimise energy consumption and accelerate energy security, Bangladesh needs to focus on policy enforcement to achieve the desired results.

The energy audit regulations (EAR), issued in 2018 and revised in 2024, specify guidelines for performing energy audits and the certification of energy auditors and managers. Furthermore, the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) declared 189 enterprises as large energy consumers (designated consumers) that are mandated to carry out energy audits and submit periodic reports.

A logical progression should ensure that designated consumers carry out energy audits and submit reports to the SREDA periodically. However, this step will only generate data on the EE potential of audited consumers and can at best motivate some consumers to implement a few energy-saving measures. Instead, setting up annual or periodic energy-saving targets for designated consumers will guide them towards EE for compliance purposes. SREDA should crosscheck the annual EE results of designated consumers and prescribe corrective measures to underperforming consumers.

The government could consider increasing energy savings targets of the designated consumers and enlarge their base. Verification and proper enforcement of EAR will encourage industries to establish a systematic energy management practice to achieve the highest level of efficiency.

On the other hand, the Bangladesh government issued the EE labelling regulations in 2023, laying the foundation for assessing the minimum energy performance standards (MEPS) of different appliances. Energy efficiency labels should be introduced, based on MEPS, to help consumers make informed decisions while purchasing lights, fans, air conditioners and other appliances.

Once labels for appliances are available, the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution should regularly monitor the market to phase out appliances that do not meet the MEPS.

Energy-efficient refrigerators and air conditioners with inverters are already costlier than their counterparts without inverters. As the FY2024-25 national budget has imposed higher minimum import duties on imported compressors that have inverters, consumers will find energy-efficient refrigerators and air-conditioners more expensive. The government should revisit the duty imposed on imported compressors with inverters and develop an ecosystem to encourage the use of efficient appliances. Once the country achieves adequate manufacturing capacity to meet local demand, the government could reimpose such duties.

If the country builds on its strong EE potential, it can reduce imported energy dependence and utilise monetary savings to upscale clean energy and enhance energy security. Furthermore, higher energy prices make the investment in EE expedient.

Striking the balance between living alone and a full-time career

If you want to maintain consistently satisfactory job performance and aim for promotions, you need to strike a difficult, but not impossible, balance. Here are some simple ways you can do so.

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

If you're living alone, whether by choice or circumstance, balancing a full-time job with the myriad of responsibilities of household management, finances, and personal care can be a tough ordeal. If you want to maintain consistently satisfactory job performance and aim for promotions, you need to strike a difficult, but not impossible, balance. Here are some simple ways you can do so.

ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

Maintain a routine
Household chores can pile up fast, especially when you're pulled to a random meeting at the last minute. As such, creating a solid routine for everyday tasks, for both home and office, can help relieve pressure on yourself. Allocate specific time slots for cleaning, paying the bills, and conducting self-care activities like exercising and recreation. For instance, set a day each week, preferably a weekend, for grocery shopping. Set two-three weekdays each week for quick house cleaning and at least one weekend for a more thorough cleaning of your living space.

Prepare meals in advance
Cooking, despite its sheer importance, is one of the most time-consuming tasks on any given day, given how it involves shopping and preparing for ingredients as well. As such, if you buy in bulk on weekends and dedicate two-three days per week to making a lot of food at once, you can avoid the daily stress of cooking after a long workday. However, be sure to refrigerate properly after each meal, and cook only as much as you need.

Careful financial management
While financial management is a skill everyone should have, it is especially important when living alone. The salary you are getting is being used to pay for your rent, bills, groceries, travel, and any other expenses in between. You can use the 50-30-20 budgeting strategy here; keeping 50% of total income to pay the bills, 30% for things you want to buy, and 20% for savings. However, keep the allocation flexible in case you need to save more or spend less in a given month.

Be patient with yourself
At the end of the day, even your best efforts might not always be enough to achieve a perfect balance. In those moments, take a deep breath, step back, and prioritise self-care. Don't overwhelm yourself with more responsibilities than you can realistically manage. When needed, ask friends and family for advice, or even reach out to experts for more professional help. Recognising the steps needed for self-care is a big sign that you are ready to thrive in both your personal and professional life.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

SAJIDA Foundation
Deputy Program Head
Deadline: September 2
Eligibility:
- Master's degree in Business Administration, Finance, Public Health, Social Sciences, or related disciplines.

Minimum experience: 4-5 years

Robi Axiata Limited
General Manager, DevSecOps
Deadline: August 31
Eligibility:
- Master's/Bachelor's degree in CSE/EEE.

Minimum experience: 6 years

Healthcare Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
Sr. Executive/Assistant Manager, R&D
Deadline: September 5
Eligibility:
- Master's degree in Pharmacy from any reputed university.

Minimum experience: 3 years

ActionAid Bangladesh
Interactive Theatre Associate
Deadline: August 29
Eligibility:
- Bachelor's degree in Theatre or Social Sciences, or relevant subjects.

Minimum experience: 1-2 years

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.

Australians can now ignore work calls outside office hours

REUTERS, *Sydney*

Australians can now enjoy their personal time without the intrusion of work-related communications, thanks to a new "right to disconnect" law that came into effect on Monday. This legislation protects employees, in most cases, from being penalised for not responding to work emails, calls, or texts outside of their official working hours.

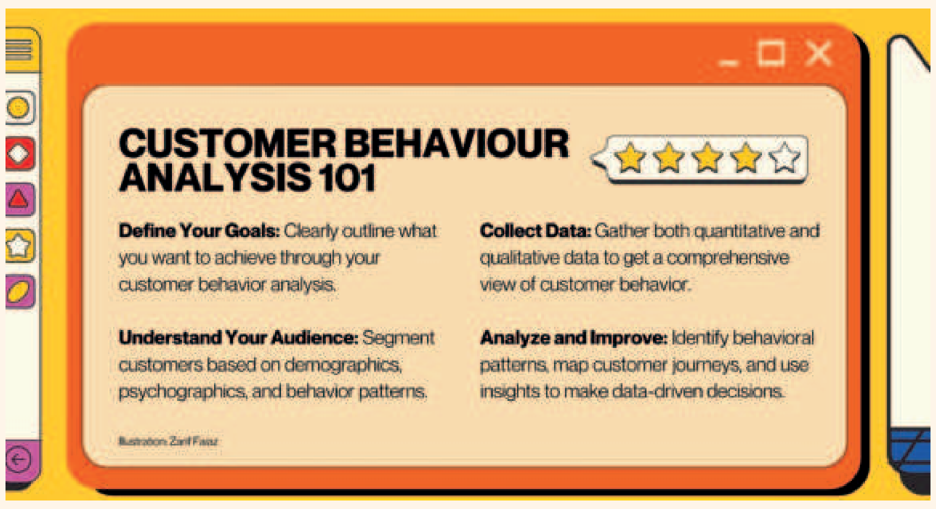
Supporters say the law gives workers the confidence to stand up against the steady invasion of their personal lives by work emails, texts, and calls, a trend that has accelerated since the Covid-19 pandemic scrambled the division between home and work.

Australians worked on average 281 hours of unpaid overtime in 2023, according to a survey last year by the Australia Institute, which estimated the monetary value of the labour at A$130 billion ($88 billion). The changes add Australia to a group of roughly two dozen countries, mostly in Europe and Latin America, which have similar laws.

To cater for emergencies and jobs with irregular hours, the rule still allows employers to contact their workers, who can only refuse to respond where it is reasonable. Determining whether a refusal is reasonable will be up to Australia's industrial umpire, the Fair Work Commission (FWC), which must consider an employee's role, personal circumstances, and how and why the contact was made.

> "To succeed, work hard, never give up and above all, cherish a magnificent obsession."
>
> WALT DISNEY

How to conduct a customer behaviour analysis the right way



CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS 101

Define Your Goals: Clearly outline what you want to achieve through your customer behavior analysis.

Collect Data: Gather both quantitative and qualitative data to get a comprehensive view of customer behavior.

Understand Your Audience: Segment customers based on demographics, psychographics, and behavior patterns.

Analyze and Improve: Identify behavioral patterns, map customer journeys, and use insights to make data-driven decisions.

Illustration: Zarif Faiaz

Understanding customer behaviour is crucial for improving products, marketing strategies, and overall satisfaction. Conducting a customer behaviour analysis involves several key steps.

Define your business goals
Begin by defining your goals and desired outcomes. Determine what you want to understand about your customers and set key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure success, such as improving the customer journey or increasing conversion rates.

Segment your audience
Segmenting your audience involves categorising customers based on shared characteristics like demographics, psychographics, and behaviour patterns. Identifying your most valuable customer segments helps tailor your marketing strategies to meet their specific needs.

Collect quantitative and qualitative data
Gather both quantitative data (e.g., purchase history, website visits) and qualitative data (e.g., customer surveys, interviews). This combination provides a comprehensive view of customer behaviour, explaining both how often customers buy a product and why they prefer it.

Analyse customer journeys
Map out customer journeys to identify stages from initial awareness to purchase and post-purchase interactions. This analysis highlights key touchpoints and areas for improvement.

Identify behavioural patterns and trends
Examine behavioural patterns and trends over time to spot consistent behaviours among different customer segments. Understanding these patterns helps inform decisions about inventory management, marketing initiatives, and product development.

Apply findings to improve customer experience
Use insights to make data-driven decisions, such as personalising marketing campaigns and optimising product features. Regularly update and refine your analysis to stay attuned to evolving customer needs and preferences.

Microsoft launches unified Teams app for both personal and work use

NEXT STEP DESK

Microsoft has just launched a unified Teams app that supports both personal and work accounts on Windows 11, Windows 10, and Mac. This new version eliminates the need for separate apps, which previously confused users who had to juggle between 'Microsoft Teams (free)' for personal use and 'Microsoft Teams (work or school)' for professional or educational purposes.

According to a recent blog post by Amit Fulay, Vice President of Product at Microsoft, the new Teams app will allow users to manage all their accounts from a single platform. Whether you're using a personal, work, or education account, they can now be accessed side by side within the same app. Users can switch between accounts by selecting their profile picture in the upper right corner of the app.

With the new unified app, users can now choose their preferred account when joining a Teams meeting or even join as a guest without signing in. This is particularly beneficial for those who frequently switch between personal and work-related calls, says Fulay. Furthermore, users who prefer Teams for personal use can schedule free meetings, invite participants with a join link, and create communities for group interactions.

What you should know about Pavel Durov, Telegram CEO

NEXT STEP DESK

Pavel Durov, the billionaire founder and CEO of the instant messaging app Telegram, was reportedly arrested on the evening of August 24 at Bourget Airport near Paris, according to French media outlets TF1 TV and BFM TV, which cited unnamed sources.

TF1 and BFM both said the investigation focused on a lack of moderators on Telegram and that police considered that this situation allowed criminal activity to continue undeterred on the messaging app.

Here are some things you should know about Pavel Durov and Telegram:

Russian-born Durov, 39, is the founder and owner of messaging app Telegram, a free-to-use instant messaging platform that competes with other social media platforms such as Messenger, WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, and WeChat. The platform aims to surpass one billion active monthly users within a year.

Telegram is influential in Russia, Ukraine and the republics of the former Soviet Union. It has become a critical source of information on Russia's war in Ukraine, used heavily by both Moscow and Kyiv officials. Some analysts call the app "a virtual battlefield" for the war.

Telegram's increasing popularity, however, has prompted scrutiny from several countries in Europe, including France, on security and data breach concerns. In May, the EU tech regulators said they were in touch with Telegram as it neared a key usage criterion that could see it subject to more stringent requirements under a landmark EU online content legislation.

Durov, whose fortune was estimated by Forbes at $15.5 billion, left Russia in 2014 after refusing to comply with government demands to shut down opposition communities on his VKontakte social media platform, which he sold.

Durov became a French citizen in August 2021. He moved himself and Telegram to Dubai in 2017, and according to French media, he has also received United Arab Emirates citizenship. He is also a citizen of St. Kitts and Nevis, a dual-island nation in the Caribbean, according to media reports.

"I would rather be free than to take orders from anyone," Durov told U.S. journalist Tucker Carlson in April about his exit from Russia and search for a home for his company, which included stints in Berlin, London, Singapore and San Francisco.

What to WATCH

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Live from 9:00 pm

Cautious batting, skillful bowling behind Tigers' Pindi triumph, say coaches

Exceptional performances from both batting and bowling units, coupled with some fantastic catching and astute captaincy catapulted Bangladesh to a history-making 10-wicket win over Pakistan in the first Test in Rawalpindi on Sunday. In three days' time, Bangladesh will be looking to clinch their maiden Test series win over Pakistan when they take on the hosts in the second Test at the same venue. On Monday, Bangladesh's batting coach David Hemp and pace bowling coach Andre Adams spoke with The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan, shedding light on their convincing win and what they hope to achieve in the following match. Here are the excerpts:

The Daily Star (TDS): How do you see the pace unit's performance in the historical Test win over Pakistan?

Andre Adams (AA): I'm incredibly proud. If you look at our last Test performance against Sri Lanka, they were certainly under par. I think there are certain ways to win Test matches. We felt that the way we played in the first Test gave us the best opportunity. And credit to our bowlers as they won it for us at the end. The pacers were fresh in the second innings thanks to the batters and were able to strike and bowl with pace. I think our first innings bowling was pretty good. I think Shakib (Al Hasan) bowled brilliantly. Mehedi (Hasan Miraz) was also amazing. The pace bowlers were excellent in both innings and really challenged the Pakistani batsmen, made it difficult for them. I thought the fields (Najmul Hossain) Shanto set in the second innings were spot on. So that was a very good game.

TDS: What do you feel was behind the bowling attack's success in the match?

AA: The thing about this group is they are incredibly skillful. I look at the batting and bowling group and think if they can play their part, they can put pressure on most teams. We have a very young bowling line-up. The Bangladeshi people should be incredibly proud of that performance and they should also be pretty excited about the young bowling group coming through.

TDS: How challenging will it be for the pacers to maintain consistency in Tests?

AA: That's the focus for every coach. Consistency might be the most used word in coaching. We try to help the guys understand how they can be more consistent. When you look at Mushfiqur (Rahim), the standard he sets on and off the field, that's a living example on how one has to do to be world class. It's always wonderful to have such an example, that kind of beacon to walk towards. That's the kind of desire, discipline and hunger we want to see day in day out.

TDS: How do you view the 'pace revolution' in Bangladesh cricket?

AA: Well, it's been a couple of years in the making. I think as a group they want to get better. They have to work hard off the field, do things to get fitter, stronger and faster. But the main thing with fast bowling is to bowl the right ball in the right moment. That's something you can learn. The more leadership we get in the bowling group, the more chance the young guys will have to learn faster. So, it's pretty good when you do well on a flat wicket. We have the pace to cause some uncertainty, we have the skill to bowl the right ball at the right time. The guys are learning every day. They want to get better and they have that desire. The competition in the fast bowling group is a great thing for Bangladesh cricket. It's a good headache for everyone.

TDS: What will be Bangladesh's plan in the second Test, where a draw or win will earn them their maiden Test series win over Pakistan.

AA: I don't know what sort of wicket we will get for the second Test. I don't know how much the plan will change. This is a country where you have to be patient in Test matches. I don't see the plans changing too much from the blueprint of the previous game. The plans could change if they (Pakistan) change their playing XI.

TDS: It looked like you guys had specific plans for Babar Azam, can you share that?

AA: I can't share the plan (laughs). Obviously, Babar is a great player and you have to be clear about what you want to do to get him out early. You have to pay attention to guys like Babar and (Mohammad) Rizwan, who can take the game away from you.

The Daily Star (TDS): What a fantastic performance from the players, pulling off their maiden Test win over Pakistan, that too on Pakistan soil...

David Hemp (DH): When you play a Test match, you have to play well every day. That's why it's so difficult to win Test matches. Hats off to the players. We showed great energy and consistency on the field, kept supporting the bowlers in taking wickets, some of the catches that were taken were excellent, coupled with the batting and bowling. That was a really good win. The trick is now to turn up and do it all again in three days' time.

TDS: Bangladesh's first inning score of 565 was their best ever total against Pakistan in Tests, what was catalyst behind it?

DH: The batting effort was all about discipline and having the mentality of leaving the ball and not worrying about taking singles, not focusing too much on going for boundaries but still looking to score and keep the scoreboard ticking along.

TDS: What was the plan of the batting group before the match?

DH: What we talked about before the game was how we could set up the game from a batting point of view. Traditionally in Pakistan, the games go to the fifth day. If the bowlers keep bowling in a straight line challenging the stumps, for the batters it becomes a matter of not getting bored, taking singles and making sure you don't play across the line. From the batting point of view, we talked about putting ourselves in a position from where we can win the game. We spoke the importance of surviving the first 20-30 balls to get into the innings. Once you get yourself settled with 30-40 runs, you can make the innings count, try and go on to convert that to a significant score. We wanted to bat for a minimum of 125 overs.

TDS: Do you think the lengthy preparation Bangladesh took for the series helped?

DH: Obviously, there was a little bit of disturbance for a couple of weeks before we came here because of what was going on in Bangladesh. But up until that stage, the preparation was excellent. After the Sri Lanka series, we had a discussion about what we can do better against different oppositions in different wickets. The red-ball camps while the white-ball players were away worked really well and then the HP team playing in Australia and the 'A' team playing in Pakistan certainly assisted in the individual preparation. I think that had a positive impact on the team preparation.

TDS: Shadman Islam returned to the side in place of injured Mahmudul Hasan Joy and hit a brilliant 93. Having two performers for one position is a good headache to have, right?

DH: Sometimes it can obviously be a bit of a headache [laughs]. That means a difficult conversation. But you would rather have a difficult conversation because there is a lot of competition for spots than not have any conversations at all. If everybody plays well consistently and to their potential, I think the selectors and head coach will have a lot of tough decisions to make.

TDS: Shakib Al Hasan's batting form has been poor for a while. Is he now being considered as more of a spinner than an outright all-rounder?

DH: After watching him practice, my personal opinion is he is still driven to succeed and perform with bat and ball. He missed out on the first innings but from whatever I have seen from him in practice and preparation, he is certainly driven to perform and do well in both skillsets. So, I personally don't see that as a concern or an issue.

SHORT CORNER

'On-field, Shakib has nothing else on his mind'

Shakib Al Hasan's mentor and current Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director Nazmul Abedeen Fahim was not surprised by the left- arm spinner's bowling performance on Day 5 of the first Test against Pakistan, saying his former pupil's ability to keep out all outside noise sets him apart. "He [Shakib] has nothing else on his mind. He only thinks about the batter and where to bowl. He may worry about those things at other times, but not while he is bowling. This is what separates him from others. We see others struggling to play their natural game after some incidents or facing criticism. That's not the case for Shakib," Fahim told the media in Mirpur yesterday.

Bangladesh, Pakistan lose WTC points for slow over-rate

Pakistan and Bangladesh have suffered a blow to their chances of reaching the ICC World Test Championship final after they were found guilty of a slow overrate during the first Test in Rawalpindi. Hosts Pakistan were found to be six overs short during the Test and lost six World Test Championship points, while visitors Bangladesh - who recorded a 10-wicket triumph over their Asian rivals - were docked three points after being found three overs short of the acceptable rate.

I'm speechless, says Endrick after landmark goal

Endrick made his official Real Madrid debut in style. Spanish champions Real Madrid earned a 3-0 win over Real Valladolid in La Liga on Sunday and the Brazil teenager Endrick, who replaced Kylian Mbappe late in the match, needed only 10 minutes to become the youngest foreign player to score for Madrid in the Spanish league at 18 years, 35 days, surpassing Frenchman Raphael Varane, who was 18 years, 152 days when he scored in 2011. "I'm speechless. I can only thank God for all that is happening to me," he said after the match.

**Read full stories on The Daily Star website*

Cricket as it should be

Former Bangladesh national team cricketer Yousuf Rahman Babu has outlined remedies to cleanse what he feels is a corruption-plagued Bangladesh Cricket Board and suggested priority areas of reform to focus on in order to reap the rewards of the talent-base in the country and the hard work the cricketers put in.

To read the article, visit The Daily Star website.

'True gentleman' Eriksson dies at 76

AFP, *London*

Prince William hailed Sven-Goran Eriksson as a "true gentleman" as tributes poured in following the former England manager's death on Monday.

Eriksson passed away surrounded by his family after revealing in January he had "at best" a year to live after being diagnosed with terminal cancer.

The 76-year-old Swede was the first foreign manager of England, taking them to the World Cup quarter-finals in 2002 and 2006, while reaching the same stage at Euro 2004.

As well as his colourful five-year spell with England, Eriksson managed several of the world's top clubs and countries during 42 years in the dugout.

In his role as president of the English Football Association, Prince William met Eriksson on many occasions.

"Sad to hear about the passing of Sven-Goran Eriksson. I met him several times as England manager and was always struck by his charisma and passion for the game. A true gentleman of the game," he wrote on X.

Although Eriksson was unable to end England's wait for a first major trophy since the 1966 World Cup, his teams produced several memorable performances, including a 5-1 rout of Germany in a World Cup qualifier in 2001.

After stepping down from the England job in 2006, Eriksson managed Manchester City in the 2007-08 season and the Premier League club joined the tributes to their former boss.

Local coaches deserve recognition and opportunities

SPORTS REPORTER

The likes of Mushfiqur Rahim and Mominul Haque were already going through their gears in the Bangladesh Tigers camp as early as May 26, preparing for the upcoming Test assignments. The camp, held under the guidance of local coaches, played a significant role in Bangladesh's preparations, even as unrest in the country presented obstacles.

While the national team have worked with local coaches for months, the players only began training with the foreign coaching contingent after moving to Pakistan.

Following Bangladesh's historic victory in the first Test in Rawalpindi on Sunday, questions surrounding head coach Chandika Hathurusingha's tenure were reassessed. Yet, the contributions of the local coaches in the country are never paid their due credit.

When spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz seeks advice, he turns to Bangladesh Tigers' camp head coach Sohel Islam, who has also mentored Miraz in the national side as a spin coach. Others, such as Mizanur Rahman Babul, have guided players during the camp and are currently overseeing the Bangladesh 'A' side in Pakistan. Local coaches are, more often than not, shunned, with barriers often preventing them from becoming part of the national coaching staff.

PHOTO: STAR

Under the Nazmul Hassan Papon-led board, the lack of experience of local coaches had been frequently highlighted as a key factor behind their exclusion. Yet, players often rely on coaches like Mohammed Salahuddin and others in grassroots coaching to better understand their game.

After the win in Rawalpindi, Mushfiqur Rahim paid tribute to the local staff who prepared them in Dhaka, Sylhet, and Chattogram.

"I just want to share a few things from before the Test series. There was a two, two-and-a-half-month gap, right? So we had a pretty special camp back home with the Bangladesh Tigers camp, and all the local support staff were there. That was really beneficial for all the players in their preparation," he said.

The question remains as to how to strengthen the local coaching base. Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, mentor to many national team stars and now a Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director, believes the contributions of local coaches need to be highlighted.

"I feel that the media are responsible for this too. The media never highlights these things. Maybe we don't do as well. By 'us', I mean the board doesn't appreciate it. The media do not highlight the areas where local coaches are contributing. I feel that whatever contributions are made, regardless of magnitude, should be recognised; it's very important.

"Appreciation is needed for those who are doing good work. The fact that they have been working for a long time has its effect," Fahim said.

As time goes by, BCB's task will be to put words into action and ensure that local coaches receive the credit they deserve, not only through recognition but also through opportunities to work and improve.

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Cases against Hasina keep mounting

She is made accused in 2 more murder cases

STAR REPORT

The number of cases filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has risen to 66, with two new cases filed in Gazipur and Rangpur yesterday.

The cases include 56 for murder, seven for crimes against humanity and genocide, two for abduction, and one for attack on the BNP procession.

In Gazipur, Hasina, along with Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and 83 others, were sued over the death of one Manju Mia, 43, during a student protest in Borobari area on July 20.

Former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, former lawmaker Tipu Munshi, former minister Mashiur Rahman Ranga, Gazipur city Awami League President Azmat Ullah Khan were among the accused.

Insar Ali, the father of the deceased, filed the case with Gacha Police Station, accusing 500-700 unnamed individuals as well, Ziaul Islam, officer-in-charge of the police station, told our local correspondent.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Bangladesh forward Asadul Mollah (L) celebrates his first-half goal against India during their SAFF U-20 Championship semifinal in Kathamandu, Nepal yesterday. Although the defending champions equalised in the second half, it was the boys in red and green who had the last laugh in the penalty shootout. PHOTO: BFF

Asif sends U-20s into SAFF final

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Having conceded the equaliser six minutes after coming off the bench, substitute goalkeeper Mohammad Asif made amends with two big saves as Bangladesh beat defending champions India 4-3 in penalty shootout in the second semifinal of the SAFF U-20 Championship in Nepal yesterday. The regulation time had yielded a 1-1 draw.

Bashundhara Kings' young goalkeeper Asif blocked Akash Tirkey's fifth shot with his outstretched right leg as Maruful Haque's charges burst into wild celebration at the ANFA Complex in Lalitpur.

The final save came after the young goalkeeper had saved the first shot from Thanglalsoun Gangte while Bangladesh's Piash Ahmed Nova, Moinul Islam, Shakil Ahmed Topu and Ashraful Haque had converted all four of their attempts.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Niaz Ahmed Khan new DU VC

DU CORRESPONDENT

Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan has been appointed as the vice-chancellor of Dhaka University.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin, also the chancellor of the university, made the appointment, sources at the Bangabhaban confirmed The Daily Star yesterday.

He will replace Professor Dr ASM Maksud Kamal, who resigned from the post on August 10.

He was previously the pro-vice chancellor of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) and the former chairman of the Department of Development Studies at DU.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

SOUTHWEST PAKISTAN

Over 70 killed in militant attacks

Baloch Liberation Army claims responsibility

REUTERS, *Quetta*

At least 73 people were killed in Pakistan's province of Balochistan when separatist militants attacked police stations, railway lines and highways and security forces launched retaliatory operations, officials said yesterday.

The assaults were the most widespread in years by ethnic militants fighting a decades-long insurgency to win secession of the resource-rich southwestern province, home to major China-led projects such as a port and a gold and copper mine.

"These attacks are a well thought-out plan to create anarchy in Pakistan," Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said in a statement.

The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) armed militant group took responsibility for the operation they called "Haruf" or "dark windy storm". In a statement to journalists they claimed more attacks over the last day that have not yet been confirmed by authorities.

Pakistan's military said 14 soldiers and police and 21 militants were killed in fighting after the largest of the attacks, which targeted buses and trucks on a major highway.

Balochistan's chief minister said 38 civilians were also killed. Local officials said 23 of them were killed in the roadside attack after armed men checked passengers' IDs before shooting many of them and torching vehicles.

"People were taken off buses and killed in front of their families," Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said in a televised press conference.

Rail traffic with Quetta was suspended following blasts on a rail bridge linking the provincial capital to the rest of Pakistan. Militants also struck a rail link to neighbouring Iran, railways official Muhammad Kashif said.

Interim govt is on right track

Says Jamaat ameer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday said Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus's speech echoed the aspiration of the nation.

He said the interim government is on the right track. "Allah and the people will support him if they move forward this way."

The Jamaat chief came up with the remarks while talking to reporters at Dhaka Medical College Hospital after visiting students injured during the clashes between the students and Ansar members.

Shafiqur said, "The chief adviser gave a responsible speech, which was necessary at this moment. The nation needed to hear about hope. We think the speech echoed people's desire."

Regarding the movement of different quarters over their demands, Shafiqur said, "They [government] have just taken charge. Where have you [the protesters] been in the last 15 years? Since they have been patient then, we urge them to be patient for a little longer. Give them [the government] a chance to sort things out."

Israel orders fresh evacuation in Gaza

Displaced Palestinians flee Deir Al-Balah; truce talks in Cairo end without a deal

AGENCIES

Israel issued new evacuation orders for Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip early yesterday, forcing more families to flee, saying forces intended to act against Hamas and others operating in the area.

In recent days, Israel has issued several evacuation orders across Gaza, the most since the beginning of the 10-month offensive, prompting an outcry from Palestinians, the United Nations and relief officials over the reduction of humanitarian zones and the absence of safe areas.

The Deir Al-Balah municipality said Israeli evacuation orders have so far displaced 250,000 people.

Israeli military strikes killed at least seven Palestinians yesterday, medics said. Two were killed in Deir Al-Balah, where around a million people were sheltering, two at a school in the Al-Nuseirat camp and three in the southern city of Rafah, near the border with Egypt.

The military campaign has killed at least 40,435 Palestinians in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry yesterday.

The new orders forced many families and patients to leave Al-Aqsa Hospital, the main medical facility in Deir Al-Balah, where hundreds of thousands of residents and displaced people had taken shelter, for fear of bombardments. The hospital is close to the area covered by the evacuation notice.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said in a statement on X on Sunday night that an explosion approximately 250 metres away from the MSF-supported Al-Aqsa Hospital triggered panic, reports Reuters.

"As a result, MSF is considering whether to suspend wound care for the time being, while trying to maintain life-saving treatment."

» MSF considers suspending medical care at Al-Aqsa Hospital

» Israeli new evacuation orders so far displaced 250,000

» Death toll in Gaza rises to 40,435

Nazrul's 48th death anniv today

STAR REPORT

The 48th death anniversary of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam will be observed in the country today in a befitting manner.

On August 27 (12 Bhadra of Bangla calendar year) in 1976, the poet breathed his last at the then PG Hospital, now Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital, in Dhaka.

The poet was buried with state honour beside the Dhaka University central mosque.

Kazi Nazrul was a poet, lyricist, musician, and philosopher.

Different political parties, socio-cultural and professional bodies have chalked out programmes to pay respect to the national poet.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Ansarullah Bangla Team chief freed on bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gazipur*

Mufti Jashimuddin Rahmani, chief of the banned militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team, was released on bail from Kashimpur High-Security Central Jail in Gazipur yesterday.

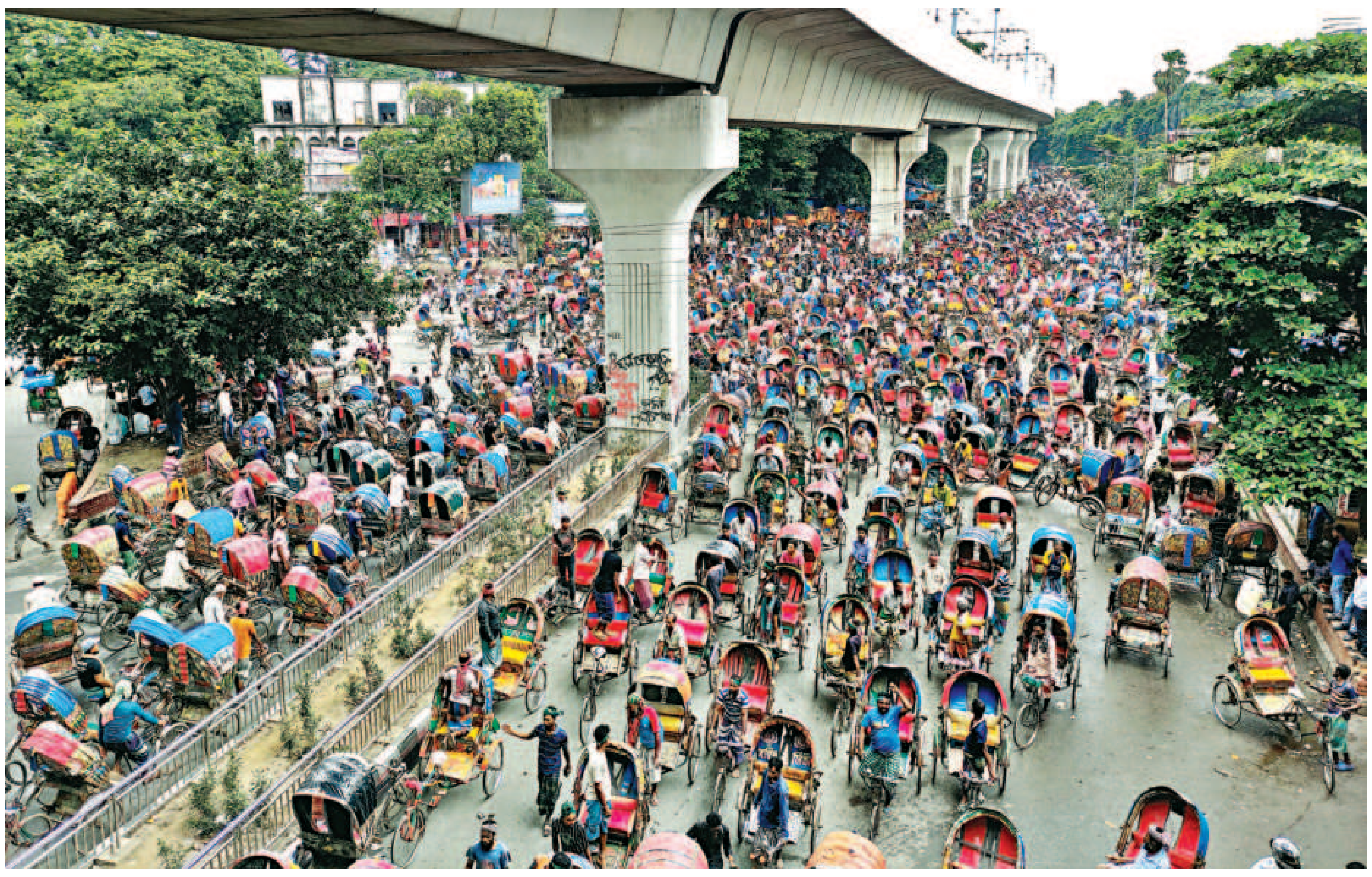
Rahmani walked out of the jail around 11:15am, said Deputy Jailer Rezaul Karim.

He was sentenced to five years in jail in 2015 for inciting blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider's murder through his sermons.

Deputy Jailer Md Farhad Sarkar said there were four cases against Rahmani, and he got bail in all of them.

"He [Rahmani] was released as there was no

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



Several hundred rickshaw pullers blocked Shahbagh for around two hours from 10:00am yesterday, halting traffic at this busy intersection in the capital. They were demanding that battery-operated rickshaws be banned on main roads and restricted to feeder roads. They left Shahbagh around noon on assurances from police and army personnel. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Russia fires 200 missiles, drones at Ukraine

5 killed; energy facilities hit

REUTERS, *Kyiv*

Russia launched about 200 missiles and drones at Ukraine yesterday, killing five people and striking energy facilities nationwide, Kyiv said, while neighbouring Nato member Poland reported a drone had probably entered its airspace.

Power cuts and water supply outages were reported in many areas, including parts of Kyiv, as officials said the attack - 2-1/2 years into Russia's full-scale invasion - targeted power or other critical infrastructure in at least 10 regions.

Russia dramatically stepped up its strikes on the Ukrainian power grid in March in what Kyiv has said looked like a concerted effort to degrade the system ahead of next winter when people need electricity and heating most.

Yesterday's missile and drone salvo was Russia's most intense in weeks, coming as Ukraine is claiming new ground in a major cross-border incursion into Russia's southern Kursk region while Russian forces steadily inch forward in Ukraine's east, closing in on the transport hub of Pokrovsk.

"It was one of the biggest combined strikes. More than a hundred missiles of various types and about a hundred Shahed drones. And like most previous Russian strikes, this one is just as sneaky, targeting critical civilian infrastructure," President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Telegram.

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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Together, they work tirelessly to repair a damaged dam
P3

Russia keeps pounding Ukraine
P7

A good national address to start with
P8

Nepal stand between Bangladesh and elusive trophy
P11

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Govt sets up inquiry commission

It has to submit report in 45 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday formed a five-member inquiry commission to identify and find the people who were forcibly disappeared by various intelligence and law enforcement agencies between January 1, 2010, and August 5, 2024.

The formation of the commission comes three weeks after the toppling of the previous government, which had persistently denied reports of enforced disappearance and maintained that the victims went into hiding willingly to embarrass the authorities.

Bangladesh currently has no laws criminalising enforced disappearance nor has it ratified the United Nations International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

The country has now tasked retired High Court judge Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury to lead the new commission that will investigate the circumstances under which people were forcibly disappeared by any law enforcement or intelligence agency.

These agencies include Bangladesh Police, the Rapid

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Seven-year-old Riya feeding her 10-month-old brother the bread they received as relief for flood victims yesterday. Their family, along with 25 others, have been in an under-construction building in Feni municipality since Thursday when their previous shelter was flooded.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

UCB freed from ex-land minister, family's grip

2 more banks removed from S Alam's control

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The family of former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed lost its grip on United Commercial Bank (UCB) yesterday as the Bangladesh Bank dissolved the lender's board of directors.

The dissolved 18-member board was heavily dominated by Saifuzzaman's family members, including his sister Roxana Zaman Chaudhury and relatives Anisuzzaman Chowdhury and Asifuzzaman Chowdhury.

Saifuzzaman's wife, Rukhmila Zaman, had been serving as chairman of the bank till August 16, when the bank reconstituted the board of its own accord in an attempt to keep a portion of Saifuzzaman's family onboard, industry insiders alleged.

The bank reconstituted its board again yesterday for the same reason just hours before the banking regulator dissolved the board, they added.

Over the years, Saifuzzaman has influenced various activities at the bank,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Major reshuffle in police force

3 top cops forced into retirement; 5 retired police officials reinstated

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

In a major reshuffle in the police force yesterday, three top police officials have been sent into forced retirement and five mid-ranking officials, who had been forced to retire by the Awami League government, have been reinstated.

Also, 24 district police superintendents were transferred to police units across the country.

The government also transferred 38 additional SP- and 14 assistant superintendent of police- (ASP) ranked officers from Dhaka Metropolitan Police to different police units, including in-service training centre, river police, and Rab.

- **24** SPs transferred
- **38** addl SPs sent outside Dhaka, to police units
- **47** addl SPs transferred to Dhaka, police units

Many of these officials have worked in the capital for years and had held major posts during the AL rule.

Forty-seven additional SP- and 10 ASP-ranked officers, who were outside Dhaka or in different units, have been transferred to the DMP.

Six deputy inspectors general and two additional inspectors general also got new posts.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

How a family grabbed multiple banks

S Alam and his family bypassed rules cleverly in capturing seven banks and two non-banks

AHSAN HABIB

The Bangladesh Bank is supposed to protect customers' interests, but it did not do so when it permitted Mohammed Saiful Alam and his family to seize multiple banks and funnel enormous sums as loans.

Alam, the chairman of S Alam Group, and his family members used the central bank's special permission to unprecedentedly possess large shares of seven banks and two financial institutions despite prohibition by the Bank Company Act.

For example, they have a 30 percent stake in Islami Bank while the law caps such shareholding by a family in a bank at 10 percent. That allowed Alam's relatives to take a total of Tk 25,000 crore loans from the bank with far less investment in it, official data shows. The actual amount is believed to be more than three times the official figure.

The Alams are the only family in Bangladesh with all members and some of their relatives sitting on the boards of several banks simultaneously. They deftly captured the banks' shares as the central bank relaxed the rules for them.

Analysts and experts have condemned such a practice as "totally unacceptable and absurd", as it has put the banks, and the entire financial sector at risk.

The experts have been calling for efforts to reduce family control over the banks for a long time. However, their suggestion fell on deaf ears with the central bank bypassing rules to let Alam and his family strengthen their control over the banks.

All the members of the family were directors of different banks until last week when the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

S ALAM, RELATIVES' SHARE IN BANKS, FIS (IN %)

Islami Bank	30
SIBL	22
First Security	28
Global Islami	30
Al-Arafah	5
Union Bank	74
Northern Insurance	5
Aviva Finance	72

SOURCE: **ANNUAL REPORTS**

FLOOD RELIEF

Lack of logistics key obstacle

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inadequate logistics continue to plague relief distribution along the eastern flank of Bangladesh that has been ravaged by the recent flood. Although the government has allocated food relief and cash -- 20,650 tonnes of rice and Tk 3.52 crore -- many among the 5.6 million flood victims of 11 districts are yet to benefit from it.

While the flood situation has improved in the absence of torrential rains in the eastern districts and water levels are subsiding, local administration and volunteers still find it hard to reach remote areas since they do not have enough boats. As a result, there is a strong demand for relief materials in deep pockets. Some of the officials have also complained of inadequate allocation of relief materials.

According to a daily update of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Chattogram was allocated Tk 35 lakh and 2,100 tonnes of rice, Feni was allocated Tk 62 lakh and 2,900 tonnes of rice, Cumilla, Noakhali and Sylhet were each allocated with Tk 45 lakh and 2,600 tonnes rice, Moulvibazar with Tk 30 lakh and 2,350 tonnes of rice, Habiganj with Tk 35 lakh and 2400 tonnes of rice, Brahmanbaria with Tk 15 lakh and 1,600 tonnes of rice, Lakkhipur and Khagrachhari with Tk 10 lakh and 500 tonnes of rice each, and Cox'sBazar with Tk 20 lakh and 500 tonnes of rice.

The disaster relief ministry also allocated 15,000 packs of dry food

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

PREMIER cement
ঢালাইয়ের রাজা

YUNUS' ADDRESS

It presented a clear vision of Bangladesh

Say eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser to the interim government, has presented his vision with objectivity and assured his government's commitment towards the countrymen in his televised address to the nation, said eminent citizens.

The speech has met the expectations of the people, said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

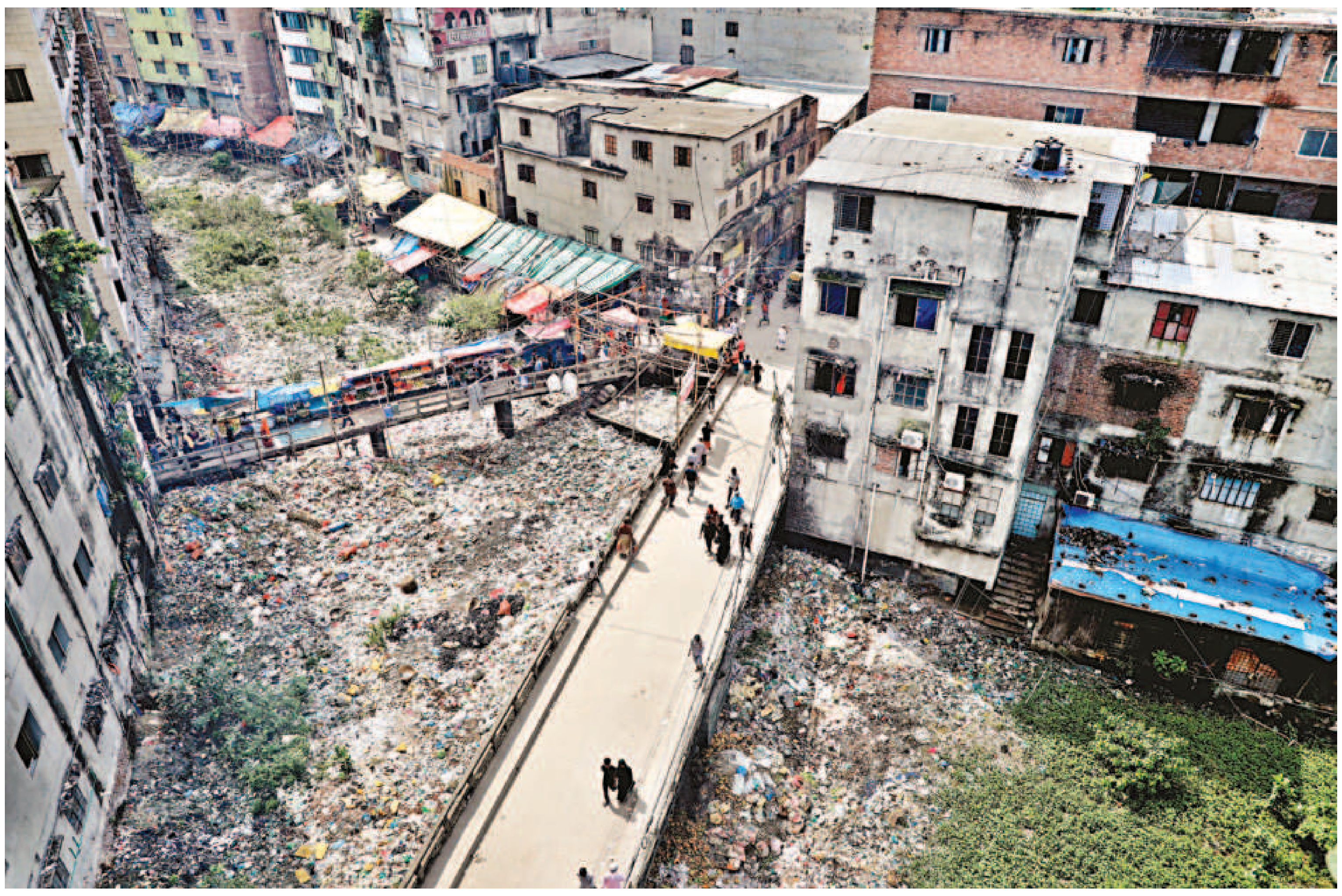
"Without any verbosity or rhetoric, Yunus, as expected of him, provided straightforward responses to a whole range of issues that have been agitating the minds of the people in the prevailing extremely challenging circumstances."

The speech strongly emphasised equality for everyone irrespective of any marker of identity and fundamental rights and justice without any form of discrimination.

"One could easily find in the speech a true articulation of the underlying spirit and aspirations of 'New Bangladesh' as pronounced by the unprecedented student-led people's movement."

The emphasis against corruption

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Sweatshops and traders of kitchen markets have turned the Shuvadya canal into a landfill, leaving no room for water to flow. The photo was taken in Dakshin Keraniganj a couple of days ago.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Modi's tweet and a question

TANIM AHMED

In his recent tweet, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that while talking to US President Joe Biden, they spoke about Ukraine, and "also discussed the situation in Bangladesh and stressed the need for early restoration of normalcy, and ensuring the safety and security of minorities, especially the Hindus, in Bangladesh".

Not just Prime Minister Modi, the Indian foreign ministry's brief states that the two leaders "expressed their shared concern" about the situation in Bangladesh.

The two leaders hoped that "safety and security of the minorities, particularly Hindus, in Bangladesh" would be ensured.

Curiously though, the White House readout of the same telephone conversation does not even mention Bangladesh, which probably indicates that Biden's concern about the "situation" in this country is not as much as Modi had thought it to be or what his foreign ministry's statement makes it out to be.

The Indian prime minister had already spoken to Muhammad Yunus, the de facto Bangladesh prime minister, soon after his inauguration, and chose to take up this issue with the American president. He might have, instead, raised it with his counterpart in Bangladesh again, if he was still unsure whether the matter was satisfactorily resolved.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

MY DHAKA

Understanding the 'Dhaka Dhakka' phenomenon

ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

Moving to a new city can be intimidating, and when it's Dhaka, there are bound to be some stories.

Cultural shock is a real thing and it can happen even within your own country. Moving to Dhaka comes with such experiences and instead of cultural shock, I like to call these -- "Dhaka Dhakka."

Here are a few things that are common in Dhaka, but usually surprising to the newcomers:

NOT KNOWING YOUR NEIGHBOUR

If you come from a rural area, chances are that you know almost everyone in your village.

Some people are even so well informed that they can tell you what their neighbour is cooking for dinner on any given day.

But this is hardly the case in Dhaka.

Unless you have been living close by for a long time, people in Dhaka barely know their neighbours. And in most cases, they do not have the time or the patience for it either.

IT'S ALIVE 24/7

Village markets get dizzy by 10:00pm. By 11:00pm, everyone is closing up.

In remote areas, late nights are quiet, desolate, and frighteningly dark. Dhaka is not bound by any such schedule.

Even at midnight, there are people on the roads, and many places are found buzzing at midnight, such as Nazirabazar.

Places like Karwanbazar and other wholesale markets in Dhaka are equally noisy in the middle of the night as they are at any other time of the day. Dhaka is alive every hour of the day and every day of the week.

NOBODY CARES ABOUT OTHERS

There are so many people in Dhaka and everyone is so busy with themselves that nobody has the time to sit back and care about what another person is doing.

In smaller cities and villages, you find that people will stop and stare. Some would even come up and inquire sometimes.

This happens more often in villages where individualism hasn't quite caught up yet and the concept of privacy is still alien. So, everyone is interested in someone else's business.

But in Dhaka, nobody has the time or interest to care about what others are doing.

LOVE FOR SLEEP

Sure, Dhaka is alive 24/7 and buzzing even at midnight, but the city loves to sleep more than anything else.

One can really feel that on weekends and other national holidays. While you might be used to people starting their day as early as possible back in your hometown, Dhaka reminds you that there is no need to rush into the day when it's your day off.

On workdays, Dhaka will surprise you with its millions of commuters and their dedication but on holidays, you can expect to start the day as late as possible. Even the shops will open late so you're better off sleeping.

'THERE'S A MARKET FOR THAT'

Remember that time when people used to say "There's an app for that?" Well, Dhaka is sort of like that.

If you are looking for something, there probably is a market for that somewhere in Dhaka.

From common items such as books and clothes to unique items such as antiques and paintings -- whatever you need -- there is a marketplace for that in Dhaka. All you have to do is ask around.

Digesting the "Dhaka Dhakka" can take some time. For those who are willing to embrace the city, it can happen fast.

But if you are scared by Dhaka, then it's not going to get any easier because Dhaka is many things, but forgiving is not one of them.

PHOTO: **SAZZAD IBNE SAYED**

Erdoğan calls Yunus, promises aid for flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan congratulated Bangladesh Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on assuming leadership of the interim government over a phone call yesterday.

During the call, President Erdoğan condoled the loss of valuable lives in the flood-affected areas of Bangladesh and said Turkey would provide humanitarian aid to the flood-stricken people.

Chief Adviser Yunus thanked the Turkish president, who is a long-time friend of the 2006 Nobel laureate.

He called for increased trade with Turkey and said Bangladesh would need Turkish investment in key sectors, including manufacturing, in which Turkey is a formidable global power.

President Erdoğan said he would soon send a high-powered delegation to Bangladesh in their efforts to help rebuild the country.

He invited the chief adviser to visit Turkey. Prof Yunus accepted the offer, saying he would visit the country at a convenient time.

The chief adviser also invited President Erdoğan to visit Bangladesh. He also accepted the offer.

Student returns from Assam after backlash on social media

STAR REPORT

A Bangladeshi student studying in India's Assam returned home on Monday as many people reacted angrily to her heart emoji reaction on an "anti-India" post on social media, PTI reported yesterday, quoting local police.

The student of the National Institute of Technology in Silchar requested the institution's authorities to allow her to return to Bangladesh, Cachar Superintendent of Police Numal Mahatta said.

The SP said the fourth-semester student of the electronic and communication department of NIT was sent back through the Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Sutarkandi in Karimganj district.

"This is not a case of deportation... She reacted with a love symbol in one anti-India post on Facebook by her senior and NIT Silchar alumnus who left India around six months back after completing his course. He now lives in Bangladesh," Mahatta said.

UCB freed

FROM PAGE 1

including approval of loans, according to the insiders.

The central bank constituted a five-member board for the bank, including two shareholder directors and three independent directors.

Sharif Zahir, chairman of National Finance, was made a shareholder director. Zahir is also the managing director of Ananta Group and a former vice-chairman of UCB.

Md Tanvir Khan, director of Eastland Insurance, is the other shareholder director.

Sajjad Hossain, former executive director of Bangladesh Bank, Yusuf Ali, former deputy managing director of Agrani Bank, and Obaidur Rahman, a chartered accountant, were named independent directors.

The new board was constituted to protect the interests of the depositors and ensure good governance as per section 45 of the Bank Company Act, 1991, read a letter from the central bank to the UCB managing director.

Saifuzzaman has acquired at least 260 properties in the United Kingdom, paying at least 134.76 million British pounds or Tk 1,888 crore, according to The Daily Star's calculation based on company filings that are publicly available on UK government websites.

The three-time Awami League lawmaker also has at least 537 mortgages against properties in the UK, a majority of which are in London.

Allegations are also rife about the former land minister using UCB for personal gain.

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit found that Saifuzzaman and Rukhmila have also amassed huge fortunes in the United States and Dubai.

Saifuzzaman is a relative of S Alam Group Chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam.

TWO BANKS FREED OF S ALAM

The S Alam Group's dominance over two banks, namely Global Islami Bank and Union Bank, was upended yesterday as the Bangladesh Bank dissolved their boards, which were heavily controlled by individuals linked to the conglomerate.

In recent days, National Bank, Islami Bank Bangladesh and Social Islami Bank have also been freed from the S Alam Group's clutches.

The central bank dissolved the 21-member board of Global Islami Bank and 11-member board of Union Bank, and appointed five independent directors for each.

Mohammad Nurul Amin, former managing director of Meghna Bank, has been appointed as chairman of Global Islami Bank's board following his selection as an independent director.

Similarly, the banking watchdog appointed Md Farid Uddin Ahmed as the chairman of Union Bank after selecting him as an independent director.

Ahmed is a former managing director of Islami Bank Bangladesh.

Founded in 1985 by Mohammed Saiful Alam, a relative of former Awami League politician Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, S Alam Group has grown into one of the largest conglomerates in Bangladesh.

The banks have been facing huge deficits in their current account balances with the central bank for more than a year due to widespread loan irregularities and scams.

Govt sets up inquiry commission

FROM PAGE 1

Action Battalion, Border Guard Bangladesh, the Criminal Investigation Department, the Special Branch, the Ansar Battalion, National Security Intelligence, military forces, and the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI).

The commission will provide descriptions of the incidents of enforced disappearance to the authorities concerned and make recommendations, according to a gazette notification of the Cabinet Division.

Relatives will be informed if the commission discovers someone forcibly disappeared, said the notification signed by Cabinet Secretary Md Mahbub Hossain.

It will also gather information from the investigation already carried out by any agency or organisation on the incidents of enforced disappearances.

The other four members of the commission are Justice Md Farid Ahmed Shibli, another former judge of the High Court, rights activists Nur Khan and Sazzad Hossain, and Nabila Idris, a teacher at BRAC University.

They will submit the report to the government after completing their investigation within 45 working days in line with the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1956, under which the commission has been formed.

Sanjida Islam Tulee, coordinator of Mayer Daak, a platform for the families of victims of enforced disappearance, said, "The investigation process must be transparent and the report must not seek to hide any of its findings. A system must be set up for victims to submit evidence."

The AL's narrative regarding reports of enforced disappearances unravelled after the horrifying stories of people, who were confined to secret detention centres, became public following the dramatic fall of Hasina's government.

The victims of enforced disappearance began to speak out after their release from the secret facilities known as "Aynaghar". These victims come from different age groups and political and social backgrounds, but their narratives of the thick-walled, iron-door prison cells are strikingly similar. These facilities are notorious for their complete isolation, with detainees unable to see any light from the outside world.

Many of these were run by the DGFI. The agency's heads are reportable directly to the prime minister and the prime minister's security adviser.

At a meeting with the DGFI on August 6, a six-member team, including rights activists and a UN representative, demanded access to the detention facility. The team was allowed to visit the DGFI headquarters in Dhaka on August 7.

After coming out of the facility, rights activist Shireen Huq told families of some victims that the DGFI said there were no detainees in their Dhaka facility. The agency also said that they would form a joint commission to arrange visits for rights activists to 23 other facilities across the country to see if the victims of enforced disappearance were there.

Now demands are being made from the families of the victims, rights activists and different other quarters to put an end to such torture in confinement to Aynaghar-style facilities.

According to rights organisation Odhikar, at least 708 people were victims of enforced disappearance between 2009 and June 2024.

The US in December 2021 imposed sanctions on Rab and seven of its top officers over serious rights abuses. It said the Rab and other Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies were responsible for more than 600 enforced disappearances since 2009 and nearly 600 extrajudicial killings since 2018.

Major reshuffle in police force

FROM PAGE 1

Over the last one week, 13 top police officers have been sent into forced retirement in "public interest".

Many of these officials have been alleged to have used excessive force to suppress the student movement that toppled the AL government on August 5.

Much-talked-about names like Monirul Islam, additional IGP at Special Branch; Habibur Rahman, DMP commissioner; Atiqul Islam, additional IGP of police headquarters; Mohammad Ali Miah, CID chief; and Krishna Pada Roy, additional IGP of the Police Headquarters, were among those forced to retire.

Some of them have murder cases filed against them.

Police and home ministry sources said the changes were made as a part of measures to revamp the force that has been "politically used" for a long time.

"We have transferred the officials out of Dhaka as a part of measures to revamp the force," Md Mainul Hasan, commissioner of the DMP, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said, "Capable, professional, and deprived officers are being selected for filling the vacant posts."

Muhammad Nurul Huda, a former inspector general of police, termed the moves "administrative measures or actions warranted by the present situation".

He told The Daily Star, "The officials, who have been given charge in new posts, should strictly follow the law so that the image [of the force] is restored."

REINSTATEMENTS, RETIREMENTS

With three circulars, the government yesterday sent three top police officials, including an additional inspector general of police (IGP), into forced retirement from today.

The officials are Krishna Pada Roy, additional IGP of police headquarters; Mozammel Haque, Khulna Metropolitan Police commissioner; and Sarder Rakibul Islam, additional commissioner.

The circular invoked section 45 of the Public Service Act, 2018.

The five reinstated police officials, who were forced to retire between 2020 and 2023, are Deputy Inspector General of police Abdullah Al Mamun, and SPs Nazmul Karim Khan, Ali Hossain Khan, Delwar Hossain Mia, and Zillur Rahman.

Five circulars were issued in this regard yesterday.

They would be considered on duty from the day of their forced retirement, and they would be entitled to arrears, promotions, and other benefits as per rules, read the circulars.

The home ministry during the AL rule had cited "public interest" as reason for them being forced to retire.

THE NEW TO BE WATCHED

Sources said many of the newly posted DMP officials do not have experience in working in the capital.

Talking to this newspaper, a source, requesting anonymity, said, "It would be hard for the newly appointed officers to perform their duties if they have no experience in dealing with crime in the capital ... ."

DMP Commissioner Mainul said, "We will keep the newly transferred officials under the scanner and follow their work. If they fail to perform and maintain the professional standard, then they would be sent back.

"We want to ensure the best service to people ... ."

Earlier, the authorities transferred all additional commissioners and deputy commissioners of eight crime divisions and eight detective branches of the DMP.

The officials, who were posted outside Dhaka, are now being given the charges of these divisions and DB branches.

NEW SPs, DIGs

The home ministry in another circular transferred the SPs of 24 districts.

New officials were also appointed to these districts.

The districts that got new SPs are Rangpur, Gazipur, Cumilla, Dhaka, Sirajganj, Chattogram, Manikganj, Mymensingh, Gaibandha, Habiganj, Rajshahi, Munshiganj, Sylhet, Narayanganj, Natore, Pabna, Patuakhali, Bagerhat, Kishoreganj, Jhenaidah, Magura, Tangail, Jashore, and Narsingdi.

In another circular, the home ministry yesterday transferred two additional inspectors general of police and six DIGs.

Additional IGP (supernumerary) AKM Hafiz Akter and KH Mahid Uddin were transferred to the Industrial Police and Tourist Police.

DIG Munibur Rahman of DMP was sent to the Armed Police Battalion headquarters while DIG Faruk Ahmed to the DMP.

DIGs (supernumerary) Israil Howlader, Khondoker Nazmul Hasan, Masud Karim, and Hasan Md Shawkat Ali were posted to the DMP.

It presented a clear vision of Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 1

and money laundering has raised expectations and would motivate the relevant institutions to take action to set concrete examples that abuse of power, especially at high levels, can no longer be enjoyed with impunity, Iftekharuzzaman said.

Yunus has rightly conveyed the message that it is upon the people to determine when the much-needed elections will be held.

"There is no denying that one of the deliverables of the interim government is the restoration of people's right to vote as the means of transition of power. But the election cannot be regarded as an end in itself without meeting the key aspirations of the movement," he added.

In his address to the nation on Sunday, Yunus requested the people to discuss and prescribe what is the least the interim government needs to do, said Serajul Islam Choudhury, professor emeritus at the University of Dhaka.

"Our expectation is that an election should be held and for that, a proper atmosphere should be created."

At the very least, the expectation is that due honour will be given to the aspiration of liberty.

There are several other expectations such as proper treatment for those injured during the mass upsurge and financial compensation for the families of those killed.

"Perpetrators of these murders must be brought to book. There is a need to rein in the immense powers given to the police and the RAB. Efforts should be made to stop wealth laundering, plundering and corruption."

Ramping up employment generation, bringing prices under control, ensuring freedom of expression and dismantling all types of syndicates are crucial.

Furthermore, adopting a policy of development towards social ownership and moving away from the trend of capitalist development is also essential.

"If you can ensure this, an atmosphere of polls will be created. This should not take that much time. There are proposals of different reforms and commissions but those are time-consuming exercises," Choudhury added.

In his statement, Yunus highlighted that a key priority for the interim government is to seek justice for the hundreds killed and thousands injured during the July Protests, said Sara Hossain, a Supreme Court advocate and a rights activist.

"He also said it out loud and clear that no one should face injustice when seeking justice. I hope the government will act on this and take swift measures to bring to account some of those responsible for the gross human rights violations we have just witnessed, and also stand by the victims, remembering the long history we have in our country of impunity across the years."

It was good to hear Yunus emphasise the importance of respecting each other irrespective of ethnicity, religion or gender, marking a clear step away from the politics of division and hatred and towards a vision of common goals and a shared future.

Yunus asked all those raising grievances for patience.

"People have genuine grievances, and with the restrictions on democratic space, they have had little opportunity to voice them for years."

They need to be heard and issues resolved based on priority.

"But more importantly we need to move ahead with a practical reform agenda, including for public institutions, which have been hollowed out. Once this is done, the government can move forward with other tasks."

Hossain agreed with Yunus that there should be reforms before holding elections.

"We have not witnessed proper elections for many years. Elections are not just a matter of institutional practices or legal rules; political parties should play a role and they should be ready for it. For that, voters need genuine choices, and all political groups must have a fair chance to be involved," she added.

Through his address, Yunus aimed to reassure the countrymen about the actions being taken and addressed the challenges of democratic transformation and the necessary reforms for it, said Selim Raihan, professor at the University of Dhaka's economics department.

Yunus mentioned that the interim government assumed power based on the mandate of the students and the people and asserted that the government would remain in place as long as they have that support.

However, one thing that needs clarification on how much control this interim government has over the administration.

"Every institution is in mess, with many being severely damaged -- it is a monumental task to rebuild them. I believe the government should create a comprehensive package outlining the necessary reforms and then hold a referendum on that."

If the government go to an election without making significant progress on the reforms, it will be like returning to square one, said Raihan, also the executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling.

He suggested that a white paper on the state of the economy should be issued and that similar initiatives should be taken across different sectors such as the constitution, administration, elections and others to ensure their accountability.

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Yunus now heading 6 ministries

Portfolios of four other advisers redistributed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is now in charge of six ministries or divisions as the portfolios of five advisers were redistributed yesterday.

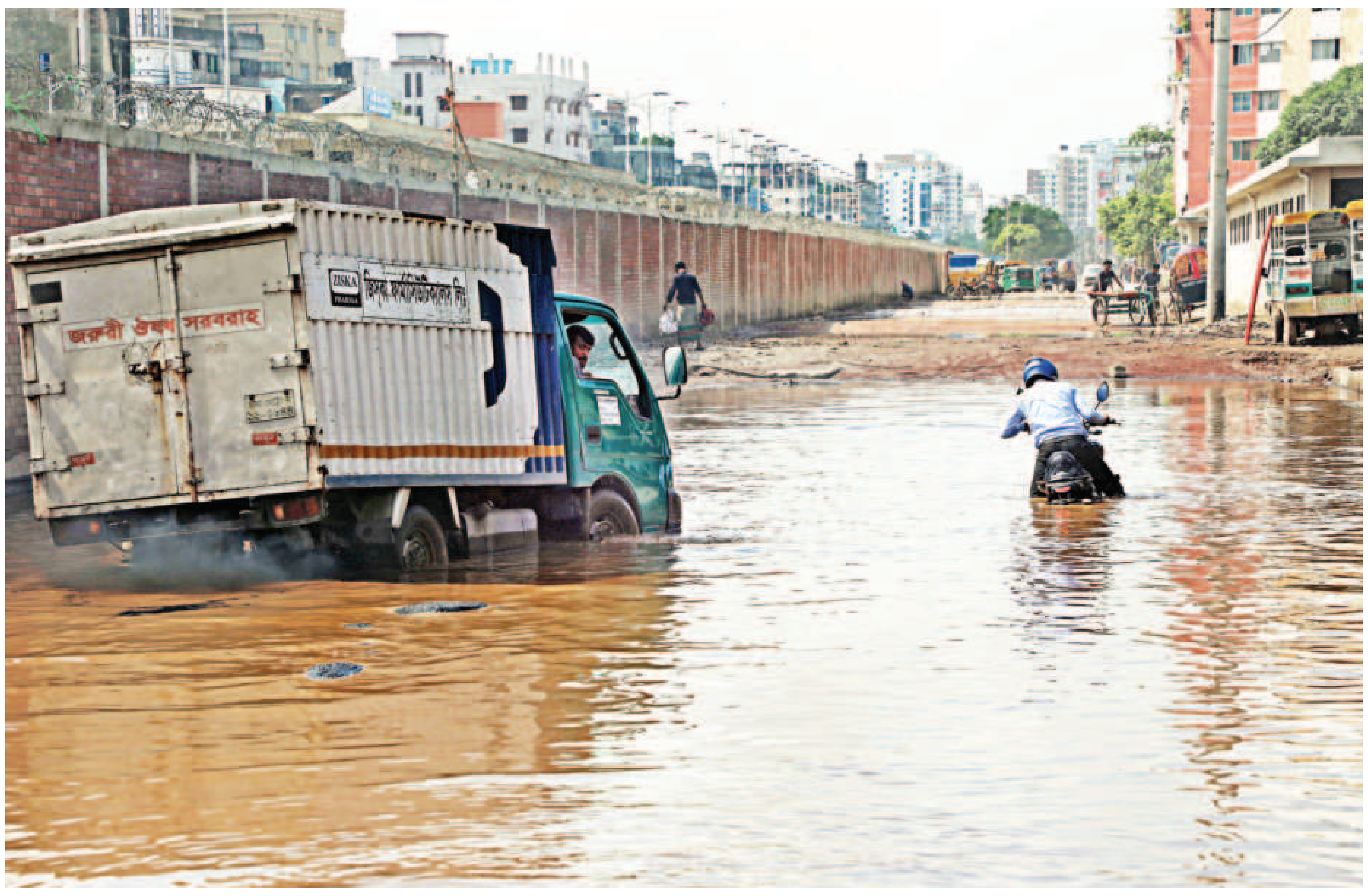
The Cabinet Division has issued a circular in this regard.

Yunus, the head of the interim government, was in charge of 10 ministries and divisions, but as per the circular he has given up charge of the land, science and technology, shipping, and women and children affairs ministries.

According to the new decision, Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed has been given the charge of the science and technology, and finance and commerce ministries.

Hasan Arif has been given charge of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



The road beside the Jurain Railway Market in the capital's Jurain area goes under water even after minimal rainfall, causing suffering for commuters and vehicles. With the road's numerous potholes remaining invisible due to the water, it gets risky for vehicles to ply the road amid the situation. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

UN RIGHTS DELEGATION

Bangladesh assures full cooperation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is committed to providing full cooperation to the United Nations, Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said yesterday following a meeting with a visiting UN delegation at the Secretariat.

The three-member delegation, led by Rory Mungoven, Chief of the Asia-Pacific Section of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), arrived in Bangladesh on August 22 to investigate human rights violations that occurred between July 1 and August 15.

The team also included Livia Consenza and Alexander James Amir El Jundi, both human rights officers at OHCHR.

During the meeting, the home adviser requested the UN to consider including more Bangladeshi personnel from the army, police, and other forces in UN peacekeeping missions.

Rory Mungoven described the meeting as positive, saying, "We are in Bangladesh to discuss how the UN could conduct an investigation and fact-finding mission regarding the events of the past two months, as requested by the interim government."

He added that the delegation is also exploring other areas where they can assist and support the interim government and the people of Bangladesh.

"We are halfway through our visit, and the discussions have been very positive. We are inspired by the efforts of the students and people of Bangladesh, and we want to support them in the best way possible," Mungoven told reporters at the Secretariat.

APPOINTMENTS OF CECs, ECs

HC asks why indemnity of search bodies not illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule questioning the legality of a provision that provides indemnity to president-appointed search committees that recommend appointments of CECs and other ECs for holding polls in the country.

In the rule, the court asked the respondents to explain why Section 9 of the Chief Election Commissioners and Other Election Commissioners Appointment Act, 2022, which has given such impunity to search committees, should not be declared illegal and contradictory to the constitution.

The law secretary and the election commission have been made respondents to the rule, which is returnable in four weeks.

The HC bench of AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice Muhammad Mahbub-Ul Islam issued the rule following a writ petition challenging the legality of the provision, which was filed by 10 Supreme Court lawyers on August 18.

Section 9 states that the appointments of CECs and other ECs based on the recommendations of the search committees previously formed by the president and their activities will be deemed as valid and no question shall be raised in any court in this regard, said the petition.

Advocate Mohammad Shishir Manir appeared for the petitioners during the hearing of the petition.

He told the HC that Section 9 of the act has taken away the jurisdiction of the judiciary, as it has been said that any question cannot be raised in any court of the country.

Such impunity is totally unconstitutional, he added.

Earlier, Shishir Manir told The Daily Star that his clients have challenged the impunity given to the search committees formed in 2017 and 2022, headed respectively by Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Obaidul Hassan, judges of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division, to recommend appointing the CECs and ECs for holding the elections in 2014 and 2018.

Together, they work tirelessly to repair a dyke

A breach in the embankment has flooded over 35 villages in Sylhet

MINTU DESHWARA

A breach in the Manu River embankment in Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila has led to widespread flooding, submerging over 35 villages and causing significant damage to crop fields, houses, and roads.

The breach, which occurred on August 20, has left the region reeling as floodwaters continue to inundate the area.

The damage was particularly severe in the villages of Belartal, Alinagar, and Dhalia, where sections of the embankment gave way due to persistent rainfall and water flow from across the border.

Local residents and officials have pointed fingers at the Bangladesh Water Development Board, accusing it of using substandard materials in constructing the embankment, leading to its collapse.

Despite these challenges, the story has taken a hopeful turn as hundreds of local residents, students, and social organisations have come together to repair the damaged embankment themselves.

"The Manu river's breach has devastated our community, but we're not waiting for government aid. We've taken matters into our own hands," said Umar Ali, a student involved in the repairs.

Ali and other local youths were among the first to respond, quickly filling the breach with sandbags.

Soon after, they were joined by former UP member Abbas Ali, social activist Dr Monirul Islam Sohag, and other villagers.

The repair effort, which began on the night of August 22, has become a community-wide endeavour.

Men, women, and children have been working side by side, filling sacks with soil and stacking them to rebuild the embankment.

The scene is one of determination and unity, with villagers refusing to let the floodwaters defeat them.

"We've been working since dawn, every day, to protect our homes and crops," said Dr Sohag, who also contributed Tk 1 lakh to support the effort.

"Many of the embankments in this area are unstable, and we're doing everything we can to safeguard our land," he added.

Local youth Yasin Ali voiced frustration over unfulfilled promises by public representatives to build a permanent embankment, but he praised the community's spirit.

"The people here are incredible. They've come together to do what needs to be done. It's inspiring to see," said Yasin.

Abbas Ali echoed these sentiments, noting that while the situation is dire, the collective effort has brought the community closer together.

"We've been working at great personal risk, but it's worth it to protect our neighbours and our homes," he said.

Russia interested in exploring five more gas wells

Envoys of three countries call on chief adviser

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom has expressed interest in exploring five additional gas wells in Bhola, as well as further wells inland, Russian Ambassador to Bangladesh Alexander Mantytskiy revealed during a courtesy call on Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna yesterday.

Mantytskiy also highlighted Russia's ongoing support for Bangladesh in international forums and discussed several key cooperation areas, including the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'No flowers, no lavish arrangements'

Says Prof Niaz after taking charge as 30th DU VC

DU CORRESPONDENT

Professor Niaz Ahmed Khan took charge as the 30th vice chancellor of Dhaka University yesterday.

He was appointed "for the time being" by President Mohammed Shahabuddin, also the chancellor of the university.

After joining the office, Prof Niaz went to visit relief activities at TSC, where students are collecting relief items and funds for flood-affected people.

He also urged teachers, students, and other

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

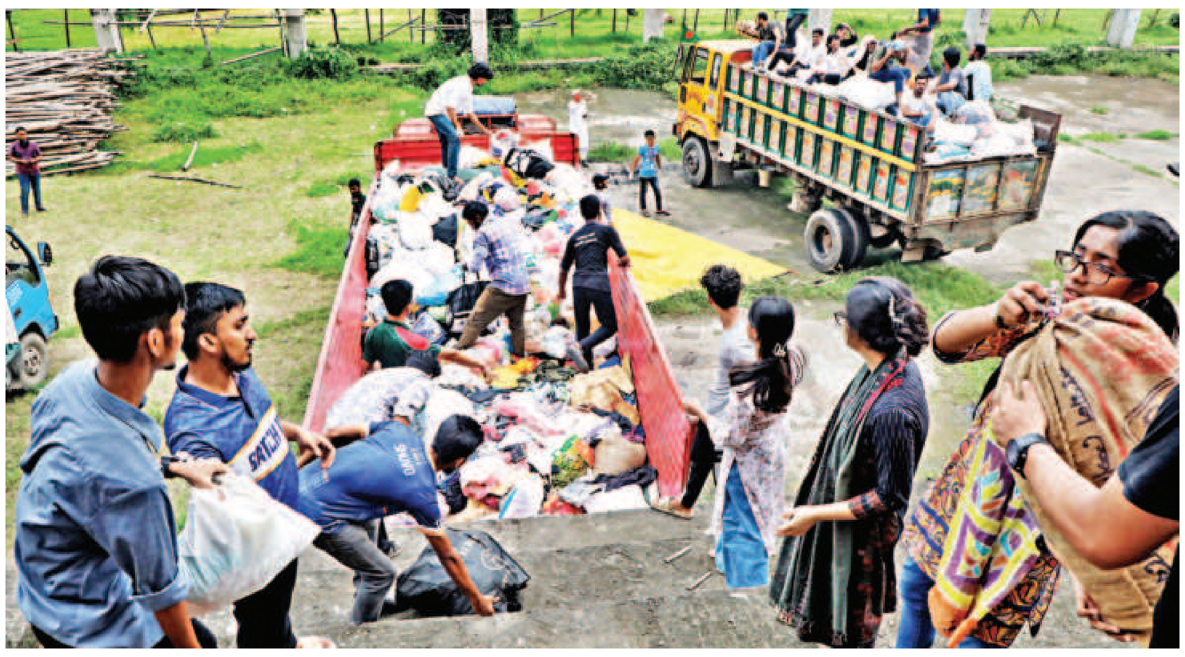


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Volunteers load trucks with clothes and other relief materials to dispatch them to flood-affected areas. As the relief campaign continues at Dhaka University, students are working round the clock to collect relief funds and items and send them to the flood-affected people. The photo was taken at the DU Central Field yesterday.

Biman board of directors reformed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government yesterday reconstituted the board of directors of Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Affairs Ministry said this in a gazette notification in this regard.

Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, a former adviser to the caretaker government, was made chairman of the board of directors of Biman.

On August 19, Chowdhury has been appointed as the new chairman of the national flag carrier.

FOR CUSTOMERS' ATTENTION
TEMPORARY HALT OF IMPORT-EXPORT & GUARANTEE SERVICES

In our continuous endeavor to serve you better, we will be carrying out a system upgradation of our trade services as per the time table below. All Import-Export & Guarantee related services will be suspended during this period.

Schedule Downtime	Suspended Services
Sunday, 1 September, 2024 to Tuesday, 3 September, 2024	• All local and international Import-Export services • All Guarantee related services

We regret any inconvenience caused. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

City Bank PLC
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www.citybankplc.com
Call Center : 16234
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Asiatic 3Sixty supports flood relief efforts

STAR REPORT

The Asiatic 3Sixty family has come together to support those affected by the recent floods, contributing one day's salary to a relief fund, said a press release.

This effort was further amplified by matching contributions from the organisations under the Asiatic 3Sixty umbrella, effectively doubling the total amount collected.

The full donation has been handed over to the Chief Adviser's Relief Fund of the interim government. This fund will be used to provide essential supplies such as food, clean water, medical assistance, and other critical support to flood victims.

PRAYER TIMING

AUGUST 28

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Most KCC dev projects halted

FROM PAGE 5

those? I want to surrender and hand over the remaining work to KCC authorities to prevent further losses," he said.

Echoing him, Ziaul Ahsan Titu, proprietor of Ziaul Traders and also councillor of ward-28, said, "My safety is my first priority now. My materials and equipment have been looted from the work site already. However, if I get security from the authorities, I will complete the remaining work in time."

Visiting at least seven wards including 21, 25, 28, and 9, this correspondent observed that sand, stones and other materials were left scattered on road near the construction sites. Only a few workers were seen on some sites.

Kudrat-e-Khuda, president of Sanak Khulna unit, called upon the KCC authorities to restore public confidence by addressing the issue and finding a way to resume the works of these crucial projects immediately, alongside ensuring transparency and accountability, and steps to prevent future disruptions.

Contacted, Moshiuzzaman Khan, chief engineer of KCC, said work has already resumed on 11 project sites while steps are on to resume the rest.

Release detained

FROM PAGE 5

five years after his disappearance.

Mikel, reading from a written statement, demanded the release of individuals held in the secret detention centre known as "Aynaghar".

He said that over the past 15 years, more than 50 UPDF leaders and activists have been killed without trial, disappeared, arrested, or tortured.

Mikel called for an end to military control in the CHT, arguing that democracy is impossible under such conditions.

He expressed support for the interim government but stressed the importance of including the CHT in any upcoming reform plans to prevent the resurgence of a fascist regime.

Yunus now heading 6 ministries

FROM PAGE 3

Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Ministry as well as the Ministry of Land.

Brigadier General (retd) M Shakhawat Hossain was given the charge of the shipping ministry while Social Welfare Adviser Sharmin S Murshid was given charge of the women and children affairs ministry, according to the circular.

Yunus is now in charge of the Cabinet Division, the Ministry of Defence, the Armed Forces Division, the Ministry of Food, the Ministry of Public Administration, and the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism.

Menon, Inu

FROM PAGE 5

In the case, the complainant alleged that some of the accused as per instruction directly or indirectly from some others opened fire while hundreds of students, including Rubel, were protesting in Adabor on August 5.

Rubel succumbed to bullet wounds at a hospital two days later, the case said.

Another Dhaka court placed Hasanul Haq Inu on a seven-day remand in the Abdul Wadud murder case.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Ali Haider passed the order after police produced him with a 10-day remand prayer, court sources said.

On August 21, Abdur Rahman, the victim's brother-in-law, filed the case with New Market Police Station against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 129 others.

Besides this case, Inu has been accused in several other cases after Hasina resigned and fled on August 5 in the face of a mass uprising.

Meanwhile, in the courtroom, a group of pro-BNP lawyers hurled expletives and attempted to attack Inu and Menon. Some unruly lawyers even threw eggs at them despite law enforcers' presence.

70 indigenous families attacked

FROM PAGE 5

The student leaders called on the government to restore the damaged sculpture.

Specific incidents highlighted during the press conference include the torching and looting of homes in Pipalla village, Biral upazila, and Birganj upazila in Dinajpur, leaving many residents displaced out of fear.

In Bochaganj, 12 bighas of land belonging to the indigenous communities were seized, and in Parbatipur upazila, houses were occupied after being set on fire.

Further attacks were reported in Ranisankail upazila of Thakurgaon, where four houses were burned down.

In Godagari upazila of Rajshahi, several villages were targeted, with valuables worth Tk 10 lakh looted. Similar incidents occurred in Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila, where fish from several ponds were looted, and in Patnitola upazila of Naogaon, where shops owned by indigenous families were ransacked.

The students at the press conference demanded a thorough investigation into the attacks and immediate government action to protect the affected communities.

Russia interested

FROM PAGE 3

This project, which benefits from Russian technical and financial support, is nearing completion and is expected to become operational next year.

Additionally, Russia is keen on exporting LNG to Bangladesh and constructing a gas pipeline from Bhola to Khulna, he noted.

Chief Adviser Yunus acknowledged Russia's historical support during Bangladesh's Liberation War and its crucial mine-cleaning operations at Chittagong Port.

He urged Russia to increase its imports from Bangladesh and emphasised the need for expanded economic and educational cooperation.

In a separate courtesy call, Saudi Arabia's Ambassador Essa Yousef Essa Al Duhailan informed Yunus that approximately 3.2 million Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia send around $10 billion in remittances annually, with half sent through official channels.

Yunus praised Saudi Arabia as a key friend of Bangladesh and reminisced about his visit to the country for the World Football Summit. A

Ambassador Essa Yousef also raised the issue of renewing passports for 69,000 undocumented Bangladeshi residents in Saudi Arabia and discussed Saudi interest in investing further in Bangladesh's logistics, services, and renewable energy sectors.

Meanwhile, during a meeting with Pakistani High Commissioner Syed Ahmed Maroof, Yunus called for the revival of SAARC to enhance regional cooperation and boost economic ties in South Asia. He expressed hope that SAARC could become a model for regional integration similar to the European Union.

Maroof emphasised the need to revitalise trade and economic relations between the two countries and advocated for easing visa procedures and establishing direct flights between Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested **Firm/Organization to undertake graphic design and printing for the ILO office in Bangladesh** for the provision of Long-Term Agreement (LTA). The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ***United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM)*** at

https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/244819

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Wednesday, September 25, 2024, by 04:30 PM (BST time)**.

Save the Children

Date: August 28, 2024

Save the Children is the world's leading, independent organisation for children

Invitation for Tender

Save the Children International (SCI) is hereby inviting request for proposal from the interested experienced bona fide vendors for Suppling ALP Book.
For details, please see the IFT schedules, which are available on http://procurement.scibd.info/ under tender notification for free of cost. Downloaded copy is acceptable for tender participation.

Description, Pre-Proposal Meeting, submission time & date:

SL	Name of IFT	Reference No.	Pre-Tender Meeting Schedule & Place	Last date of Tender Submission
1	ALP Book Printing	IFT/SCI/CXB/FY-24/(Manual)/02	**Zoom Meeting: 02/09/2024** **https://zoom.us/j/99633685610?pwd=umb4PgJITUb1ujcMT2HFLmiqi47LbV.1**	September 17, 2024, on or before 03:00 pm.

Special Instruction:
(a) All activities in connection with the said procurement of Services/Goods/Works will be guided as per the SCI's Procurement Policies. (b) SCI reserves the right to accept or reject part/whole of any or all the application without assigning any reason.

Director - Procurement & Supply Chain

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Department of Public Health Engineering
Rangamati Division, Rangamati
Email: dphe.rangamati@gmail.com

Invitation e-Tender

Tender Notice Memo No: 46.03.84.00.061.24-234 Date: 27/08/2024

1	Ministry/ Division	Local Government Division
2	Agency	Department of Public Health Engineering
3	Project Name	Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-4)
4	e-Tender ID	ID No: 1010268,1010264,1010266
5	Description of works: Construction of single storied RCC WASH Block having 1 storied foundation for MT & Boys and FT & Girls including all associated construction, sanitary, plumbing & electrical works under DPHE Rangamati Division Construction of 2 storied RCC WASH Block having 2 storied foundation for MT & Boys and FT & Girls including all associated construction, sanitary, plumbing & electrical works at different primary school in Rangamati District.	
6	Name, Designation & Address of official Inviting Tender	Engr. Parag Barua Executive Engineer, DPHE, Rangamati Division, Rangamati.
7	This is online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and on offline/ hard copies will be accepted Interested persons/firms can see details in the : www.eprocure.gov.bd	

(Engr. Parag Barua)
Executive Engineer
Department of Public Health Engineering
Rangamati Division, Rangamati.

GD- 265

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Chief Controller of Stores
Bangladesh Railway
Pahartali, Chattogram-4202.
Phone: +88-031-659604, email: ccspht@railway.gov.bd

No: **54.01.1543.335.08.027.24** **Date: 25/08/2024.**

Corrigendum to Notice-2

The following corrigendum to tender document have been carried out in respect of Tender Last selling date, Tender closing date & Opening date of tender no. **54.01.1543.335.08.027.24**, Date: 11/06/2024, Opening Date: 28/08/2024 of this Procuring Entity:

SL. No:	Description of Corrigendum	Read	For
1.	Tender Last selling date	08/09/2024	27/08/2024
2.	Tender Closing date and Time	09/09/2024, 12.00 PM	28/08/2024, 12.00 PM
3.	Tender Opening date and Time	09/09/2024, 2.00 PM	28/08/2024, 2.00 PM

This corrigendum to tender document shall be treated as an integral part of the Tender Document. All other terms and conditions of the tender shall remain unaltered and unchanged.

This is issued with the approval of the Chief Controller of Stores, Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chattogram.

S(24)(182)

25-8-24
(Md Mizanur Rahman)
Assistant Controller of Stores (P-1)
For the Chief Controller of Stores
Bangladesh Railway
Pahartali, Chattogram.

GD- 271

No flowers

FROM PAGE 3

well-wishers not to come and exchange greetings with flowers and other stuff, as the country is going through a crisis, said sources at his office.

"The context of my taking charge is a bit different. The blood of the martyrs has not yet dried. Many students are screaming in pain. On the other hand, millions of people are living in dire straits due to the current flood situation in the country. As part of our sympathy to all of them, we request you refrain from any lavish arrangements, including flowers, at this time," Professor Niaz said.

A circular from the education ministry yesterday announced that President Md Shahabuddin, as chancellor of the university, appointed him under the Dhaka University Order, 1973.

He replaced Prof ASM Maksud Kamal, who resigned from the post of DU VC on August 10.

Prof Niaz was the former chairman of the Department of Development Studies at DU. He also was a pro-vice chancellor at Independent University, Bangladesh.

He has a distinguished career in academia and development management. He holds a PhD degree with distinction from the University of Wales Swansea and has earned numerous scholarships, including the UK Commonwealth Scholarship.

He subsequently pursued postdoctoral research at the University of Oxford, University College Swansea, and Asian Institute of Technology.

Prof Niaz also served as the Bangladesh Country Representative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Four AL leaders

FROM PAGE 5

accused attacked the police station and beat up police personnel.

A few law enforcers sheltered in many areas, but the attackers dragged them back to the police station and mercilessly beat them to death.

At least 15 police personnel were killed during the attack. Thirteen died on the spot, and two others died in hospital. Attackers also vandalised and torched the police station.

Enayetpur Police Station Officer-in-Charge Hasibullah Hasib said they have recorded the case and are investigating it.

"Police are trying to nab the culprits," he said.

HC scraps petition

FROM PAGE 5

Supreme Court lawyer Kamrul Hasan submitted the petition as a public interest litigation on August 20.

In the petition, he also requested the HC to form an inquiry committee to identify those responsible for formulating the "wrong curriculum" and to suspend the current curriculum.

"There are lots of errors in the curriculum and syllabus of secondary level education and the student's guardians have reportedly expressed concern with this issue," Kamrul Hasan told The Daily Star.

He also said he will again move the same petition before the HC later.

Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL)

Invitation for Tender

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the Authorized Agents/ Dealers of respective brands for supply, installation, configuration, and commissioning of **Firewalls, Routers, Switches and Network Monitoring Solutions** with required Hardware, OS, Software, and other ancillaries to Central Depository Bangladesh limited (CDBL) as per the RFP (Request for Proposal) provided by CDBL.
Tender documents may be collected from CDBL, Head Office, DSE Tower (Level-5), House#46, Road#21, Nikunja-2, Dhaka-1229 during office hours from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM from 01-09-2024 to 05-09-2024. Last date of submission of tender is 4:30 PM, 03-10-2024.

UTTARA BANK PLC.
PURCHASE & PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT, HEAD OFFICE, DHAKA

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Quotations are hereby invited from bonafied & experienced firms for **Procurement of several ICT Items i.e. hardware, accessories, hardware repair for Uttara Bank PLC.** Please visit www.uttarabank-bd.com/home/tender for details.

General Manager

Directorate General Defence Purchase
Ministry of Defence
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215
Web: www.dgdp.gov.bd
Email: adp5army1@dgdp.gov.bd

Tender Notice

1. Sealed Tenders in Local Currency are invited from bonafide manufacturer(s) /Supplier(s) (Enlisted Firms in DGDP) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh Army.

Ser No.	Name of Items & Qty	Schedule selling date		Tender opening date	Tender No.	Cost of I/T
1.	Pillow for JCO & OR, Oty-54,000 Nos.	From	To	18-09-24	219.205.23	5,000.00
		27-08-24	17-09-24			

2. Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (non-refundable) during office time between 0800 hour to 1300 hour. The Tender can be dropped latest by 1125 hour on opening date (18-09-2024) and shall be opened at 1130 hour on the specified date of opening in presence of all Tenderers (If present).

Dated: August 2024

Colonel
For Director General

আইএসপিআর/বিবিধ/২০২৪/৩৪০
২৭/০৮/২৪

GD- 275

Directorate General Defence Purchase
Ministry of Defence
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215
Web: www.dgdp.gov.bd
E-mail: ddp3navy@dgdp.gov.bd

Tender Notice

1. Sealed tender in Foreign currency is invited from bonafide Manufacturer/Dealer/Suppliers/ Importers (enlisted with DGDP) for supply of the following item for Bangladesh Navy:

S. No.	Name of item	Date of selling		Date of opening	Cost of tender schedule	Tender number	Currency
1	Inflatable Life Jacket (General Service), Qty: 1,500 Nos.	From	To	07-10-24 At 12:05	5,000.00	248.07.048.24 Dt. 22 Aug 24	Foreign
		27-08-24	06-10-24				

2. Tender schedule with detailed specification/condition will be available in this Directorate General on payment as per I/T selling rate (non-refundable) during office hours between 0800 hours to 1300 hours on the abovementioned date of selling. The tender can be dropped in the tender box latest by 1200 hours and the same will be opened at 1205 hours on the specified date of opening in the presence of the tenderers (if present).

Commander BN
For Director General

আইএসপিআর/বিবিধ /2024/341
27/08/28

GD- 276

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE JAIL SUPER
NOAKHALI DISTRICT JAIL
www.prison.noakhali.gov.bd.

Memo No. 58.04.7500.123.04.001.2024- 4119/6 Date: 27-08-2024

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal.

SL. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Goods	Publishing date & time	Closing Date & Time
01	**1011004**	Supply of Unnotamaner Moshur Dal (Mota) to Noakhali District Jail for the period of **October/2024 to March/2025**	25/08/2024 & 23:00	09/09/2024 & 13:00
02	**1011019**	Supply of Unnotamaner Moshur Dal (Saru) to Noakhali District Jail for the period of **October/2024 to March/2025**	25/08/2024 & 23:00	09/09/2024 & 13:15
03	**1011023**	Supply of Unnotamaner Cholar Dal to Noakhali District Jail for the period of **October/2024 to March/2025**	25/08/2024 & 23:00	09/09/2024 & 13:30

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to **09:00 on 09 September, 2024.**

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

29-8-28
(Md.Golam Dastagir)
Jail Super
Noakhali district Jail
Jailsupernoakhali@gmail.com

GD- 278

AUGUST 5-7

70 indigenous families attacked in the north

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

At least 70 families from the indigenous communities across five districts in the northern region have come under attack since the fall of the Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5.

The violence, which continued for three days, left 25 people injured and resulted in significant property damage.

The Adivasi Chhatra Janata, a student body representing the communities in Dinajpur, revealed the details during a press conference at the Dinajpur Press Club yesterday.

Ishwar Tudu, a leader of the organisation, presented the keynote address, detailing the extent of the attacks.

The violence occurred between August 5 and August 7, affecting the districts of Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, and Naogaon.

The attacks involved looting, vandalism, and arson.

In addition to the destruction of homes, the attackers also looted fish from ponds and damaged or stole crops, with total financial losses estimated at approximately Tk 2.5 crore.

Despite the severity of the attacks, no official cases have been filed yet.

The violence also included the defacement of the Shidhu-Kanu sculpture, a monument commemorating the historic Tevaga movement, located on the way to the Kantajew temple in Kaharol upazila, Dinajpur.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Amid incessant rain, pullers of rickshaw vans keep waiting for work while parking their vehicles on the side of the road. As there are very few people getting outside due to the downpour, they have been struggling to find passengers or other work. The photo was taken in the Boyra Bazar area of Khulna city recently.

PHOTO: **HABIBUR RAHMAN**

ACC forms panel to assist anti-graft operations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has formed a panel to maintain the ongoing anti-corruption operations and support the law enforcement agencies.

Md Shahriar, director general of ACC, disclosed this in a letter yesterday.

The panel will assist in seizing evidence and handling legal matters during search operations, the letter said.

The panel includes ACC Deputy Directors Debabrata Mondal, Md Humayun Kabir, Md Saiful Islam, and Mohammad Tajul Islam Bhuiyan, as well as assistant directors Muhammad Zafar Sadeq Shibli and Shoyeb Ibne Alam.

The panel was formed with the commission's approval, the ACC said.

The body will assist in searches with the ACC secretary's approval, the anti-graft watchdog added.

HC scraps petition on bringing edn reform

It says govt needs time for that

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday refused to accept a writ petition that sought its order on the government to reform the education system at the secondary school level.

The bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice Muhammad Mahbub Ul Islam dropped the petition, saying the interim government needs time to bring reforms in the education system.

No order should be passed on the government in this regard, the court said.

Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman opposed the writ petition, citing similar points.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Most KCC projects halted

Contractors go into hiding after AL govt's ouster

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

- Suspension of projects leave roads incomplete
- Contractors demand security
- Tk 468cr worth of projects remain unfinished

After the fall of the Awami League-government on August 5 following a mass uprising, Khulna City Corporation's mayor, most of the ward councillors, and pro-AL contractors fled.

As such, most of the ongoing projects of KCC have been halted since then.

KCC has been working on a Tk 823 crore project to develop the city's drainage system, and a Tk 607 crore project for renovation of the city's roads.

According to sources, most of the works of these projects were being implemented by pro-AL contractors. Also, it has been alleged that some of the works were being done by the mayor himself and some councillors anonymously using the licence and work orders to other contractors. With them now on the run, these projects have been lying suspended.

City residents expressed concerns that solution to Khulna's existing problems, including waterlogging and dilapidated roads, will now either take much longer to be solved, or will be left incomplete midway.

At least 23 of the KCC's 31 ward councillors were directly involved in some of these project works contractually.

Abdur Razzak from ward-25 said the renovation work of at least four major drains have been suspended for two weeks, exacerbating waterlogging.

AKM Kibria Hossain, a resident of ward 28, said local residents are now being compelled to cross the 2km concrete road from Jorakal Bazar to Rupsha on foot as it has been left half done.

According to KCC, around 50-70 percent works of the drainage and road development projects have so far been completed. However, unless the works resume soon, the projects may get delayed.

Other halted projects include renovation of the road in front of Kuet, and construction of a waste treatment plant in Shalua and Chitrali Market.

The remaining works for all these projects are worth around Tk 468 crore.

A ward councillor, who is also contactor of at least 12 development works, said wishing anonymity that he has been threatened by locals, who also vandalised his residence and office.

"Amid the lack of security, how am I going to oversee the works and complete

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

AUG 4 COP KILLINGS

Four AL leaders and 6,000 unnamed sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

A case was filed yesterday against four local Awami League leaders and around 6,000 unnamed individuals on charges of killing 15 police personnel at Enayetpur Police Station in Sirajganj on August 4.

The accused AL leaders are: AL's Enayetpur union unit President Ahmed Mostafa Khan Bachchu, Secretary Ajgar Ali, Khukni Union Parishad Chairman and also AL's union unit President Mulluk Chand, and Bhangabari Union Parishad Chairman Johurul Islam Bhuiyan.

Enayetpur Police Station Assistant Sub-Inspector Abdul Malek filed the case.

According to the case statement, the accused often forced the police to fulfil their illegal demands. On August 4, when police did not listen to them, the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Ensure safe env in edn institutions

Ministry directs DCs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Education Ministry has instructed district commissioners (DCs) to oversee the overall maintenance of a conducive environment in educational institutions under the current circumstances.

The ministry's Secondary and Higher Education Division issued an order in this regard yesterday.

The order stated that demands for the resignation or removal of heads and officials at some universities, colleges, and schools have led to unpleasant situations in various parts of the country.

"In some cases, teachers have been personally harassed, which caused a deterioration in law and order. Such a situation is unacceptable," the order reads.

At the university level, vice-chancellors, pro vice-chancellors, or other officials may resign on their own. If necessary, the chancellor can remove them according to the law.

The order also stated that the SHED or the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education can investigate and take necessary actions, including transfers, for heads or officials in government schools and colleges.

"Similarly, governing bodies or the DSHE can take action in the case of private educational institutions. In such cases, the relevant department or office will investigate and take action if there is a specific complaint against a teacher or official," it also said.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ
সেকশন-১৪, মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

পুনঃদরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী অনুযায়ী) এবং তৎসংশ্লিষ্ট সকল আইন ও বিধি মোতাবেক ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরে পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ এর লাইব্রেরীর জন্য বিভিন্ন প্রকার বইপত্র ও সাময়িকী ক্রয় কাজ উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে বাস্তবায়ন করার নিমিত্ত উপযুক্ত/যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন ঠিকাদার নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী/প্রকৃত নাগরিক ও সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন আগ্রহী প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে পুনঃদরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	:	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।
২.	সংস্থা	:	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
৩.	ক্রয়কারী সত্ত্বার নাম	:	রেক্টর, পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ।
৪.	পুনঃদরপত্র নম্বর ও তারিখ	:	স্মারক নং-৪৪.০১.০৪০০.০১২.০৭.৩৪.২০২৪/২৮৬৭, তারিখ: ২৭/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রি.।
৫.	পুনঃদরপত্র পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (O:M)
৬.	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	:	রাজস্ব বাজেট
৭.	পুনঃদরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তি, গ্রহণ উন্মুক্ত করণের স্থান	:	পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ, সেকশন-১৪, মিরপুর, ঢাকা।
৮.	পুনঃ দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	১০/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রি. অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত
৯.	আবেদনপত্র ও পুনঃদরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	১১/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রি. ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
১০.	পুনঃদরপত্র সিডিউল উন্মুক্ত করণের স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	:	পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ, সেকশন-১৪, মিরপুর, ঢাকা: ১১/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রি. ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা
১১.	পুনঃদরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা	:	যোগ্যতার শর্তাবলী : (১) হালনাগাদ বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (২) আয়কর সার্টিফিকেট এবং হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধের প্রত্যয়ন পত্র (৩) হালনাগাদ ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট (৪) দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি জারির পূর্ববর্তী ৬ মাসের ব্যাংক লেনদেনের হিসাব বিবরণী (৫) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের ০৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা সনদ (৬) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের কপি (৭) কালো তালিকাভুক্ত নয় মর্মে প্রত্যয়ন পত্র (৮) দরদাতার ০২ (দুই) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবিসহ বর্ণিত কাগজপত্র প্রথম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত হতে হবে।

	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ	দরপত্র জামানত (ফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)
১২.	পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ এর লাইব্রেরীর জন্য বিভিন্ন প্রকার বইপত্র ও সাময়িকী ক্রয়	চাহিদামোতাবেক	১৫,০০০/-	৫০০/-

১৩. বিশেষ নির্দেশনা :
★ পুনঃদরপত্র সংক্রান্ত যাবতীয় নির্দেশনা/শর্তাবলী টেন্ডার সিডিউলে উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে।
★ পুনঃদরপত্র জামানত/পে-অর্ডার পরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও অর্থ), পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ এর অনুকূলে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে।
★ পুনঃদরপত্রে উল্লিখিত যেকোন আইটেমের পরিমাণ বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
★ ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্বত্বাধিকারীর স্বাক্ষরযুক্ত প্যাডে আবেদন পূর্বক নির্ধারিত তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত পুনঃদরপত্র সিডিউল সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।
★ সীলগালা যুক্ত খামের উপর কাজের নাম উল্লেখ পূর্বক পুনঃদরপত্র জমা প্রদান করতে হবে। অন্যথায় পুনঃদরপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
★ সিডিউলে উল্লিখিত ক্রয় কাজ ফ্রেমওয়ার্ক পদ্ধতিতে চুক্তি সম্পাদন হবে।
★ পুনঃদরদাতা প্রতিষ্ঠানকে কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্তির পূর্বে ৩০০/-(তিনশত) টাকার নন জুডিশিয়াল স্ট্যাম্পে চুক্তি করতে হবে।
★ কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত যে কোন অথবা সকল পুনঃদরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের পূর্ণক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২৭.৮.২৪
(মো: ছিবগাত উল্লাহ, পিপিএম)
বিপি-৬৭৯৫০১০০৩৬
পরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও অর্থ)
পক্ষে/-রেক্টর
পুলিশ স্টাফ কলেজ বাংলাদেশ।

GD- 270

MURDER CASES

Menon, Inu placed on remand

STAR REPORT

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon was remanded for six days and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu for seven days yesterday in separate murder cases filed in Dhaka.

Menon, a key leader of the Awami League-led 14-Party Alliance, was remanded in the case over the death of garment worker Rubel during the mass uprising on August 5.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Saifur Rahman passed the order after investigation officer Mintu Chandra Banik, an inspector of Adabor Police Station, produced him before the court with a 10-day remand prayer, a sub-inspector working in the court told The Daily Star.

On August 22, Rafiqul Islam, father of the victim, filed a murder case with Adabor Police Station against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 147 others.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Release detained UPDF supporters

Demands Mikel Changma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

United People's Democratic Front's organiser Mikel Changma yesterday urged the interim government to release 29 supporters of the organisation and its affiliated bodies from jail.

Speaking at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club, Mikel Changma highlighted that while political prisoners in other regions are being released, UPDF leaders and activists in the Chittagong Hill Tracts remain incarcerated, with some detained for over five years.

Mikel presented an eight-point demand, including the formation of a special tribunal to investigate all murders and human rights violations in the CHT during what he described as "the fascist regime of Hasina".

He also called for the United Nations' involvement in the judicial process.

UPDF leader Mikel returned home on August 7,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
BANGLADESH DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC.
(A State Owned Commercial Bank)

Ref No : 06.3/
Date : 27/08/2024

Invitation For Tender

Tender is invited from the reputed Companies for Operation, Maintenance & Servicing of 04(Four) no's passenger lift in monthly payment basis for 03 (Three) years at BDBL Bhaban-2, 12 Karwanbazar, Dhaka-1215. Necessary information's are given below:

01.	Procuring Entity :	Real Estate Department, Bangladesh Development Bank PLC., Head Office, BDBL Bhaban (Level - 09), 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka - 1000.
02.	Procurement Method :	Open Tendering Method (OTM) of Public Procurement Rules, 2008 and The Public Procurement Act, 2006.
03.	Invitation for Tender No :	BDBL / RED / OTM / 2024 / 04
04.	Source of Funds :	Bank's own Fund.
05.	Brief Description of the Goods and Services :	Operation, Maintenance & Servicing of 04(Four) no's passenger lift in monthly payment basis for 03(Three) years at BDBL Bhaban-2, 12 Karwanbazar, Dhaka-1215.
06.	Name & Address of Receiving Tender Document :	Real Estate Department, Bangladesh Development Bank PLC., Head Office, BDBL Bhaban (Level - 09), 08, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka.
07.	Last Date and Time for Selling Tender Schedule	11/09/2024 up to Office Hour.
08.	Last Date and Time for Submission :	12/09/2024 Time : 12:00 PM
09.	Date, Time and Place for Tender Opening :	All Tenders will be opened at Real Estate Department, Head Office, Dhaka -1000 on 12/09/2024 at 12:30 PM (Intending Tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend at the time of opening of Tender)
10.	Eligibility of Tenderer :	1. The Tenderer must have 05 (Five) years of general experience in public/Private sector as Prime Contractor. 2. The Tenderer must have specific experience as Prime Contractor in providing non-consultant service of at least 02(Two) contracts of similar nature, complexity and methods/technology completed over a period of last 05(Five) years each contract with a value of at least Tk. 20.00 (Twenty) Lac. 3. The Tenderer must have minimum amount of liquid assets i.e. working capital or credit line(s) of Tk. 5.00 (Five) Lac. 4. The Tenderer must have ABC category Electrical & Supervisory license by name of own Company, Valid & up to date Trade License, TIN & Tax Return certificate, Tax Clearance Certificate, VAT registration certificate etc.
11.	Tender Security :	Tender Security of an amount of 1,85,000.00 (One Lac Eighty Five Thousand Taka only) will be required in the form of Pay Order favoring Bangladesh Development Bank PLC., which is refundable.
12.	Price of Tender Schedule :	Taka 1,000.00 (One Thousand Taka Only) in the form of Pay Order favoring Bangladesh Development Bank PLC. Which is Non Refundable.

Bangladesh Development Bank PLC. reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender either in part or full without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Md. Asaduzzaman
Deputy General Manager
Real Estate Department
✆ : 02 -223350689

GD- 274

How a family grabbed multiple banks

FROM PAGE 1

central bank dismantled the board of the Islami Bank to ensure good governance after the new interim government launched its efforts to fix the troubled sector as part of a broader reforms plan.

Alam is the chairman of First Security Islami Bank's board while his wife Farzana Parveen is a director. Their son Ahsanul Alam, daughter Maimuna Khanam, and son-in-law Belal Ahmed control the boards of Islami Bank, Global Islami Bank and Social Islami Bank respectively. Alam's brothers, sisters, and other relatives also sit on the boards of several banks.

The law bars a person with a significant shareholding in a bank from buying a substantial stake in another bank. The same rule applies to their family members and companies.

Alam, however, grabbed Islami Bank and Social Islami Bank in 2017 despite having significant shares of First Security Bank, and Union Bank.

A top official of the Bangladesh Bank confirmed that Alam's family received the central bank's approval to buy the stakes despite the banking regulator's obligation to block the process.

The law states that not more than three members of a family are allowed to hold the directorship of a bank. A family and their firms cannot acquire more than 10 percent of shares jointly.

However, besides the 30 percent stake in Islami Bank, Alam's family members and their firms together own about 22 percent of Social Islami Bank shares, 28 percent of First Security Islami Bank, and 30 percent of Global Islami Bank, according to the shareholding reports of the banks.

They also have 5 percent shares in each of Al-Arafah Islami Bank and Northern Insurance, and more than 70 percent in Aviva Finance and Union Bank each.

Shareholding data of Bangladesh Commerce Bank could not be obtained but the website of S Alam Group claims it owns the bank.

Toufic Ahmad Choudhury, director general of Bangladesh Academy for Securities Markets (BASM), described the control of Alam's family over the banks as "totally unacceptable".

Although legal restrictions were put in place to stop the family control in banks, S Alam had been allowed to wield its control over the banks for its own benefit, Choudhury said, referring to the loans taken by the Alam family and their relatives.

"The banking business is quite different. Depositors are the real owners of the banks," said Choudhury, also a former director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM).

An analysis of Islami Bank's financial reports shows that the Shariah-based bank provided about Tk 25,000 crore loans to Alam's relatives. Social Islami Bank showed nearly Tk 5,000 crore loans to them in its financial reports.

The other banks followed in the footsteps of these two banks. Officials of these banks, who requested anonymity, said the loans given to Alam's relatives were bigger than what official data shows.

The total amount could be above Tk 75,000 crore from Islami Bank alone, one of the officials said.

A top official of a bank said many directors abused their power to save themselves from becoming loan defaulters by rescheduling loans year after year. So the criteria for directors should be changed in such a way that will not allow them to have their loans rescheduled when they face a default.

Data also showed how the S Alam family's presence on the board affected the banks, all of which except Al-Arafah Islami Bank remain in the yellow zone – meaning their financial health is between "good" and "fragile".

Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said this is "the best example of how a single family controls the banking sector".

As the regulatory body, the Bangladesh Bank is responsible for allowing this to happen while the government gave S Alam a free rein over the banks by amending the laws, she said.

Despite repeated requests from analysts, parliament allowed the increasing presence of families on a bank's board. It doubled the number of members of a family allowed on a bank's board to four before reducing it to three amid huge pressure from analysts. On top of that, a director was allowed to remain on the board for 12 years.

"This is absurd," said Fahmida.

When many family members remain on a bank's board, they can influence the board for the benefit of people or organisations linked to them. In some cases, directors with a much lower stake also obtain such benefits.

For instance, Alam's relatives received loans above Tk 25,000 crore from Islami Bank officially while their contribution to its paid-up capital was around Tk 300 crore, according to the financial report of the bank.

It shows how high their gain is compared to their investment in the bank, Fahmida said.

The economist recommended amending the law further to allow only one member of a family on a bank's board and limiting a bank director's tenure to six years.

A top official of a leading private bank, who preferred not to be named, questioned the Bangladesh Bank's role in allowing the S Alam family to control so many banks. "What did the central bank do when the family was grabbing the banks? It was their responsibility to stop the family," he said.

The Daily Star tried to contact Saiful Alam via text message, but he did not reply. BB spokesman Mezbaul Haque did not receive phone calls for comment.

Lack of logistics key obstacle

FROM PAGE 1

and baby food worth Tk 35 lakh and another Tk 35 lakh for fodder.

Shahina Akhter, deputy commissioner (DC) of Feni told The Daily Star confirmed that she had received the relief materials but could not reach the remote areas. "Initially we could not distribute the materials in the remote areas as it was hard to reach the villages. But from today (Tuesday) we plan to distribute rice in every ward."

"We have already sent instructions to all UNOs accordingly," she said.

Tania Bhuiyan, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Fulgazi sub-district under Feni confirmed receiving about 250 tonnes of rice, 500 sacks of dry food and Tk 7.5 lakh as relief from the DC office. "We have been facing difficulties in sending relief to remote areas. But the army and navy are trying their best."

Apart from the government relief initiatives, armed forces air dropped around 48,000 packets of food among destitute people. Also, private volunteers distributed an estimated 60,000 packets of food, she said.

Considering that both government agencies and non-government organisations as well as volunteers were engaged in distributing disaster relief materials, the ministry directed deputy commissioners of the flood affected districts to coordinate efforts with units of the anti-discrimination student movement, army, navy, fire service and civil defence, medical teams and other volunteer units.

Local government officials of Noakhali and Laxmipur districts also said they were facing difficulties to distribute relief in remote areas.

Kabirhat UNO Mohammad Sarwar Uddin, under Noakhali district, said he received 96 tonnes of rice and Tk 4.5 lakh in cash for two lakh people affected by the flood. "But we are not able to distribute that in the remote areas due to a lack of boats," he told The Daily Star.

Subarnachar UNO Md Al Amin Sarkar said they had received 76 tonnes of rice and Tk 3.5 lakh. "We are trying to reach the remote areas," he said.

Lakkhipur Sadar UNO Arifur Rahman said they have so far received 126 tonnes of rice and Tk 4 lakh for people of 21 unions.

Raipur UNO Imran Khan said the government allocation was inadequate. "We are not getting relief from any non-government sources here. And we are not able to reach remote places away from roads because we don't have boats," he said.

Contacted, Fatikchhari UNO Mozammel Haque Chowdhury said flood waters receded in most of the areas in the upazila on Tuesday, adding, "Only two unions—Suabil and Harualchhari—are still under water."

While water had receded in many localities, some low laying areas still remain inundated, said Yamin Hossain, additional deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said that overall flood situation was improving as water level is receding in all major rivers in eastern and northeastern Bangladesh.

Petition filed for reviewing SC verdict

FROM PAGE 12

system was introduced through political consensus and thus became a part of the constitution's basic structure, which cannot be scrapped.

The Appellate Division verdict, which cancelled the 13th amendment, is self-contradictory as the court in its short verdict said that the next two national elections (10th and 11th parliamentary polls) could be held under the caretaker government system, but this was not mentioned in the full judgement, the lawyer said.

Replying to a question, he said if the Appellate Division grants the review petition after holding a hearing, the caretaker government system will be reinstated.

On Sunday, Appellate Division Chamber Judge Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam allowed the five citizens to file the review petition.

The chamber judge passed the order after the petitioners filed an application seeking permission to lodge the review petition.

The four other citizens are Tofail Ahmed, M Hafizuddin Khan, Md Jobirul Hoque Bhuiyan and Zahrah Rahman.

The petitioners in the review petition said that the sole purpose of the 13th Amendment Act was to ensure democracy by holding free and fair elections under a nonparty caretaker government which would be in charge for only 90 days, and accordingly, the 13th Amendment became an essential part of the basic structure of the constitution.

They said that the right to vote in public elections is a fundamental feature of the constitution, which cannot be curtailed by a judgment of the Appellate Division; and furthermore, free and fair elections are a part of the basic structure of the constitution and democracy. Hence, the impugned SC judgment, which declared the 13th Amendment Act void and ultra vires the constitution, is liable to be reviewed.

The petitioners also argued that direct consequence of the abolition of the nonparty caretaker government system through the impugned judgment was three consecutive failed elections in 2014, 2018 and 2024. This not only destroyed the foundation of democracy, but also led to the politicisation and manipulation of the judiciary. Accordingly, the circumstances that have emerged as a result of the student-mass revolution leading to the overthrowing of the government on August 5, 2024, warrant a review of the impugned judgment to ensure a democratic transition and a peaceful handover of power.

A seven-judge full bench of the Appellate Division, headed by then chief justice ABM Khairul Haque, by a majority view on May 10, 2011, declared the 13th amendment null and void.

Modi's tweet and a question

FROM PAGE 1

Admittedly, there were attacks on Hindus immediately following the fall of Sheikh Hasina's autocratic regime on August 5. The minority groups had unfortunately fallen victim to bigots and brigands who exploited the brief absence of law enforcement agencies. That was immediately addressed, with citizens' groups including madrassa students and Muslim clerics -- in the temporary absence of the police -- coming forward to guard places of worship and homes of fellow Bangladeshis, whether Hindu or Buddhist, in a show of communal harmony that has done us proud.

Furthermore, these attacks targeting religious minorities subsided within a few days of the flare-up and there has not been a single such incident reported over the last week. But the attacks should never have happened in the first place and we must make our utmost effort that it never occurs again.

The timing and context of the Indian premier raising it with the US president makes it difficult to understand his rationale for doing so. India is perceived to be one of Sheikh Hasina's chief enablers in legitimising rigged elections and strengthening her misrule. As such, anti-India sentiment runs rather high among Bangladeshis at the moment.

More recently, Bangladesh's eastern districts along with India's Tripura and Assam, have been facing one of the worst floods in decades. It was also on August 26 that there was news of the Farakka Barrage opening all its gates to let the water through, which is reportedly normal procedure.

It was in this context that Prime Minister Modi raised his concerns over a religious minority before even recognising the plight of millions of people affected by the floods. This can only create further misunderstanding between neighbours at a time when we desperately need to improve relations with each other.

বাংলাদেশ পেট্রোলিয়াম এক্সপ্লোরেশন এন্ড প্রোডাকশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (বাপেক্স)
BAPEX
Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Co. Ltd (BAPEX)
Foreign Purchase Department, Administration Division
BAPEX Bhaban (Level-4), 4, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh

"শিল্পে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস গৃহস্থালীতে বিকল্প জ্বালানী"

"বিদ্যুৎ ও জ্বালানি নিরাপত্তা সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রাধিকার"

Invitation for Tender (IFT)

1	Ministry Division	:	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/ Energy & Mineral Resources Division.
2	Agency	:	Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla)
3	Company	:	Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Company Limited (BAPEX).
4	Procuring entity name	:	General Manager, Administration Division, BAPEX
5	Procuring entity district	:	Dhaka.
6	Invitation Ref. No	:	BAPEX/ADMIN/INT/TEN-1257/2024, Dated 25-08-2024
7	Invitation for	:	Procurement of Mechanical Spare Parts for ZJ50DBS Rig for Zakiganj-1 Work Over Well.
KEY INFORMATION			
8	Procurement method	:	One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method (OSTETM), International Competitive Tender (ICT).
FUNDING INFORMATION			
9	Budget and source of funds	:	BAPEX Own fund, Under Cash Foreign Exchange.
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
10	Division name/project name	:	Engineering Division
11	Last selling date of tender	:	14-10-2024 at 15.00 hrs (BST).
12	Place of tender selling	:	a) Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Co. Ltd. (BAPEX), Accounts & Finance Division (Level-3), BAPEX Bhaban, 4, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215. b) Petrobangla, Petrocenter, 3, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215. c) Titas Gas T & D Company Ltd. 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.
13	Date & time of selling of tender document	:	Tender documents will be available from 29-08-2024 to 14-10-2024 between 10.00 hrs to 15.00 hrs. BST on all working days (except government holidays).
14	Tender closing date & time	:	15-10-2024 at 11.00 Hrs. (BST).
15	Tender opening date & time	:	15-10-2024 at 11.30 Hrs. (BST).
16	Place of tender receiving & opening	:	Foreign Purchase Department, Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Co. Ltd. (BAPEX), BAPEX Bhaban (Level-4), 4, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
17	Eligibility of tenderer	:	i) Manufacturer must have at least 6 (six) years experience and relevant ISO/API Certificate. ii) Bonafide Suppliers having minimum 6 (six) years experience of supplying similar items (at least 3 (Three) consignments of similar goods for last 5 (Five) years) to IOC or any other well reputed Oil & Gas Exploration related Companies Locally/Internationally. iii) Suppliers/Manufacturers of the countries which have no diplomatic relation with Bangladesh are not eligible for this tender.
18	Brief description of goods	:	Lot-1: Spare Parts for DW, RT, HPU, Pneumatic control system & others. Lot-2: Spare Parts for Caterpillar & Volvo Engine. Lot-3: Spare Parts for solid Control Equipment. Lot-4: Spare Parts for National Mud Pump.
19	Price of tender document	:	Bangladeshi Taka 5,000.00 or USD 45.00 (non-refundable).
20	Procuring entity details	:	General Manager (Administration, BAPEX (Level 5), BAPEX Bhaban, 4, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.
21	Address of the official inviting tender	:	General Manager (Administration) BAPEX (Level 5), BAPEX Bhaban, 4, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.
22	Special instructions	:	a) Tender must remain valid for 120 (one hundred twenty) days from the date of closing of the tender. b) Time for completion of delivery 120 (one hundred twenty) days. c) Mode of Shipment: By Sea d) Amount of tender security for Lot-1: USS 1,750.00 or BDT 2,06,000.00, Lot-2: USS 1,160.00 or BDT 1,37,000.00, Lot-3: USS 1,700.00 or BDT 200,000.00, and Lot-4: USS 4,100.00 or BDT 483,000.00 or any equivalent amount of freely convertible currency in the form of Bank Guarantee or Pay Order issued by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh or from any reputable foreign bank duly endorsed by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh located in Dhaka with full obligation and liabilities. e) The tender security must remain valid for 148 (one hundred forty-eight) days from the date of closing of the tender. f) If tender opening day happens to fall on any holiday or any unavoidable circumstances such as strike, civil commotion, Govt. holiday etc. tenders shall be opened at the same hours on the first subsequent working day. g) This tender notice will also be available at Bapex website: www.bapex.com.bd and Petrobangla website: www.Petrobangla.org.bd and CPTU website. www.cptu.gov.bd
23	This tender will be conducted as per The Public Procurement Act-2006 & Public Procurement Rules-2008.		
24	The procurement entity reserves the right to accept or reject in part or full of any or all tenders at any stage without assigning any reasons whatsoever.		

GD-272

General Manager (Admin.)

Bangladesh Bank
Common Services Department-2
(Mechanical Engineering Wing)
Head Office, Dhaka-1000.

Invitation for Tender (Goods & related works) through Web.		
01.	Procuring Entity	Common Services Department-2, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka- 1000.
02.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
03.	Invitation ref. No. & Date	CSD-2(MES): 11/2(lift)/2024-40 Date: 27/08/2024
04.	Source of Funds	Bangladesh Bank's own fund.
05.	Name of the work	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 1000 Kg Capacity 01 (One) No. Passenger lift including all other accessories at Bangladesh Bank, Rajshahi Office, Rajshahi.
06.	Address of the web for submission e-tender.	From web: www.bangladeshbank.org.bd www.bangladeshbank-bank.org (e-Tender)
07.	Last date & time e-tenders through web	15/09/2024 on or before 3:00PM.
08.	Last Date & Time and Name & Address of the office for receiving Original tender security and other documents	15/09/2024 on or before 3: 15 PM. Director (Engineering-E/M), Common Services Department-2 (7th floor of 30^{th} storied Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka-1000.
09.	Tender opening Date & Time	15/09/2024 at 3:30 P.M.
10.	Name & Address of the office Opening Tender.	Director (Engineering-E/M), Common Services Department-2 (7th floor of 30^{th} storied Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka-1000. (intending tenders or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend the tender opening).
11.	Eligibility of the Tenderer	(a) Tenderer shall have at least 07(Seven) years of overall business experience in the supply and installation of mechanical machineries. (b) Tenderer shall have a sole agent/ distributorship of the proposed lift. (c) Tenderer shall have specific experience for supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of the proposed brand lift installed in any Govt./ Semi-Govt./ Autonomous organization worth not less than Tk. 50(Fifty) Lac, in a single contract in the last 05(five) years. (d) The minimum amount of liquid asset i.e. working capital or credit line(s) of the Tenderer shall be Tk. 55(Fifty Five) Lac only. In case of credit facilities, Bank shall ensure that the above mentioned credit limit will be given if the said work is awarded to the contractor. (e) The Tenderer shall have to furnish the certificate in this respect from an officer not below the rank of Executive Engineer or equivalent and shall meet all other criteria, terms & conditions as specified in the tender documents without which the tender will not be considered.
12.	Tender Security	Tender Security amounting BDT 1,50,000 (Taka One Lac Fifty Thousand) only will be required in the form of Pay Order/ Bank Draft/ Bank Guarantee in favour of Director (Engineering-E/M), Common Services Department-2, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.
13.	Work's completion Time	06(Six) months from the date of Award of Contract.
14.	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Sudhangshu Kumar Sarker, Director (Engineering-E/M), Common Services Department-2 (7th floor, 30^{th} storied Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka-1000.
15.	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone: 88-02-9530490, Fax: +88-02953032.
16.	Special Instructions	(i) The Tenderer shall submit the tender through Bangladesh Bank Website (e-Tendering) & shall have a valid e-mail address for participating in e-Tendering. (ii) Original PO/BD/BG as Tender Security has to be send to Director (Engineering-E/M), Common Services Department-2 within stipulated date and time of TDS. (iii) Scanned copy of the Tender Security shall be submitted with the tender through web. (iv) Tenderer shall submit the documentary evidence etc. (attested or original whichever necessary) at the time of Tender opening or when required, failing which the Tender may be considered as non-responsive. (v) Tenderer shall duly fill in the Form PG-1 (Tender Submission Letter) and Form PG-4 (Tenderer Information sheet) as per format given in Tender Document. (vi) PG-1 form will be completed and signed by the Authorized Signatory on the Letter-Head Pad, attached by scanning during submitting tender and original will have to send to Director (Engineering-E/M), CSD-2 at scheduled time as per TDS. (vii) Furnishing of any false, misleading documents shall result in rejection of the tender and may lead to action under Rules 127 of PPR 2008. (viii) All sorts of Security and Safety measures shall be carried out by the Contractor during execution of the work. (ix) Bangladesh Bank reserves all right to accept or reject any or all the tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. No claim will be entertained in this regard.

DCP : 48/2024-2234
Date : 27-08-2024

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

(Sudhangshu Kumar Sarker)
Director (Engineering-E/M)
Common Services Department-2
Phone:- 9530490

GD-277

Russia-France ties hit new low after arrest of tech boss

REUTERS, *Paris*

Relations between Moscow and Paris have reached a nadir following the arrest of Russian-born Telegram boss Pavel Durov, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said yesterday, after the tech billionaire's detention was extended until Wednesday.

Durov, who has French as well as Russian nationality, was arrested near Paris over the weekend as part of an investigation into crimes related to images of child sex abuse, drug trafficking and fraudulent transactions on the platform, French prosecutors said on Monday.

It remains unclear if he knew about the threat of arrest in France. Durov's French lawyer did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

Durov's arrest has plunged Moscow-Paris ties to their lowest level, Lavrov said, capping months of deteriorating relations between the two nations.

French authorities accused Russia of trying to destabilise it ahead of the Paris Olympics in response to its more hawkish stance on the Ukraine war - claims Russia has denied.

Durov's detention was extended by 48 hours late on Monday, a spokesperson for the Paris prosecutor's office said yesterday. After that, prosecutors will either need to charge or release him.

With close to 1 billion users, Telegram is particularly influential in Russia, Ukraine and the republics of the former Soviet Union. It presents itself as a haven for free speech, but is also widely used by far-right, anti-vax and conspiracist movements, as well as political dissidents.

Without providing evidence, Vyacheslav Volodin, the chairman of Russia's State Duma, the lower house of parliament, earlier said the United States, through France, was attempting to exert control over Telegram.

Police detain an activist as they march towards the state secretariat demanding the resignation of Mamata Banerjee, chief minister of India's West Bengal state, in Kolkata yesterday. Police in India fired tear gas and water cannon, as they clashed with thousands of protesters seeking justice for a doctor who was raped and murdered in Kolkata this month. More than 100 people were detained. PHOTO: **AFP**

Russia pounds Ukraine

AFP, *Kyiv*

Russia fired a wave of attack drones and missiles at Ukraine that killed at least four people, authorities said yesterday after the second night of heavy strikes across the war-battered nation.

The overnight barrage came a day after the Kremlin launched one of its largest-ever aerial attacks on Ukraine, which targeted energy facilities and killed several people.

Ukraine's air force yesterday said it downed half of the 10 missiles and 60 of the 81 Iranian-designed attack drones launched from several regions of Russia and from occupied-Crimea.

"Unfortunately, despite the effective work of our air defence systems, four people were killed and 16 were wounded," President Volodymyr Zelensky said in a post on social media.

He said rescue work was ongoing at the impact sites and vowed a response to the attacks.

"Crimes against humanity cannot be committed with impunity," he said.

AFP journalists in the capital Kyiv heard air raid sirens echo over the city throughout the night as well as an explosion, likely from air defence systems.

Local authorities said earlier yesterday that two people had been killed in the southeastern Zaporizhzhia region and two in the central city of Kryvyi Rig after a missile struck a hotel.

The Russian attacks on Monday triggered widespread blackouts and condemnation from Ukraine's allies in Europe and the US.

Russia said the attack had targeted infrastructure linked to the Ukrainian military. NATO member Poland said its airspace was violated during the barrage, probably by a drone.

Since invading in February 2022, Russia has launched repeated large-scale drone and missile attacks on Ukraine, including punishing strikes on energy facilities.

In Kyiv, Ukraine's electricity grid operator said that emergency blackouts would be applied throughout the day to reduce pressure on the grid following the fresh attacks that damaged energy infrastructure nationwide.

"Ukraine's power system is currently recovering from nine massive Russian attacks, with a power deficit and emergency and scheduled repairs underway at power facilities," Ukrenergo said in a statement, urging Ukrainians to reduce their electricity consumption.

The bombardment comes as Ukrainian forces are pushing an offensive in Russia's border region of Kursk, a surprise operation that has seen Kyiv gain swathes of territory in three weeks.

The governor of Russia's Belgorod region, which borders Kursk and Ukraine, yesterday said he was aware of reports the Ukrainian army had tried to cross the border.

Zelensky said late Monday that Ukraine's surprise cross-border incursion into Kursk region launched on August 6 was partially to "compensate" for Kyiv's inability to strike deeper into Russian territory.

He has been appealing to Ukraine's allies to allow his forces to use Western-supplied weapons to strike targets inside Russian territory as part of efforts to thwart more aerial bombardments.

Despite Ukraine's push inside Kursk, which Kyiv hoped would divert Russian forces from the front line in the east of the war-battered country, Moscow has been making steady gains.

Excessive heat

FROM PAGE 12

flames," the official told The Daily Star at 6:10pm.

He said a team of engineers from the Public Works Department (PWD) visited the factory premises in the afternoon to make an assessment of the damage, but they could not enter the building.

Alauddin said they will not launch a rescue operation until they are given the go-ahead by the expert team.

Saiful Islam, sub-divisional engineer of PWD in Narayanganj, who accompanied the team, said, "The building became very risky as parts of it collapsed and there were some fires."

He said they will visit the factory site again today to decide if it is safe for the firefighters to conduct a rescue operation.

Anwarul Haque, assistant director of fire service, in the morning said, "We managed to reach a staircase on the ground floor and search the roof of the building, but found no one there."

Visiting the factory premises in the afternoon, Narayanganj Deputy Commissioner Mahmudul Haque said the fire service will launch a rescue operation in the quickest possible time.

He said the building had a large stock of sulfur, rubber, plastic, and other raw materials for production of tyres.

The DC said an investigation cell will be formed to prepare a list of the missing.

He said the district administration yesterday formed an eight-member inquiry committee, headed by Narayanganj Additional District Magistrate Hamidur Rahman, to investigate the incident. It has representatives from fire service, Power Division and the police.

LIST OF MISSING PEOPLE

Students started preparing a list of the missing people since noon yesterday. Family members and relatives of 126 missing persons reported to the students till 6:00pm, said Mahima Mir Ripa, a student of Government Murapara College.

She said though the fire broke out on Sunday night, they did not find anyone compiling a list of the missing people till Tuesday morning.

Holding photographs and national identity cards of the missing persons near the factory, their relatives were looking for them, Mahima said.

"Please find my brother alive or dead," said Rafiqul Islam Ratan, brother of Abdul Motaleb, 40, at the main gate to the factory holing Motaleb's NID card and a photo.

Motaleb had rushed to the factory looking for his teenage son Yasin Gazi, a worker of the factory.

Yasin, however, returned home later.

The DC said Rupganj upazila administration was compiling a list of the missing people. He said they will also collect the list being prepared by the students.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Superintendent
Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital.
E-mail: chittagong@hospi.dghs.gov.bd

Memo no: CGH/Tender/2024-2025/Non-MSR (Diet/ Non-Diet)/2310 Date: 27/08/2024.

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from experienced Contractors/ Suppliers / Distributors to supply Non-MSR (Diet/ Non-Diet) goods for CGH in the fiscal 2024-2025. As per PPA-2006 & PPR-2008 (with all corrigendum); Terms and conditions are as follow(s):

KEY INFORMATION				
1	Ministry/ Division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.		
2	Agency	Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital.		
3	Procuring Entity Name, Designation & Contact details	Dr. Ajoy Das, Superintendent, Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital. E-mail: chittagong@hospi.dghs.gov.bd; Mobile: 01701-248197.		
4	Procuring Entity Code & District	GOB, Chattogram.		
5	Invitation for	Procurement of Non-MSR (Diet/ Non-Diet) goods for Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital in the fiscal year 2024-2025.		
6	Tender Ref. No. & date	CGH/Tender/2024-2025/Non-MSR (Diet/ Non-Diet)/2310, Dated: 27-08-2024.		
7	Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (National). Item-by-item.		
8	Budget and source of Funds	GOB in Bangladeshi Taka. Code: 127-0210-111140		
9	Tender Notice Publication Date	28-08-2024.		
10	Tender Schedule Selling Starting Date and Time	28-08-2024 During office hours.		
11	Tender Last Selling Date and Time	24-09-2024, 12:00 P.M		
12	Tender Dropping & Closing Date and Time	Dropping date: 25-09-2024, Dropping time from 09.00 A.M to 12.00 P.M, Closing time: 12.01 P.M		
13	Tender Opening Date and Time	25-09-2024 at 1.30 P.M		
NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE OFFICE'S				
14	(a) Selling Tender Documents	Accounts Officer, Office of the Superintendent, Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital.		
	(b) Receiving Tender Documents	1 Office of the Superintendent, Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital. 2 Officer In-charge, Kotowali Thana, Chattogram Metropolitan police.		
	(c) Tender Documents Opening Place	Office of the Superintendent, Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital.		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
15	Bidders Eligibility	**Details in Tender Booklet.**		
Description of Groups, Price of Tender Document, Tender Tecurity etc.				
16	Sl..	Description of Group	Price of Tender Document in BDT by treasury challan (nonrefundable) Code no-1-2711-0000-2366	Tender Security in BDT (Pay Order to be submitted with the tender booklet in favor of the Superintendent, Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital). **Bank guarantee is not acceptable.**
	1	Diet Goods	2,000.00 (Per Schedule)	3,00,000.00
	2	Linen item cleaning for patient	1,000.00 (Per Schedule)	1,50,000.00
	3	Printing and binding, Cleaning and washing items, other stationery, Computers and accessories & Electrical equipment goods	1,000.00 (Per Schedule)	1,00,000.00
17	Description of Related Services	**Details in Tender Booklet.**		

(a) Corrigendum, if necessary, in future will be a part of this notice. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender without assigning any reason whatsoever.
(b) If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is disturbed under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.

27/08/24
(Dr. Ajoy Das)
Superintendent (Additional Charge)
Chattogram 250 Bedded General Hospital.
E-mail: chittagong@hospi.dghs.gov.bd; Phone: 031-616786.

GD- 266

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপার এর কার্যালয়
ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-২, মোগরখাল, ভোগড়া, বাইপাস, বাসন, গাজীপুর।

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

স্মারক নং- ১৫২৩/ই তারিখ- ২৭/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।

২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের পুলিশ সদস্যদের পোশাক সেলাই ও রিবন সরবরাহ (আনুসাঙ্গিক) এবং ২য় কোয়ার্টারের রেশন সামগ্রী (ভোজ্যতেল সয়াবিন, মশুর ডাল, জ্বালানী কাঠ, পোলাওয়ের চাল, গম পেষাই করে আটা সরবরাহ, রেশন সামগ্রী পরিবহন, কুলি সরবরাহ ও চিনি) সরবরাহ/ক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে দরপত্র পিপিআর/২০০৬, পিপিআর/২০০৮, পিপিআর/২০১০ ও তত্বীয় সংশোধিত ২০১৬ অনুসারে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তসাপেক্ষে ঠিকাদার নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী, সরবরাহকারী/ঠিকাদারের নিকট হতে নিজস্ব প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্যাডে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।			
২.	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।			
৩.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	পুলিশ সুপার ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-২, গাজীপুর।			
৪.	কি কারণে দরপত্র আহবান	ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-২, গাজীপুরের পুলিশ সদস্যদের পোশাক সেলাই ও রিবন সরবরাহ (আনুসাঙ্গিক) এবং ত্রৈমাসিক ভিত্তিতে রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয় প্রক্রিয়া সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে।			
৫.	দরপত্র সূত্র নং ও তারিখ	স্মারক নং- ইন্ডাঃ পুঃ-২, গাজীঃ/টেন্ডার-০২/২০২৪/১৫২৩/ই, তাং- ২৭/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।			
৬.	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র।			
৭.	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	রাজস্ব খাত/(জি.ও.বি.)			
৮.	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি পত্রিকায় প্রকাশের তারিখ	২৯/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ এর মধ্যে যেকোন ০১ (এক) দিন।			
৯.	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	১৮/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত)।			
১০.	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের তারিখ ও সময়	১৯/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ বেলা ঃ ১২.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ।			
১১.	দরপত্র বাক্স খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১৯/০৯/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ বেলা ১৪.০০ ঘটিকায়।			
১২.	সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী অফিস (শুধু মাত্র রেশন সামগ্রী)	০১। পুলিশ সুপার এর কার্যালয়, ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-২, গাজীপুর। ০২। এ্যাডিশনাল ইন্সপেক্টর জেনারেল, ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স, উত্তরা, ঢাকা।			
১৩.	আইটেম	পরিমাণ (টন)	দরপত্রের মূল্য অফেরৎযোগ্য (টাকা)	নিরাপত্তা জামানত ফেরৎযোগ্য (টাকা)	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময়সীমা
১৪.	ভোজ্যতেল সয়াবিন (উন্নতমানের)	চাহিদা মোতাবেক	৭৫০/-	৫০,০০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
১৫.	মশুর ডাল (উন্নতমানের ছোট দানা-অফিস নমুনা অনুসারে)	চাহিদা মোতাবেক	৭৫০/-	৫০,০০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
১৬.	জ্বালানী কাঠ (উন্নতমানের ও শুকনা)	চাহিদা মোতাবেক	৫০০/-	২০,০০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
১৭.	পোলাওয়ের চাল (উন্নতমানের)	চাহিদা মোতাবেক	৩০০/-	৫,০০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
১৮	গম পেষাই করে আটা সরবরাহ	-	৩০০/-	১০,০০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
১৯.	রেশন সামগ্রী পরিবহন	-	৩০০/-	১০,০০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
২০.	কুলি সরবরাহ/(লোডিং-আনলোডং)	-	২০০/-	৫০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
২১.	চিনি (উন্নতমানের)	চাহিদা মোতাবেক	৭৫০/-	৫০,০০০/-	(অক্টোবর/২০২৪ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত)
২২.	পোশাক সেলাই ও রিবন সরবরাহ (আনুসাঙ্গিক)	-	৫০০/-	২০,০০০/-	(২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছর)
২৩.	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	০১। হালনাগাদ ব্যবসায়িক বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স ০২। আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র ০৩। ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদপত্র ০৪। হালনাগাদ ব্যাংক স্বচ্ছলতা সনদপত্র ০৫। অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা যাহা সিডিউলে উল্লেখ আছে।			
২৪.	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম ও পদবী	মোহাম্মদ সারওয়ার আলম বিপিএম, পুলিশ সুপার।			
২৫.	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	E-mail: Ip2.sp@police.gov.bd			
২৬.	নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।				
২৭.	কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যেকোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।				
২৮.	দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত যেকোন আইটেমের পরিমাণ বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে।				
২৯.	দরপত্র পিপিআর/২০০৬, পিপিআর/২০০৮, পিপিআর/২০১০ ও তত্বীয় সংশোধিত ২০১৬ মোতাবেক সম্পাদিত হবে।				
৩০.	সিডিউল ক্রয়ের সময় বিজ্ঞপ্তির পেপার কাটিং সঙ্গে আনতে হবে।				

২৭.০৮.২৪
পুলিশ সুপার
ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-২, গাজীপুর।
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GD-264

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Stop police culture of implicating rivals

Fabricated FIRs, arrests without evidence deplorable

After the fall of a repressive political regime, we have entered a new era of governance. However, police still seem to be trapped in the old culture of looking at things through a partisan lens. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, police are arresting Awami League leaders and activists as accused in cases they had filed before August 5, when the regime fell, although it was BNP-Jamaat men and general protesters who were initially accused in the First Information Reports (FIR) of those cases.

The newspaper cited 34 such cases filed between July 17 and August 1 relating to the murder of 64 people, where BNP-Jamaat men and protesters had been shown as accused. The initial FIRs of three other cases filed by victims' families also mentioned the same coterie of suspects, although they later claimed they didn't file those FIRs. For example, the mother of one victim, who was fatally shot on July 16 in the New Market area, denied accusing BNP-Jamaat men although the initial FIR implicated them. But after the arrest of Awami League leaders Anisul Huq and Salman F Rahman on August 14, a revised FIR was submitted to court replacing the names of previous suspects with "unidentified accused". Anisul Huq, Salman F Rahman, and another person were also shown arrested and taken on remand under that case.

This indicates that police did not carry out due diligence and probe into the killings before arresting anyone. Moreover, they just randomly replaced the accused, calling the whole exercise into question. Such laxity only weakens the legal basis of court cases and denies victims their right to a proper trial. At the same time, there is a risk that actual perpetrators will go scot-free. Besides, the plethora of cases being filed against Awami League leaders and former MPs and ministers without evidence is making a farce of the judicial system, with legal experts saying these cases will not last in court or even pass the initial stage.

What's equally concerning here is the police's culture of always accusing the opposition. Before August 5, it was BNP-Jamaat men who were their favourite scapegoats, and now it is AL men. This is not only undermining the spirit of the anti-discrimination movement that led the mass uprising; it is also eroding public confidence in police. When discussions of freeing police force from the shackles of politicalisation are going on, the above pattern of police behaviour shows where the priorities of any reform initiative should be. The legal system must not be used as a tool of retribution under any circumstance. Rather, to ensure justice, police must investigate any cases without bias. They must come out of their mindset of appeasing those in power, and instead vow their loyalty to the people.

We need better data governance

For success in modern times, there is no alternative to reliable data

Data discrepancies among different government departments continue to be a significant concern, with the most recent mismatch arising in revenue collection and expenditure figures. According to a report in this daily, data from the finance ministry showed that Tk 277,925 crore was collected during the July-April period of FY23-24, while the National Board of Revenue (NBR) reported collecting Tk 289,376 crore, resulting in a discrepancy of Tk 11,451 crore. Similarly, regarding expenditure under the Annual Development Programme (ADP), the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) estimated that ministries and divisions had spent Tk 125,315 crore during July-April of FY23-24. However, the finance ministry's data shows an expenditure of Tk 92,126 crore, which is Tk 33,189 crore lower than the IMED's figure.

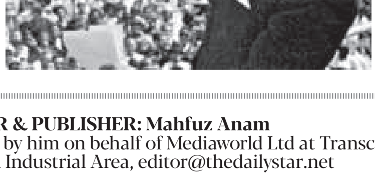
Last year, a similar discrepancy was observed between the tax collection figures published by the finance ministry and the NBR—a Tk 4,031 crore difference for July-April of FY22-23. Additionally, the ADP spending data showed a gap of Tk 41,136 crore between IMED and finance ministry figures. Apparently, the ministry calculates tax receipts based on reports from the Office of the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), while the tax administration accounts for revenue collection by including outstanding dues. This, officials say, is a major reason for the gap. But why are different departments using different methods of calculation? Why haven't they developed a uniform system of data evaluation that would ensure accuracy?

In April, Bangladesh Bank discovered that exports during July-April of FY23-24 were nearly $14 billion less than the shipment value of goods previously reported by the Export Promotion Bureau. The sheer margin of difference shocked everyone. These discrepancies and others highlight the poor state of data governance in the country. As economists have noted, if the finance ministry does not receive accurate spending data, it hampers the process of debt planning. Similar issues arise with other data inaccuracies that we seem to encounter frequently.

Given the circumstances, government institutions need to place greater emphasis on proper data governance. A systemic change to streamline the process has become essential so that flawed data doesn't lead to flawed policies. Experts say data mismatches may occur for two reasons—deliberate manipulation or accounting errors. There is strong suspicion that previous governments often deliberately manipulated data to enhance their image. We, therefore, hope that the interim government will take comprehensive actions to improve data governance among all relevant public institutions.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Civil rights march on Washington



On this day in 1963, some 200,000 people marched on Washington, DC, a high point of the civil rights movement, especially remembered for the famous "I Have a Dream" speech of Martin Luther King, Jr.

A good national address to start with

Tanim Ahmed
is a journalist at The Daily Star.

TANIM AHMED

The chief adviser's much-awaited address to the nation came a little over two weeks after Dr Muhammad Yunus had taken over the helm of Bangladesh under unique circumstances. The Nobel peace laureate was on his way back from the Paris Olympics when people back home had already chosen him to lead the interim government. It rarely happens that a leader is chosen by national consensus because of adulation and respect. That was three weeks ago. In the meantime, there were a couple of questions that made the rounds: the interim government's mandate and tenure.

The Yunus-led government is a result of a student protest for reform that turned into an anti-government campaign and culminated in a people's uprising that toppled an iron-clad regime of 15 years. Sheikh Hasina's dictatorial regime had destroyed the institutions necessary for a functional state with respect for law and order. The 84-year-old professor of economics, renowned around the world for his social business concept, was a victim of the previous regime himself. Hence, reforms were always going to be a priority for the incumbents. There was a slight indication to the nature of reforms as Yunus mentioned them briefly to a reception of diplomats earlier this month, and some isolated mentions from some of the advisers. But this was the first time that the chief adviser elaborately laid out his vision of the reforms, for which he must be commended.

Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus addressed the nation on August 25, 2024.

PHOTO: **PID**

Dr Yunus also touched upon certain challenges and urged the people to bear with him and have patience. As for the reforms, he predictably stressed on judiciary, law and order, administration, Election Commission, and the media. But the de facto prime minister also mentioned agriculture, health, and education. He mentioned a police commission and a banking commission. One of the advisers had previously mentioned media commission, but the chief adviser said he would carry out reforms to ensure free flow of information. He said the incumbents would take a strong stand against corruption. There is wholehearted agreement from most quarters that we need these reforms desperately. But there is also little doubt that all these reforms would take years, if not decades.

Having laid out his vision of reforms, the chief adviser rightly left it up to the political forces and the people. He mentioned twice in the same breath that his tenure and mandate would only be a reflection of the people's will, and that his government's tenure was entirely a matter of political decision. One can only interpret that as the incumbents' attempt to secure political as well as social acceptance of the government's reforms as well as its tenure.

One might venture to say that while Dr Yunus laid out his elaborate vision of reforms, he sought the people's mandate to endorse it—or rather, that he would like the people to set the limit, hence his mention of "the bare minimum that must be done." We recognise that the 170-plus million people of this country do not have a mechanism at their disposal through which they may express their opinion. Hence, it would perhaps be most prudent for the incumbents to achieve this through dialogue with experts, interest groups, researchers, academics and practitioners of the field. These people will then be able to set the ceiling.

At the same time, there is the important question of the interim government's tenure which, as Dr Yunus rightly said, has to be a purely political decision. But one must caution that his understanding of political acceptance must stem from having listened to the whole cross-section of the people.

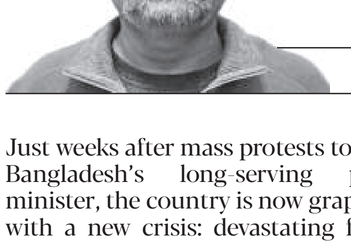
Since many people are frustrated with predatory politics and the winner-take-all culture, engagement with the full spectrum of current political forces would still not mean full representation of the electorate. The chief adviser has only spoken to centre-right-leaning parties in his attempt to engage the political parties. Surely, the absence of leftist progressive liberal forces among his audience was an accidental omission. One can only presume that the omission of the 14-party alliance was out of practicality.

Hence—short of a referendum, which has its limitations and may well prove to be impractical under the circumstances—this regime would do well to engage with a broad range of stakeholders to ascertain public opinion. These could include professional bodies, businesses, students, trade unions, and the wider civil society.

Most Bangladeshis see this transition as an opportunity to rebuild the country. They are eager to cooperate and help the government in any way they can. These dialogues must begin soon before the exuberance subsides.

2024 FLOODS

Facts, feelings, and the art of engineering diplomacy



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SHAFIQUL ISLAM

Just weeks after mass protests toppled Bangladesh's long-serving prime minister, the country is now grappling with a new crisis: devastating floods that have claimed lives and affected millions. With communication lines down and vital infrastructure damaged, the interim government faces the dual challenge of managing the disaster and combating the surge of misinformation.

In times of crisis, feelings often overshadow facts. Yet, distinguishing between the two is crucial for effective disaster management. This is where the art of engineering diplomacy can make a difference. By fostering cooperation with India, Bangladesh can develop a more reliable flood forecasting system. This collaboration can also help rebuild trust with India, shifting the focus from blame to exploring joint solutions for many shared problems.

The 2024 floods in Bangladesh didn't just happen by chance—they were the result of a perfect storm of climatic events. Firstly, we're in the thick of the monsoon season, which is hitting harder than usual this year. Add to that the Madden-Julian Oscillation, a powerful force driving warm, moist air from the Bay of Bengal toward the coast. To top it off, the jet stream over Central Asia has been positioned in a way that funnels even more rain into both Bangladesh and India. The combination of these factors has led to a series of intense rainfall events since late May, causing unprecedented flooding in many parts of both countries.

But not all floods are created equal, and this year's have been particularly early and severe. In late May, Cyclone Remal hammered southern Bangladesh and eastern India, with widespread floods leaving nearly 30 million people without power. Then, mid-June brought relentless rains that submerged Sylhet and Sunamganj, areas that received 242mm of rain in a single day—well above the monthly average. Southeastern regions didn't fare much better, with additional storms causing severe flooding in places like Feni and Cumilla.

On August 21, Feni recorded an unprecedented 312mm of rain in a single day, causing several rivers in the region to swell beyond danger levels. While extreme rainfall has been the primary catalyst for these floods, there is also speculation that the release of excess water from dams and barrages may have contributed to localised impacts. However, these releases are unlikely to be the main cause of the widespread inundation.

For context, consider the Dumboor Dam on the Gomati River in Tripura, India, which has a capacity of around 670 million cubic metres. By comparison, the rainfall over Feni on August 21 alone generated approximately 300 million cubic meters of water. This suggests that the rainfall itself played a much larger role in the flooding than any water released from the dam.

Across social media, many in Bangladesh are pointing fingers at India, accusing it of worsening the floods by releasing water from its dams and barrages. India has countered these accusations, attributing the flooding to natural factors, primarily the heavy monsoon rains.

The deep-seated mistrust between Bangladesh and India, exacerbated by recent geopolitical tensions and the spread of misinformation, has multiple layers. First, since Bangladesh's independence in 1971, India has often been perceived as a dominant regional power, influencing political and economic decisions within Bangladesh. Second, the close relationship between India and the recently ousted government of Bangladesh has intensified perceptions that former's interests have been prioritised over the latter's national interests, solidified by the former prime minister's exile in India. Third, the employment of Indian professionals in Bangladesh, despite high local unemployment, has deepened feelings of economic exploitation, compounded by the growing trade imbalance between the two countries. Fourth, long-standing disputes over water-sharing, especially involving the Ganges and Teesta rivers, have been a major source of tension. And finally, the spread of misinformation, fuelled by geopolitical developments, has exacerbated existing distrust.

To navigate disasters like the 2024 floods effectively, we must separate facts from fiction. This is where engineering diplomacy becomes crucial. It's not just about constructing physical infrastructure—it's about building trust and cooperation, both within our borders and beyond.

Two recent developments highlight this approach in action. First, the remarkable relief efforts led by students at Dhaka University, who mobilised to provide support to flood victims, demonstrate the power of grassroots action in the face of a disaster. Second, Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus's proposal to establish a high-level mechanism between Bangladesh and India to jointly tackle emergencies like floods signals a significant step towards regional cooperation.

The interim government has a unique opportunity to leverage this moment, not only to enhance flood forecasting systems, but also to address broader issues with India. By adopting a principled pragmatic framework, Bangladesh can develop solutions that are technically sound, socially acceptable, ethically responsible, and politically feasible. Some key areas for collaboration may include: developing a shared flood forecasting system that integrates processes, people, and politics, operationalising agreements to protect the Sundarbans, exploring infrastructure projects that enhance regional connectivity through Bangladesh, and addressing economic disparities and trade imbalances.

The floods of 2024 have shown us that it's time for a new approach—one that combines technical know-how with diplomatic skills. As M Inamul Haque correctly pointed out in this daily, "This situation needs to be handled diplomatically... we must avoid panicking, even though it's difficult. Panicking often leads to more problems." In these fast-moving and uncertain times, we need to be both principled and pragmatic.

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DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION 2024

Kamala Harris should change her Gaza policy

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RAMISA ROB

The words "Palestine" and "Gaza" were missing a bit too much during the Democratic National Convention (DNC), which nominated the first female Black Democratic presidential nominee in history, in Chicago—the city with the largest population of Palestinian Americans in the United States. Widely popular former First Lady Michelle Obama said, "Hope is making a comeback," since Biden passed the torch to Kamala Harris. The Democratic Party has undeniably witnessed a new refreshing momentum, nostalgic of Barack Obama's first election campaign. But that hope she spoke of was not shared by roughly 30,000 pro-Palestine protesters—led in part by Palestinians and Jewish activists—who filled up the streets of Chicago and demanded that Harris earn their votes by ending the genocide in Gaza.

Kamala Harris has a tiny lead over Trump in the swing states of Michigan and Pennsylvania. These polls also don't factor Green Party candidate Jill Stein, who will likely take up some progressive votes from Arab Americans and generally those who care about Gaza, and put Harris in the back foot. Polls can never be trusted blindly and Harris should not take it for granted—a lesson from Clinton's loss to Trump in 2016, where polls wrongly predicted an easy sweep across the country for the first female Democratic nominee.

Pro-Palestinian delegates to the DNC, including Abbas Alawieh, an "uncommitted" delegate from Michigan, staged a sit-in protest outside the United Center. Prior to the DNC, the "Uncommitted Delegates" had been calling for campaign organisers to allow a Palestinian American to speak about Gaza, for a humble five minutes. Georgia state Rep Ruwa Romman, a Palestinian American Democrat, had drafted an appeal for unity, stating, "Let's commit to electing Vice-President Harris and defeating Donald Trump who uses my identity as a slur." The draft was never vetted and all requests were denied.

On the other hand, the parents of Hersh Goldberg-Polin, an Israeli American who lost part of his left arm and was taken hostage by Hamas during the October 7 attacks, spoke on the stage. The DNC's decision to provide space for only the Israeli side of the story, and not the Palestinian side, reflect the same-old prejudicial practices that have paved the way for Israel to commit a US-backed genocide with no end in sight.

Earlier in July, Kamala Harris had imparted hope regarding a shift from Joe Biden's disastrous policy on Gaza, when after meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, she said she would not be silent about Palestinian suffering. All that hope has been effectively squashed by her acceptance speech in the DNC, as she loudly carolled her commitment to "Israel's right to defend itself," which means the provision of weapons to continue carpet-bombing Gaza and the ethnic cleansing of a devastated population under a manufactured "existential and security crisis" that Israel is purportedly facing, when in reality everyone can see it is what Palestinians are facing. Harris highlighted the sexual violence committed by the "terrorist organisation Hamas," and chose to stay silent about the sexual violence committed by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) against Palestinian detainees—both men and women—documented by CNN and the United Nations. She called the situation in Gaza "heartbreaking," hypocritically eschewing that it is only the case because of the US's supply of lethal weapons to Israel's warmongering cabinet for the past 10 months.

Pragmatically, it is understandable that Harris cannot win a US election by going hardline against Israel. But her chances of winning by alienating those who care about Palestine are looking slimmer by the day. As Uncommitted Democrats take note of their censorship in the DNC, Green Party nominee Jill Stein, who has been a fierce critic of Israel's genocide, is reportedly choosing a Palestinian American as her running mate. Stein has made direct outreach to Palestinian Americans in Michigan, where Israel's genocidal war in Gaza has hit home with 390,000 Arab Americans. In this very key swing state, Harris made a blunder at a rally recently, when protesters chanted, "Kamala, Kamala, you can't hide! We won't vote for genocide!" What could've been a moment for her to express support and vow to take action, the vice-president snapped instead, saying, "If you want Donald Trump to win, then say that. Otherwise, I'm speaking," with an entitled stare. It is her job to convince voters to elect her instead of Trump, not the other way around.

Democratic presidential nominee and US Vice-President Kamala Harris applauds from the stage on Day 4 of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) at the United Center in Chicago, Illinois, US on August 22, 2024.
FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

The contrast between Stein and Harris so far suggests that Harris will definitely lose some voters over the issue of Palestine, even if Stein's bid to the White House is a long shot. Some people simply don't care if Donald Trump will win, more than they care about the inhumanity they have seen in Gaza where the Biden-Harris administration is complicit. Robert Francis Kennedy, Jr recently ended his campaign, endorsing Trump, but Stein told the *Newsweek* that she intends on staying in the race, that she will never back Kamala Harris, even if it means facing a repeat of accusations from Democrats that she contributed to a Trump victory. Voters appealing to a third party like Stein for being more progressive and humanitarian delivers a huge blow for Harris and a gift for Trump.

The liberal US media—which has shown its duplicity regarding the lives of Palestinians in Gaza since October 7 and have their fair share of complicity for parroting Israeli propaganda—has taken a U-turn of sorts. The *New York Magazine* now calls what is happening to citizens in Gaza "an ongoing genocide," for which Harris should end US support. Even *The New York Times*—who published a major uncorroborated report of gender-based sexual violence committed by Hamas on October 7—is now running op-eds like "Harris can change Biden's policy on Israel by upholding the law" by Peter Beinhart, where he argues that instead of an arms embargo, Harris, as a prosecutor, could uphold the law that prohibits the US from assisting any unit of a foreign security force that commits "gross violations" of human rights.

Most pro-Dem media outlets advance an agenda with their journalism, for many self-serving reasons, some of which are valid such as the fact that Donald Trump is a titanic threat to US democracy and press freedom. The media now understands that Biden's Gaza policy poses a significant problem for Harris, and she needs to distance herself from it to defeat Trump. Karen Attiah, a Black journalist in *The Washington Post,* wrote an article regarding the division between Black feminists on Harris regarding Gaza. Before the DNC, her words were clear: keeping silent on Gaza is too steep a price to pay for electing the first Black woman president.

As the DNC concluded, a letter to the editor was issued in response to Attiah's article, with the title, "Americans are choosing Harris or Trump, not Harris or Gaza." The writer argued, "Electing former President Donald Trump is a far greater existential threat to our country and the world, including Palestinians. Withholding votes from Ms Harris puts that outcome into play." The writer does not seem to realise that Harris herself has to say these words or devise a strategy out of it. The Harris campaign has steered clear from paying much attention to Donald Trump's insults—supposedly a learning lesson from Hilary Clinton's campaign—but she has to somehow assert that Trump would be even worse for Gaza, and that she will also be better than Biden, as it has been the current administration's biggest failure.

As of August 26, Harris maintains a tight lead of 2.5 percent in Michigan polls over Trump, and in Pennsylvania, the second largest home for Arab Americans, she maintains a 1.1 percent lead based on 29 polls. These polls don't include Jill Stein, who could take up the percentage of the leads that Harris has over Trump. Another fact to note: polls are polls. They can never be blindly trusted and should not be taken for granted—a lesson from Clinton's loss to Trump in 2016, where polls wrongly predicted an easy sweep across the country for the first female Democratic nominee.

After a loud DNC, it seems that the US media has come to Harris' defence, to tame the moral outrage over Gaza and paint the whole week in a positive light for voters. CNN praised Harris, calling her "tough and defensive" of Israel, but also "compassionate" of Palestinians. But we've seen starved skeletons, dead children under rubble, a headless child, charred bodies, and dismembered human beings in plastic bags in the besieged strip. The US has sent Israel more weapons than humanitarian aid to Palestinians, and that's a hard pill to swallow. So mere "compassion" will not work. If Kamala Harris wants to lose to Donald Trump in November, then she should continue speaking and silencing Palestinian voices. Otherwise, she should start speaking to her campaign managers regarding how to change her rhetoric and policy on Gaza before it's too late.

India needs to pursue equal partnership with Bangladesh

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AFIA IBNAT

India is often portrayed as Bangladesh's closest ally. The two nations share a strategic partnership grounded in shared history, economic interdependence and strong cultural ties. However, this relationship has frequently been characterised by a power imbalance, with India being in a position to exert dominance over Bangladesh. If Bangladesh and India are to forge a more equitable friendship, three existing bilateral issues need to be addressed.

A vexing issue that has been in deadlock for decades is the disadvantages imposed on Bangladesh for being a lower riparian state. Even though the recent floods cannot solely be attributed to India opening the Dumbur dam, the situation serves as an eye-opener on our water-sharing agreements (or lack thereof), flood management capacity, and the need for bilateral negotiations where both countries can mitigate the damages from heavy rainfall without harming the other. Teesta River's water-sharing agreement is one example. If current trends continue, the Teesta water shortage could lower Bangladesh's rice production by roughly 8 percent by 2030 and 14 percent by 2050. This scarcity raises production costs and risks for farmers and also triggers social issues such as migration, displacement, and poverty.

Gautam Adani, founder and chairman of India's Adani Group, meets former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban on July 15, 2023.
PHOTO: X/GAUTAM ADANI

Even though Sheikh Hasina's government allowed India several benefits, including the upcoming railway line that will allow the transport of goods and travel of passengers (including military personnel) from India to its seven northeastern states via Bangladesh, Dhaka continues to be sidelined. Under Hasina's government, Dhaka had not been able to leverage its concessions to India to make progress with Teesta or other shared rivers. The interim government now has an opportunity to address this issue and build strong political consensus for a more equitable and sustainable water-sharing and flood mitigation arrangement between the two neighbours.

The second issue is the border killings between India and Bangladesh. Despite the close friendship between the two countries, the border is riddled with mindless deaths of Bangladeshis at the hands of the Indian Border Security Forces (BSF). Ain o Salish Kendra, a human rights organisation in Bangladesh, conservatively reported that between 2013 and 2023, 332 people were killed by the BSF, averaging 30 deaths per year. Aside from the killings, the BSF has also subjected Bangladeshis at the border to gruesome torture and abductions. It makes little sense for two countries that share exemplary ties to allow such lethality on their border. Although the leadership in India pledged zero deaths, this reality is yet to materialise as state promises are unaligned with BSF actions at the border. If the previous home advisor's words are an indication, the Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB) will no longer remain passive and retreat in border conflicts in the face of aggression from the Indian side. But more importantly, it is pertinent for the interim government to address the crisis and catalyse strong political will from its Indian counterparts to end the killings and bring to book the BSF soldiers who engaged in prior misconduct that led to the loss of lives and lifelong injuries of Bangladeshis.

A third contentious point that requires a comprehensive reassessment is Adani's Godda power plant in Jharkhand which charges Bangladesh an exorbitant, above-market rate. The deal was initiated back in 2015 by Modi—who Adani's chairman is close to—and signed in 2017 with Hasina's blessing, despite the deal not being favourable for Bangladesh, as reported by *The Washington Post*.

Even though a report by the non-profit AdaniWatch suggested Bangladesh might have at least two ways to exit the contract, it turns out that Adani made sure to insert clauses that prevent Bangladesh from leaving even if Adani breaches the contract. First, private coal-fired power plants in India can export electricity if only India has a power surplus, which it currently does not. Second, the contract states that the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) must pay a levy of taxes and duties that Adani itself is exempt from, especially since it was declared a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). BPDB was supposed to be officially informed of these changes for a price adjustment within 30 days, but Adani failed to do so. BPDB still went ahead with the contract, even fast-tracking it under the political compulsion of the Hasina government. Unfortunately, as *The Daily Star* pointed out, Bangladesh can only leave if Adani's breach of contract negatively impacts the latter's ability to produce electricity. As it stands, making unethical profits off the backs of Bangladeshi tax-payers will not be harming Adani's bottom line anytime soon.

Despite the ironclad agreement, there may be a way out. Unresolved disputes may be "settled in accordance with the Rules of Arbitration of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre, 2016, 6th Edition," according to a lawyer interviewed by *The Daily Star*. If such a pathway can be pursued, the interim government may probe into the matter to identify any scopes for dispute resolution. Getting out of this contract or renegotiating the prices would drastically minimise costs in a country that is already plagued with debts and dwindling foreign reserves.

Whether it's our riparian rights, contentious border killings, or power deals designed to empty Bangladesh's coffers, it is true that Bangladesh often gets the short end of the stick. But Bangladesh can leverage its advantage as a zone of influence for great power politics and make use of its concessions to its upper riparian neighbour to ensure the sustainable prosperity of its land and people. It is also in the best interest of both India and Bangladesh to ensure the survival and thriving of their long-lasting exemplary friendship—with transparency and broad political consensus benefitting both countries equally.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Dipjol's team has already delivered aid by truck in Cumilla and Feni.

Directors Mostafa Kamal Raz and Rafat Mazumder Rinku in Feni.

Airin visits Noakhali to help the victims.

PHOTOS: **COLLECTED**

Artistes rally to support flood victims across Bangladesh

Some have personally delivered relief materials to affected areas, while others have made financial contributions to support the victims. Their collective efforts are providing much-needed assistance to those struggling in this dire situation.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

As Bangladesh grapples with severe flooding, celebrities have united to support those affected by this disaster. Regions such as Feni, Noakhali, Lakshmipur, Cumilla, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Rangamati, and Khagrachari are experiencing one of the worst floods in recent history. In response, many in the entertainment industry have taken action.

Arosh Khan and Tasnuva Tisha have travelled to Feni to offer support.

Some have personally delivered relief materials to affected areas, while others have made financial contributions to support the victims. Their collective efforts are providing much-needed assistance to those struggling in this dire situation.

Young artistes Arosh Khan and Tasnuva Tisha have journeyed to Feni to offer support. The actors, along with others, have formed groups to deliver relief supplies to affected villages by boat. In Feni, they organised dry food distributions and Arosh made two consecutive visits to flood-hit areas to provide support.

Actress Rukaiya Jahan Chamak has taken the initiative to support flood victims in Noakhali. She has provided clean drinking water, dry food, and essential medicines, doing her part to bring relief to struggling communities.

Singer Asif Akbar has addressed the ongoing flood crisis by launching the Asif Akbar Foundation. He announced this initiative, explaining that the foundation's main goal is to raise funds to support flood victims and assist in relief efforts during various natural disasters across the country. He shared his vision, saying, "I have fan clubs in all 64 districts. I plan to form teams of 11 members from each club who will actively stand by people in their districts during such disasters."

Musician Zunayed Evan from the band Ashes has also travelled to the flood-hit areas to aid victims. Joining him in these efforts are director Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Raaz, Shakal Ahmed, Rafat Mozumder Rinku, Emel Haque, and actors Airin and Rashed Simanto, along with many others, who are actively contributing to the relief efforts.

Producer and actor Monowar Hossain Dipjol has once again stepped up to support flood victims. He is leading efforts to distribute relief supplies to those in need. His team has already delivered aid by truck in Cumilla and Feni, and they have also reached remote areas by boat to ensure help reaches the most affected regions.

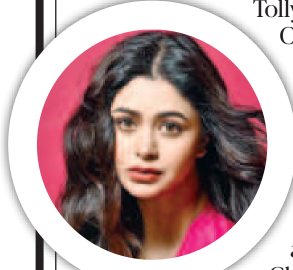
Actor Siam Ahmed has pledged to donate two months' earnings to support the victims, sharing this decision in a heartfelt video on Facebook. He also called on other media professionals to contribute according to their abilities. His wife, Shamma Rushafy Abantee, a digital content creator, has pledged to donate one month's earnings as well.

Additionally, actresses Azmeri Haque Badhan and Zakia Bari Mamo have promised to provide clothing for those affected by the floods. Artistes including Mehazabien Chowdhury, Tasnia Farin, Apu Biswas, Ananta Jalil, Barsha, and Imran Mahmudul have contributed various food supplies to aid the victims.

A concert held in the Dhaka University area successfully raised both relief supplies and funds for flood victims. The event, titled ***Joruri Shongjog***, featured performances by over 30 bands and artistes, including Shironamhin, Sonar Bangla Circus, F Minor, Arghadeb, Sayan, and Krishnakoli. Their efforts have significantly contributed to providing aid to flood-affected communities.

Additionally, the Film Directors Association, the Film Actors Association, the Actors Guild, Get Up Stand Up, and the Bangladesh Artistes Society are all actively working under their respective banners to provide much-needed relief to flood victims.

Ritabhari Chakraborty demands justice for sexual assault survivors



Tollywood actor Ritabhari Chakraborty has come forward with bold accusations of sexual misconduct within West Bengal's entertainment industry.

Without naming anyone specifically, Chakraborty called for exposing those responsible and urged India West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to initiate an investigation akin to the Hema Commission, which recently shed light on similar issues in the Malayalam film industry.

In a Facebook post on Monday night, she wrote, "The Hema Commission report exposing sexual assaults in the Malayalam film industry has left me wondering why the Bengali film industry isn't taking similar steps. Many of the reports echo experiences I've had or ones that actresses I know have faced."

Rokeya Prachi removed from Telepab VP post

Rokeya Prachi, a renowned actress and director, has been removed from her position as vice president of the Television and Digital Program Producers' Association of Bangladesh (Telepab), amid allegations of disciplinary breaches.

Director Shazzad Hossain Dodul, general secretary at Telepab, confirmed the news. While Prachi will retain her membership in the association, she has lost her influential role as vice president.

Dodul indicated that an official statement, detailing the specific breaches committed by Prachi, will be released to the media shortly. As of Tuesday afternoon, Prachi has not provided any comments regarding her dismissal.

NEWS

Dhaka should engage with Arakan Army

FROM PAGE 12

the 1970s, with the largest one being in 2017. Currently, Bangladesh shelters more than a million Rohingya.

Rohingya repatriation to Myanmar and improving trade with the neighbouring country and the other ASEAN countries are the major objectives of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has been maintaining relations with the Myanmar junta since it assumed power for Rohingya repatriation.

The emergence of a de facto statelet on its border that aspires for permanent autonomy will require Bangladesh's interim government to expand the scope of its engagement with the AA, the ICG said.

Despite the challenges Bangladesh faces domestically, it also has a key role in Rakhine State as do other outside actors, it said.

"While strengthening ties with the group, Bangladeshi envoys should emphasise the importance of treating the Rohingya humanely and with dignity," the report said.

To stabilise the borderlands and address drivers of irregular migration, Dhaka should also allow for more humanitarian aid to the area and trade across the frontier.

"Finally, Dhaka should improve security in the refugee camps, reduce the influence of armed groups there and allow a genuine Rohingya civil society movement to emerge."

The ICG said the other foreign governments should explore how they can work with the AA and neighbouring states to improve humanitarian access and expand assistance for all ethnic communities affected by conflict in central and northern Rakhine State.

For neighbouring states and other outside actors, the emerging situation in Rakhine State creates quandaries, not least the question of how to work with a de facto authority like the AA amid an international system that for legal and practical reasons privileges relationships with nation-states.

Despite the dilemmas, the ICG said neighbours and donors will likely find that the greatest potential for positive humanitarian and security impact by working with Rakhine State's de facto administrators toward mutual goals.

The AA forces have been accused of serious human rights abuses against the Rohingya, including the attack on August 5, for which the group denies responsibility.

Rakhine State requires leaders of both the Rakhine and Rohingya communities to rise above their historical animosity and defuse communal tensions.

"The AA should incorporate more Rohingya into its administration and commit to supporting an independent investigation into allegations of abuses against civilians, which should begin as soon as practicable."

Seek resolution at UNHRC session

FROM PAGE 12

responsibility of accounting for the past to steer the country toward a rights-respecting future," said Lucy McKernan, deputy UN Geneva director at HRW.

"The government should support a Human Rights Council-backed investigation into recent abuses while also seeking UN backing for an independent domestic inquiry into the former government's 15 years of rights violations," she said.

The interim government should urgently implement measures to bring civilian oversight over security forces, disband the notorious Rapid Action Battalion, reform institutions in line with international human rights standards, and revise abusive laws.

To effectively follow through on its commitments to justice and accountability amid a highly divisive political environment, the interim government should ask the UNHRC to establish an independent mechanism with a comprehensive mandate to investigate, collect, store, and analyse evidence and cooperate with credible and independent national and international judicial bodies toward accountability for the July and August violence and its root causes, the rights organisation said.

A UNHRC-mandated investigation would have the greatest independence and credibility for Bangladeshis, who distrust domestic institutions and could avoid the political interference that could undermine purely domestic measures, it said.

The HRW suggested that the council resolution should also mandate OHCHR to monitor the human rights situation in Bangladesh through the transition period until there are free and fair elections, and report back regularly.

The HRW said the recent protests reflect the frustration that Bangladesh's economic progress has been unevenly shared.

Social protection should be reformed to guarantee an adequate level of protection for all, and to ensure that no one is excluded from public benefits because of their inability to pay bribes or because they lack social or political connections, it said.

It called upon the interim government to reform institutions, the security sector, and its justice and legal system, all of which have been deeply eroded under the previous government and earlier administrations, to bring about lasting, human rights changes.

The interim government should welcome the technical assistance of OHCHR to ensure the full independence of legal and judicial bodies, the rights organisations said.

In addition to disbanding the Rapid Action Battalion, the interim government should implement robust human rights training protocols across all security forces and remove laws that enable impunity for security force abuse, Human Rights Watch said.

"Without deep institutional reform and UN support to ensure independence and transparency, the hard-won advancements in Bangladesh could be easily lost," McKernan said.

"The UN and member states should demonstrate their support for all Bangladeshis by backing fact-finding and accountability measures and by investing in rights-based institutional and security sector reform," she said.

Two girls found dead

FROM PAGE 12

the victims' families searched for them but could not find them.

Early yesterday, locals found the bodies beside a road in Sadekpur area.

On information, police recovered the bodies, said Mohammad Mozaffar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station.

"We have sent the bodies to Brahmanbaria General Hospital morgue for autopsy. The reasons for the deaths will be known after autopsy," he added.

Contacted, the hospital's Medical Officer Anik Dev said, "We have found multiple injury marks in the private parts of the girls. After primary investigation, we assume that they were raped around four days ago. However, further investigation is required for this to be confirmed."

Maimuna's father Abdul Barik, hinting at the possible involvement of a madrasa teacher, said they want a proper investigation and punishment of the people responsible.

Reject writ petition for banning AL

FROM PAGE 12

Islam during a hearing on the writ petition yesterday.

Following the hearing, the bench set September 1 as the date for issuing an order on the writ.

Arifur Rahman Murad Bhuiyan, executive director of Sarda Society, a rights organisation, filed the petition with the HC as a public interest litigation on August 19, seeking its order to ban AL as a political party and cancel its registration for the indiscriminate killing of students and general public during the anti-government movement.

In the petition, he implored the HC to pass an order fixing the tenure of the current interim government at three years, rename the institutions that were named after Sheikh Hasina, bring back Tk 11 lakh crores laundered abroad, and transfer officials who were appointed on contract during past regimes of the AL government.

During yesterday's hearing, Attorney General Asaduzzaman told the HC that the person who submitted the writ petition has no "locus standi" to file such a petition as his organisation's constitution does not allow him to do so.

He also said the writ petitioner did not include the Awami League as a party in the petition and did not serve any notice to AL prior to filing the writ.

He argued, therefore, the writ petition was unacceptable.

The attorney general then asked the HC to fine Arifur Rahman Murad Bhuiyan for submitting the petition and taking up the court's time unnecessarily.

Hasina faces 5 more cases

FROM PAGE 12

Magistrate Md Saddam Hossain.

Former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, former AL lawmakers Shamim Osman and Ramesh Chandra are among the accused.

The magistrate recorded the statement and asked the officer-in-charge of Jatrabari Police Station to register it as a First Information Report (FIR).

In Mohammadpur, Hasina and 21 others were sued for the killing of Mansur Miah, a machine operator at Buriganga Filling Station in Bosila on July 19.

The victim's brother Ainal Haque filed the case with a Dhaka court which asked the Mohammadpur Police OC to register it as an FIR.

Quader, Asaduzzaman, former AL lawmakers Ali Arafat and Jahangir Kabir Nanak, former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, former DB chief Harun Or Rashid and former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman are among the accused in the case.

Khorshed Alam brother of Miraz Hossain, who was killed on August 5, filed another case against Hasina and 91 others with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Belal Hossain.

The magistrate recorded his statement and asked the Demra Police OC to register it as an FIR.

Hasina and 40 others were sued for the killing of 21-year-old Nahidul Islam at Mirpur-10 on July 19.

The victim's brother Md Sabuj filed the case with a Dhaka court, which asked Mirpur Police OC to register it as an FIR.

Hasina' sister Sheikh Rehana and son Sajeeb Wazed Joy are among the accused.

In Rajshahi, SM Salahuddin Ahmmed Shamim Sarkar, convenor of Bagha upazila Chhatra Dal, filed a case against Hasina, former state minister for foreign affairs Shahriar Alam, and 52 others on charges of abduction and torture, said Bagha Police OC Abu Siddque.

According to the case statement, under the direct instruction of Hasina and the other accused, Salahuddin was picked up in front of the Bagha New Bus Stand on May 21, 2023.

He was tortured and shot in the leg before being handed over to the police, who later framed him in a false case, Salahuddin mentioned in the case.

Hasan Mahmud, Nowfel, S Alam

FROM PAGE 12

education minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhoury Nowfel; former Chattogram city mayor AJM Nasir Uddin; former MPs Abu Reza Nadvi, Abdul Motaleb, Abduch Salam, and Fazle Karim Chowdhury; Central Awami League Office Secretary Biplob Barua; Central Awami League member Aminul Islam; Bhorer Kagoj Editor Shyamal Dutta; and S Alam Group chairman's personal assistant Akij Uddin, among others.

The rest of the accused are leaders and activists of the Awami League and its affiliate organisations.

According to the case statement, under the leadership of Hasan Mahmud, the accused razed hills in the area for real estate companies in the port city.

The accused had been selling soil collected from the hills in Chattogram and other places through a syndicate. However, due to fear, no one dared to speak out against them at the time, the statement added.

On December 30, 2017, a landslide in the Rajanagar area under Rangunia killed three people, including a child.

The statement states that the landslide occurred as a result of the accused's indiscriminate hill-cutting as the forest department and local administration were unable to take action against them.

Murder case filed

FROM PAGE 12

Divisional Commissioner Zakir Hossain, former DIG (Rangpur range) of police Abdul Baten, ex-commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police Mohammad Moniruzzaman, former deputy commissioner Mohammad Mobassher Hasan, and former superintendent of police of Rangpur Mohammad Shahjahan.

Dilruba Akter, wife of victim Muslim Uddin Milon, filed a complaint with the court of Rangpur Metropolitan Magistrate Raju Ahmed Babu, yesterday, said lawyers Palash Kanti Nag and Mofazzal Hossain Bakul.

The magistrate asked Rangpur Kotwali Police Station to record the complaint as a case.

Besides, many unnamed people were accused in the case.

According to the case statement, on July 19, a clash broke out between students and Awami League leaders and activists during a quota protest in the City Bazaar area. The incident escalated when police opened fire indiscriminately under the orders of the accused.

Milon was hit by a bullet at that time and taken to Rangpur Medical College and Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

Under pressure from the accused, the body was hurriedly buried without an autopsy, the plaintiff alleged in the case statement.

Star
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Nepal stand between Bangladesh and elusive trophy

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh team management will be hoping to field a fully fit squad in the final of SAFF U-20 Championship when the men in red and green take on hosts Nepal at the ANFA complex with a target of winning the elusive title of regional youth championship.

Having beaten three-time champions India in the semifinals on Monday, the charges of Maruful Haque have apparently struggled to recover owing to a lack of facilities in Nepal. However, the head coach is expecting that the players will be fully fit before facing Nepal, who won the title in 2015 and 2017.

Bangladesh have never won the trophy in five previous attempts, despite making the final three times previously. They have not even been able to beat Nepal in four meetings.

"From Day 1 till now, the boys have been on the right track as we have come to this stage following ups and downs. If the boys remain fit and play according to game plan, we can return home with the trophy. I hope the boys will be fully fit before the final," Maruful said at the pre-final press conference yesterday.

The veteran coach fears Nepal could come stronger than the group stage match, where they beat Bangladesh 2-1 even though he believes his charges are ready to take more challenge this time.

"If they [Nepal] gave 80 percent in the group stage match against us, they will come stronger with 100 percent effort in the final. They may also change tactics compared to that match," Maruful said. "However, losing to Nepal once doesn't mean we will not be able to beat them in the final. If the boys can give their 100 percent and play according to game plan, it is possible for us to win."

Nepal will have the advantage on playing on their home turf, which is an artificial one, and in front of their home crowd and under familiar weather. Some of the Nepal players are also much quicker than their Bangladeshi counterparts while playing on the artificial turf, which is why Maruful is planning to change his strategy.

Bangladesh will be missing out on the services of experienced goalkeeper Mehedi Hasan Srabon, who returned to Dhaka on Tuesday following an injury in the semifinal, and experienced defender Kamacai Marma Aky, who was given marching order against India just a minute before the final whistle.

"After winning against India, the mental condition of the players is very strong but that match is now past. It is a new day and new opponents, who are a talented side with some quick wingers. I think we have to take more challenge in the final," said the UEFA A-licenced coach.

Nepal coach Urjan Sheshtha, however, is rating Bangladesh as a top team. "We see Bangladesh as the top team, who played a very good match against India. I think the final is going to be an interesting game where we will do our level best," said Shreshtha.

SHORT CORNER

No bar on Shakib to continue playing
Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) president Faruque Ahmed said that star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan can continue to represent the country as long as he is not proven guilty of any misdeeds. "There are a lot of legal procedures left to prove someone guilty. At this moment there is no bar on Shakib to continue playing," Faruque said.

Jay Shah elected Independent Chair of ICC
Jay Shah, the current honorary secretary of the BCCI, has been elected unopposed as the Independent Chair of the ICC, and will assume his position on 1 December, 2024. On August 20, it was announced that current ICC Chair Greg Barclay would not seek a third term and would step down at the end of his tenure in November.

Sports associations to have student reps
The National Sports Council introduced a position for student representatives in the new seven-member ad-hoc committees to be formed nationwide, a press release confirmed yesterday.

Read full stories on The Daily Star's website.

BCB scratching its head to solve the BPL problem

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

The newly-elected Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Faruque Ahmed has called a board of directors' meeting on Thursday where among several key issues, holding the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) in scheduled time is likely to be discussed.

Faruque has inherited a BCB that has been in limbo ever since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5 in the face of a student-led people's movement. Many BCB directors, who had links with the previous government, have gone into hiding since, leaving various standing committees at a standstill.

Resuming activities of those standing committees with changes in personnel will be a key agenda in the meeting, as will be the forthcoming BPL, which is facing a plethora of challenges at the moment.

The biggest challenge is the uncertain status of several franchises whose owners had strong ties with Awami League and are on the run after the recent political developments in the country.

Comilla Victorians, the most successful team in BPL history with four titles, was run by Nafisa Kamal, daughter of Awami League lawmaker and former finance minister AHM Mustafa Kamal. Teams like Durdanto Dhaka, Fortune Barishal and Khulna Tigers are also known to have political ties.

The remaining three teams of the seven-team tournament – Sylhet Strikers, Chattogram Challengers and Rangpur Riders – are expected to continue but they are also facing financial challenges.

"The Awami League backed teams are not in the scene at the moment. Apart from that, the market situation is not good at all. There were sponsor issues in the previous editions and now the challenges will exacerbate," a franchise official told The Daily Star yesterday, wishing to remain anonymous.

"Previously, we would have to spend around Tk 15-16 crore each season and would hardly get Tk 3-5 crore from sponsors. Getting that same amount from sponsors is also unlikely for the next edition," he added.

Before the start of the last ICC T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies, the BCB had reached out to the franchises, seeking their participation confirmation and some teams had responded positively.

However, since the change in government and Faruque taking over as BCB president, replacing Nazmul Hassan Papon who was an Awami League lawmaker, they are yet to establish any formal communication with those franchises.

Previously, the BCB had planned to hold the players' draft for the upcoming BPL in the first week of September as the tournament is scheduled between January 1 and February 11 next year. But after the recent changes in the board, holding the draft in the scheduled time seems highly unlikely.

"In these extraordinary circumstances, there is a big question whether the teams would play or not. The board is yet to receive confirmation from them as well. We have to see which teams are in a position to participate. We are currently working on that," a BCB official told the Daily Star, requesting anonymity.

"We are trying to stick to the legal framework. If the franchises do not respond, the board will then decide whether or not to terminate the contract. Whatever we do, we have to maintain the legal framework.

"We are closely monitoring the situation. We are also considering what the impact would be like if the number of participating teams went down to five from seven."

Another huge challenge for Faruque, who has been a staunch critic of BPL's financial issues over the years, would be to introduce a new structure for the tournament, which has been thrown into controversy many times due to mismanagement since its inception in 2012.

The BCB would also need to address the issue of some teams still not having cleared players' payments from the previous edition.

Amidst all the challenges, there is one silver lining as it was learnt that some interested companies have already met the newly-elected BCB president, showing interest to buy new franchises in the BPL, and the board is still holding out hope of going through with the event.

"We are very optimistic to hold the tournament in time. We believe we can make it happen," concluded the board official.

Offloading players Chelsea's main target: Maresca

REUTERS

Chelsea's main aim in the transfer window is to offload players from their squad so the club can balance its books, manager Enzo Maresca said on Tuesday.

Chelsea have been busy in the market since American owner Todd Boehly took over two years ago.

The West London club have spent over 160 million pounds ($211.50 million) on 11 new signings for this season, including winger Pedro Neto, forward Joao Felix, midfielder Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall, and goalkeeper Filip Jorgensen.

Chelsea sold Conor Gallagher to Atletico Madrid and defender Ian Maatsen joined Aston Villa, but they still have over 40 senior players registered are at risk of falling foul of the Premier League's profit and sustainability rules.

"The target is to solve the economic problem in terms of selling players," Maresca told the club website. "From there, we try to do our best and see where we arrive."

Chelsea's struggles to offload players are well documented, with England internationals Ben Chilwell and Raheem Sterling among a group of about 15 high earners frozen out by the manager and not training with the first team.

"For us, the target in this moment is to improve players. No one from the club asked me to compete for the Premier League, or compete for a Champions League spot," the Italian Maresca added.

"I want to see my team play the way we want to play, and compete every game. I want to see on the ball a clear idea of what they want, and off the ball, a very aggressive team. The most important thing is to be better game after game."

Djokovic 'avenges brothers' to kick off record bid

REUTERS, *New York*

Novak Djokovic's bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title kicked off on Monday with a rusty 6-2, 6-2, 6-4 win over qualifier Radu Albot in the US Open first round as the defending champion returned to the court after his Olympic triumph and managed to 'avenge' his brothers.

Three weeks after winning the singles title at the Paris Games, Djokovic toted his rackets and gear in a pair of gold-coloured bags onto centre court where the Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd gave him a hero's welcome.

But the Serb's golden touch was decidedly lacking in the late night match as he struggled with serve and racked up nearly twice as many unforced errors as winners.

For all that, he had more than enough weapons to handle Moldovan Albot in their first tour clash and claim a record 78th win at Arthur Ashe under a closed roof.

"I was not aware of it, to be honest with you," Djokovic said of the centre-court milestone.

"It's definitely the loudest stadium we have in the history of our sport. The night sessions are the best in the world here."

While having never played Albot before, Djokovic said he had done his homework on the 34-year-old who beat both his younger brothers Marko and Djordje during their playing days.

"They both lost to him so hopefully I can avenge my brothers tonight," he told ESPN commentator Brad Gilbert with a laugh before taking the court.

Djokovic duly avenged the family name in three clunky sets but he will hope for better from his game as he looks to move past Margaret Court on the all-time Grand Slam winners' list.

With 10 double-faults, his serve was wild by his usual standards, and he winced throughout the night as 40 unforced errors piled up.

His coach Nenad Zimonjic was an animated presence, barking instructions in Serbian at the wayward champion, who could convert only six out of 16 break points.

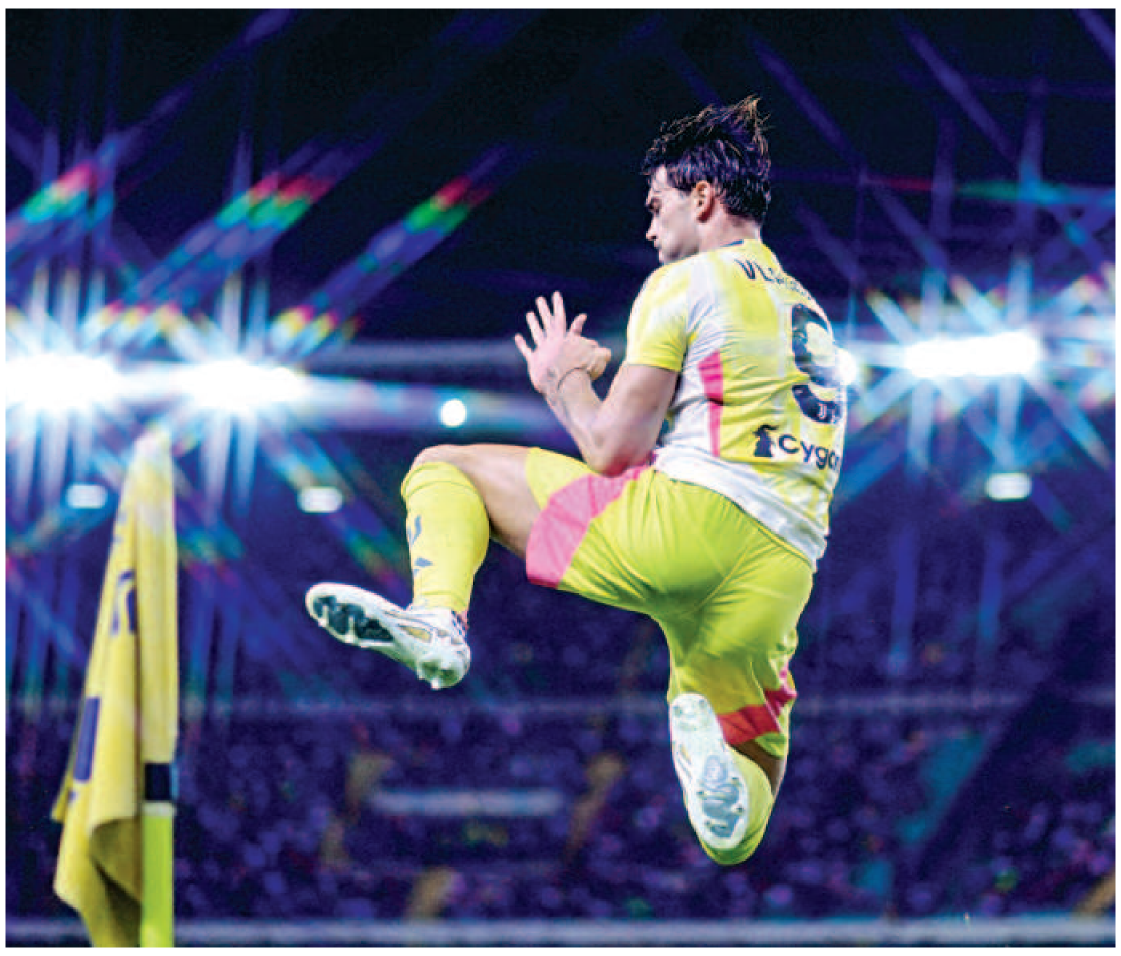
Though Djokovic was well off his best, Albot was unable to make the world number two pay.

After bright starts in the first two sets, he crumbled on serve in each of them before making a better game of the third.

In the twilight of a record-smashing career, Djokovic is eyeing several milestones in New York, including a fifth title at Flushing Meadows to match the professional era record held by Pete Sampras, Jimmy Connors, and Roger Federer.

He also hopes to become the first back-to-back winner in the men's singles since Federer's run of five successive titles from 2004-08.

Serbia's Djokovic will face fellow countryman Laslo Djere in the second round today.



Dusan Vlahovic netted a brace as Juventus continued their flying start under new manager Thiago Motta with a comfortable 3-0 victory at Hellas Verona in Serie A on Monday. Juventus, who look to reclaim the Serie A title after four years, are the only side to have kept their points tally at a maximum over the opening two match days of the Italian top flight and lead the standings with six points. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

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GAZI TYRE FACTORY FIRE

Excessive heat, risky structure delay rescue op

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Narayanganj*

After a 32-hour battle, firefighters put out the massive blaze at Gazi Auto Tyres Factory in Narayanganj's Rupganj early yesterday.

They, however, could not enter the six-storey building due to extreme heat and the precarious state of the fire-ravaged structure.

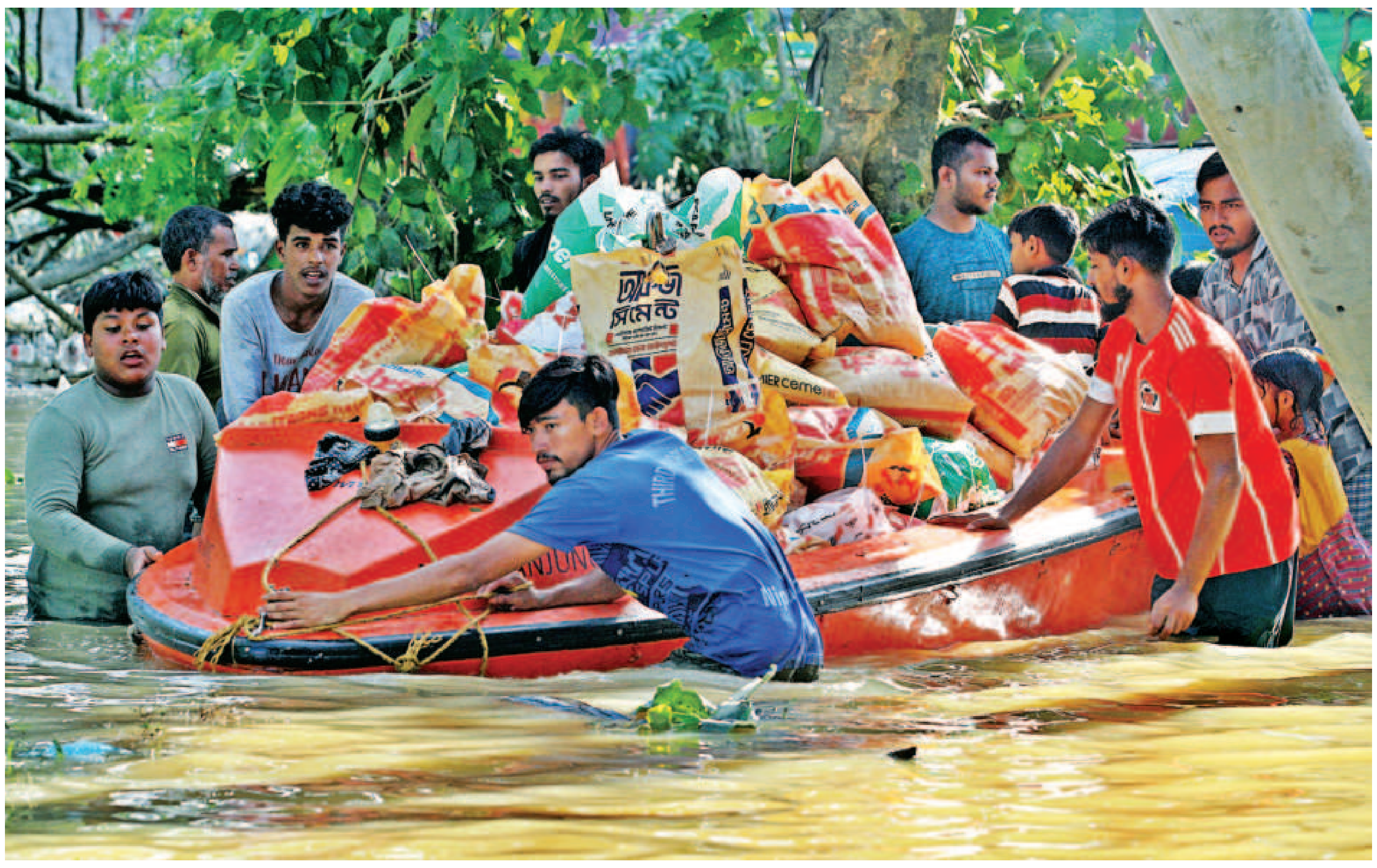
They were uncertain about the start of the rescue operation as small fires continued to flare up since yesterday afternoon due to intense heat. Parts of the ceiling and walls of the building collapsed.

Meanwhile, a group of students visited the factory site in Rupshi area yesterday and compiled a list of 126 people reported missing by their families since Sunday night when the factory, owned by former Awami League minister Golam Dastagir Gazi, was set on fire by arsonists.

Md Alauddin, deputy assistant director of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, said they doused the blaze around 5:00am yesterday, but small fires flared up at some places due to intense heat.

"We are still trying to extinguish the

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6



As boats are hard to come by, volunteers pile up supplies on a boat in Dadurpol Kitchen Market area of Feni town yesterday and try to take the vessel to hard-to-reach areas where flood victims need relief materials.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

Reject writ petition for banning AL

Attorney general requests HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman yesterday implored the High Court to reject the writ petition that sought its order on the government to ban Bangladesh Awami League as a political party and cancel its registration.

"The current interim government believes in the freedom of association that's enshrined in the constitution of Bangladesh and does not intend to ban any political parties.

"People involved in the previous authoritarian regime who are guilty of wrongdoings can be tried in court, but it's not right to ban any political party based on the actions of its members," AG Asadizzaman said.

He went on to say that the Awami League still has many good leaders and workers who believe in and practice party ideology.

The attorney general presented his arguments before the HC bench of Justices AKM Asaduzzaman and Muhammad Mahbub Ul

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

RAKHINE STATE

Dhaka should engage with Arakan Army

Suggests Int'l Crisis Group

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

As the Arakan Army is on the verge of expelling the Myanmar military in the Rakhine State, Bangladesh needs to expand the scope of its engagement with the rebel group, said the International Crisis Group (ICG) yesterday.

"After restarting its fight for Rakhine State in late 2023, the Arakan Army is in the process of carving out a proto-state of over a million people on the Myanmar-Bangladesh border," said the Brussels-based global think tank in a report.

Although the Myanmar military has countered with indiscriminate attacks and a blockade that is causing huge economic distress, the AA has pushed on, reaching northern townships where it is alleged to have attacked Muslim Rohingya civilians, it added.

Formed in the borderlands of China, the AA is responsible for some of the military junta's most decisive battleground losses over the past year.

The victories are rallying other ethnic armed groups and pro-democracy fighters to dislodge the military regime, which took control of the country by a coup against the National League of Democracy in February 2021.

The NLD leaders formed the National Unity Government (NUG) with the armed group Peoples' Democratic Force (PDF). Along with dozens of other ethnic armed groups, they have been fighting the military and now control large swathes of Myanmar.

Bangladesh's relationship with Myanmar remains sore because of the Rohingyas who fled to Bangladesh in

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

SCRAPPING OF CARETAKER GOVT

Petition filed for reviewing SC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A petition was filed with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday seeking review of its verdict that scrapped the nonparty caretaker government system in May 2011.

Lawyers Sharif Bhuiyan and Tanim Hussain Shawon submitted the review petition on behalf of five eminent citizens, including Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, citing some 14 grounds for reconsideration of the apex court's judgement.

"We have submitted the review petition against the Appellate Division verdict that revoked the constitution's 13th amendment. We will present the petition before a full bench of this court once it reconvenes after the annual vacation," lawyer Sharif told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Appellate and High Court divisions of the SC is scheduled to go into an annual vacation on September 6. They will reopen on October 20.

Citing the review petition, Sharif said the caretaker government

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

GAZA STRIP

No place for displaced as fighting rages

Israeli strikes kill 22; Israeli hostage rescued after 10 months

AGENCIES

Palestinians displaced by fighting in the Gaza Strip crowded onto the seashore as Israeli forces continued to battle Hamas fighters in central and southern areas, with health officials reporting at least 22 people killed in strikes yesterday.

Ceasefire talks were continuing in Cairo with little sign of a concrete breakthrough over key issues separating the sides, including future control over two corridors in the Gaza Strip once fighting ends.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military yesterday said it rescued an Israeli hostage in Gaza.

Kaid Farhan Alkadi, a 52-year-old Israeli Bedouin, was among the 251 people abducted by Hamas on October 7 last year.

"Alkadi was rescued... in a complex operation in the southern Gaza Strip," the statement said, adding that he was in a stable condition and being transferred to a hospital for a medical check-up.

Hostage rescues are rare, but Israeli forces have so far rescued alive eight captives since the ground military campaign in Gaza began on October 27. Seven hostages have been freed since a week-long truce ended in November.

- Few signs of progress in Cairo peace talks
- UN says movement of aid, aid workers in Gaza halted
- Gaza death toll hits 40,476

PROBING RECENT ABUSES

Seek resolution at UNHRC session to set up mechanism

HRW urges interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Watch has called on the interim government to seek a resolution at the upcoming session of UNHRC to establish an independent mechanism to investigate and pursue accountability for recent grave abuses in Bangladesh.

The 57th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council is set to begin on September 9, 2024.

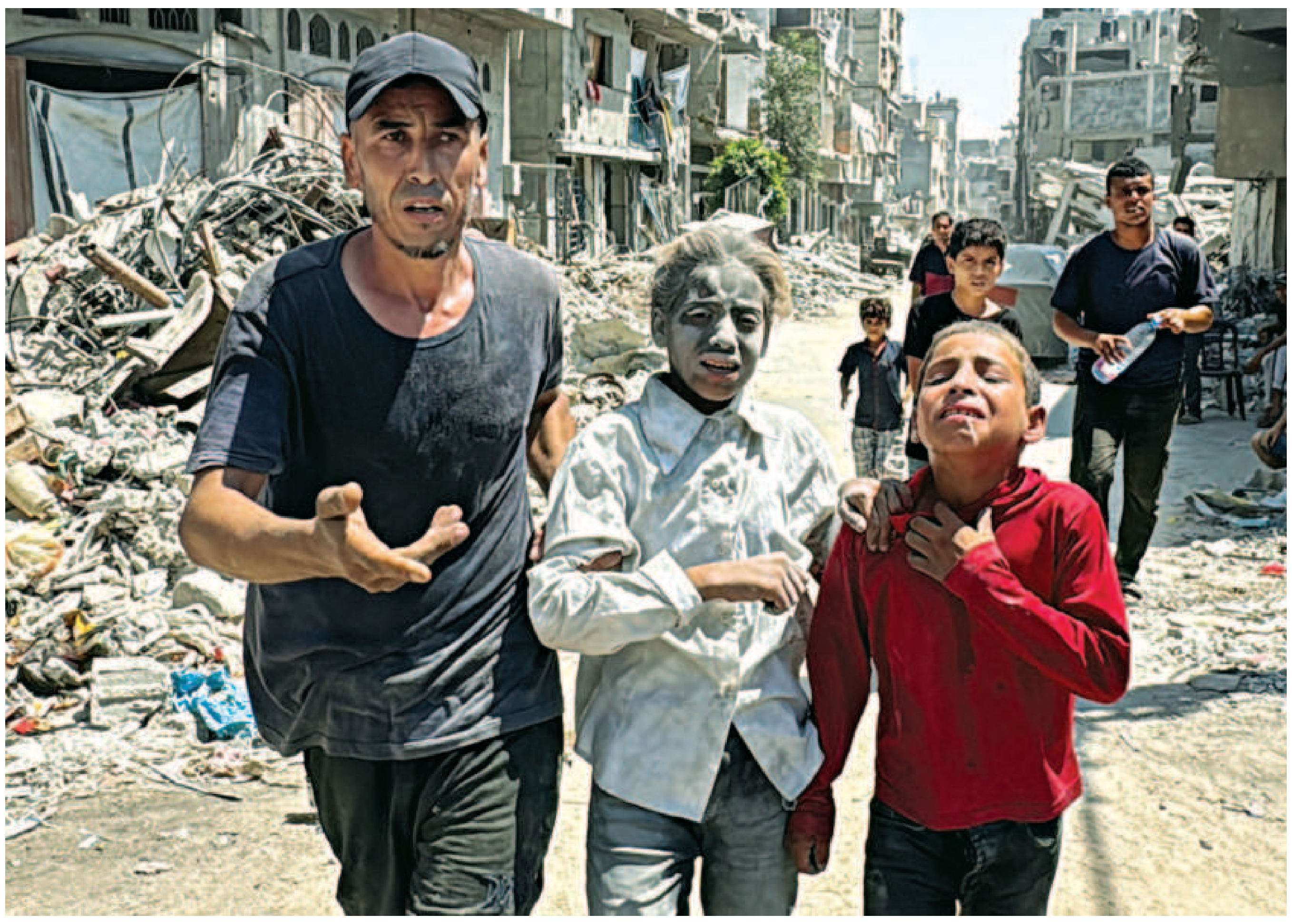
In a letter to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and other interim government officials, HRW emphasised the need for ensuring ongoing monitoring of Bangladesh's human rights situation by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and for regular reporting to the council.

The interim government should also work with OHCHR and relevant UN experts to set up an independent domestic inquiry into enforced disappearances, torture, and extrajudicial killings during former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's 15-year administration, Human Rights Watch said in the letter released on Monday.

This domestic mechanism should operate with UN support and oversight to ensure its independence and adherence to international human rights standards.

"Following Sheikh Hasina's resignation amid mass protests, Bangladesh's interim government has the heavy

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



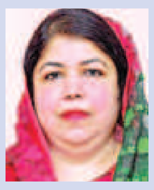
Palestinians evacuate injured children at the site of an Israeli strike that destroyed several houses in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Murder case filed against ex-speaker Shirin

Tipu Munshi also sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*



Former Jatiya Sangsad speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, former commerce minister Tipu Munshi and 15 others were accused yesterday in a case filed over the murder of a goldsmith in Rangpur during a mass protest on July 19.

The other accused include former lawmaker from the women's reserved seat for Rangpur Nachima Zaman Bobby, former Rangpur-2 MP Abul Kalam Md Ahsanul Haque Chowdhury,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Two girls found dead 3 days after going missing

Doctor suspects murder after rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Brahmanbaria*

The bodies of two female students, presumed to have been killed after rape, were recovered in Brahmanbaria yesterday, three days after they went missing.

Naima Akther, 13, of Kalisima village under Brahmanbaria Sadar, and Maimuna Akhter, 15, of Uttarpara village, were resident students of Mayna Begum Islamia Hafizia Mahila Madrasa in the area.

Police said they went missing on Saturday night and the madrasa authorities informed their families of the matter.

The madrasa authorities and

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Hasan Mahmud, Nowfel, S Alam, sued for murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

A murder case was filed yesterday against former foreign minister Hasan Mahmud, S Alam Group Chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam, former principal secretary to the Prime Minister's Office Tofazzal Hossain Mia and 270 others.

Nazim Uddin, office secretary of the Chattogram district (north) unit of Jubo Dal, the youth wing of the BNP, filed the case with Chattogram Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court.

The court ordered the Rangunia Police Station to register the case, said plaintiff's lawyer Ashraf Hossain.

The case accuses 270 named persons and 150 unnamed.

The other accused are former

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Hasina faces 5 more cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was accused in five more cases yesterday.

Four of the cases were filed in Dhaka over the killing of four people during the recent student-led movement, while another was filed in Rajshahi over the abduction and torture of a BNP leader in 2023.

With this, Hasina is now facing 71 cases, including 60 for murder, seven for crimes against humanity and genocide, three for abduction, and one for attack on a BNP procession.

Hasina and 48 others were sued for the killing of one Dulal alias Selim in the city's Jatrabari area on August 3.

The victim's brother Mostafa Kamal filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

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DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 29, 2024

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The most striking aspect of UCB is that it has redefined the landscape of higher education in Bangladesh by offering top university programmes from leading Australian and UK partner institutions right here at home.

MIFTAHUL JANNAT *and* MUJIB RAHMAN

Pursuing an international degree can be overwhelming and expensive. From navigating the admissions process to securing a visa and relocating to a new country, each step demands a significant amount of time and effort. Universal College Bangladesh (UCB) helps you transcend geographical boundaries by allowing you to prepare for, pursue, or even complete your long-dreamt foreign degree right here in Dhaka. Whether you come from a Bangla or English medium background, UCB's internationally accredited curriculum and classrooms will connect you directly to educational powerhouses in the UK, Australia, and beyond.

Overview of UCB

There are very few institutions like Universal College Bangladesh (UCB), located in the heart of Dhaka's elite district, that offer world-class educational services to Bangladeshi students. UCB, as the first-ever international higher education provider approved by the Ministry of Education in Bangladesh, has partnerships with some of the world's leading universities. It is a great privilege to be a part of the UCB family, especially as a student.

With the ever-growing opportunities for global exposure, it has become increasingly common for young Bangladeshis to seek better educational opportunities abroad. The most striking aspect of UCB is that it has redefined the landscape of higher education in Bangladesh by offering top university programmes from leading Australian and UK partner institutions right here at home.

As expected, all of UCB's programmes are taught by highly qualified faculty who creatively utilise small group teaching and provide personalised attention to every student. The teachers are equally committed to guiding students in all aspects of life, including extracurricular activities and other support services.

It's important to note that while studying abroad often requires students to live away from their families, UCB offers a wide array of world-class programmes close to home, with lower tuition fees compared to other international universities. This allows students to receive a top-tier education while staying within reach of their families, saving money, and maintaining a close connection with home. For students interested in pursuing studies abroad, UCB also provides support in test preparation, college applications, visa processing, and financial aid counselling.

Being a UCB student offers the opportunity for a successful career, particularly through placement opportunities with esteemed local and international multinational corporations. To this end, UCB has established partnerships with leading companies such as Singer, LankaBangla, and Berger.

UCB is also planning to develop a 15-acre fully integrated learning and living centre, equipped with world-class facilities for over 10,000 students. Additionally, UCB is in discussions with top-ranked universities globally and has already made significant strides in introducing new programmes in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), as well as in soft sciences such as design, fashion, logistics, hospitality, and many other disciplines that will contribute to the economic development and success of Bangladesh.

RECOGNITION & CERTIFICATE AWARD CEREMONY

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In conversation with Professor Hew Gill,
President & Provost,
Universal College Bangladesh

The Daily Star (TDS): Universal College Bangladesh (UCB) has garnered a reputation for itself over the years. What are your organisational missions, and how would you describe the institution?

Hew Gill (HG): We are the first institution in Bangladesh to be given permission by the government to offer international higher education qualifications. At the moment, we offer qualifications from Australia and the UK, and we'll be expanding the number of qualifications from different countries over the next year. Our mission is to give Bangladeshi students the opportunity to access world-class international programmes right here in Bangladesh, in a way that is much more competitive. This approach alleviates concerns about visa, travel, and living expenses, allowing students to complete everything right here in Dhaka while receiving the same quality education as they would in Australia or the UK. Additionally, our programmes particularly enable HSC students to obtain the necessary qualifications to either enter universities directly or complete their international degrees right here in Bangladesh. This is a unique offer; no one else is providing this kind of opportunity here.

> **Our international curriculum ensures that Bangladeshi students are studying the very latest in their chosen field of study. At the end of it, they receive a qualification recognised worldwide, without question. Everything we do is directly aligned with our partners, applying the same policies, procedures, teaching techniques, exams, and marking standards, all of which are checked by our partners.**

TDS: Kindly give us a brief overview of the different courses offered by UCB. What makes them different from the courses available at other universities in Bangladesh?

HG: We offer four degrees from the University of London, provided under the academic direction of the London School of Economics. These degrees are in Business & Management, Accounting & Finance, Economics, and Finance. Bangladeshi students can complete all three years of these degrees right here in Bangladesh. By special agreement with the University of London and the London School of Economics, we also offer a programme called CHESS (Certificate of Higher Education in Social Sciences), which enables HSC students to join directly. Provided they pass CHESS, they can gain direct entry to the second year of the degree. CHESS is essentially a pathway programme, but at the same time, it covers the content of the first year. Normally, HSC students would need to complete some kind of foundation to gain direct admission into world-ranked universities. However, with the CHESS programme, they can complete this in the same time as the first year and then move directly into the second year, making it a total of three years after HSC.

What's unique about us? Our international curriculum ensures that Bangladeshi students are studying the very latest in their chosen field of study. At the end of it, they receive a qualification recognised worldwide, without question. A college education from the London School of Economics or Monash will open doors to any university for a Master's and also provide a competitive edge in terms of employability. Moreover, everything we do is directly aligned with our partners, applying the same policies, procedures, teaching techniques, exams, and marking standards, all of which are checked by our partners.

TDS: How do your students perform compared to students doing the same courses overseas? How do Bangladeshi students find studying an international curriculum?

HG: Bangladeshi students are performing exceptionally well. I had the privilege of attending our last Monash convocation and proudly reported to representatives from Monash and the Australian High Commissioner that our students are performing better than students in Australia. Our foundation programme has a 97% pass rate, with over 60% of our students achieving top grades. In our Monash continuation degree pathway programme, we have a 100% pass rate. We are extremely proud of this, and it demonstrates the remarkable capabilities of Bangladeshi students—they are among the best in the world. More importantly, we conduct student surveys, which reveal that our students are overwhelmingly satisfied, with ratings of 4.8 out of 5.

TDS: How do your courses prepare students for further study and employment? What difference do international qualifications make in the Bangladeshi job market?

PHG: Most young Bangladeshis do not realise how valuable they are in Bangladesh with an international education. They often believe that their value lies in going overseas. However, if you go to places like London, Sydney, or Melbourne, you become just another English speaker. Staying in Bangladesh with an international education allows you to communicate with multinational companies on equal terms while understanding the local culture, language, and business landscape—qualities that foreign businesses increasingly need. As a former international entrepreneur and banker, I found individuals with global knowledge to be invaluable. These skills not only secure top salaries now but will also be essential as Bangladeshi businesses expand internationally in the future. Our programmes equip students with critical thinking, language proficiency, and an understanding of global business structures, making them highly employable and valuable in both local and international markets. So, if you're a student today, you'll be extremely valuable to foreign businesses for the next 20 years and to Bangladeshi businesses looking to expand overseas in the following 20 years. Thus, your entire career over the next 40 years, with an international education, is likely to be very successful.

TDS: In your opinion, how much have you been able to achieve your organisational aspirations since inception? Can you also share a bit about the future plans for UCB?

PHG: We have achieved quite a lot in the last year. We doubled our student numbers, launched four new University of London degree programmes, and are preparing to offer more in collaboration with the University of Central Lancashire, who sent a team here in July for an inspection. We have already passed the accreditation validation and received 11 commendations for excellence—the highest number ever awarded to any institution, including their partners in the UK. We have also improved our academic performance. Next year, we plan to expand into areas such as Fashion Design, Psychology, and Communications, and we're also developing STS Knowledge City, a 10,000-seat campus offering a broad range of international programmes.

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"We offer globally sought-after Bachelor's and MASTER'S PROGRAMMES"

In conversation with Chan Joe Jim, Provost, UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus

The Daily Star (TDS): What sets your university apart from others? What would you consider your key strengths?

Chan Joe Jim (CJJ): UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus takes pride in being the first foreign university branch campus in Bangladesh, approved by both the Ministry of Education in Bangladesh and Malaysia. We have launched our educational programmes at a state-of-the-art 15-storey campus located in Banani, Dhaka.

Our students also benefit from career and employment counselling provided by experienced local and international faculty. Furthermore, Main Campus' Student Affairs and Alumni (SAA) Department supports in paving the way for employment opportunities abroad for our students.

Our university is ranked 265th globally in the QS World University Rankings 2025. Additionally, we are ranked 61st in Asia and 14th in Southeast Asia, leading the way among universities in Bangladesh.

We are the first institution in Bangladesh to offer international degrees in diverse fields such as Hotel Management, Fashion Design, and Mass Communication (with specialisations in Marketing, Journalism, Film, and Television). This initiative creates significant opportunities for women in Bangladesh to pursue internationally recognised higher education degrees.

Furthermore, we offer globally sought-after Bachelor's and Master's programmes, including Financial Economics, Supply Chain Operations Management, Hospitality Administration, Psychology, and Business Information Systems.

TDS: How does UCSI University's global ranking and reputation benefit local students studying at the Bangladesh branch campus?

CJJ: The global ranking and reputation of UCSI University are invaluable assets that directly benefit local students at our Bangladesh branch campus. Our students can take pride in being associated with a university that has a strong global presence. This recognition significantly enhances their credibility and competitiveness on a global scale, making them attractive candidates for further studies and job opportunities both locally and internationally.

Additionally, our extensive global network and partnerships with renowned institutions provide our students with exposure to diverse cultures, perspectives, and experiences. This enrichment prepares them for success in an increasingly globalised world.

TDS: Tell us about some of the exclusive facilities your university offers to students.

CJJ: UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus is strategically located in Banani, at the heart of Dhaka city. Our campus is equipped with modern classrooms and specialised facilities, including a Computer Lab, Fashion Design Lab, Graphics and Multimedia Lab, Electronics Engineering Lab, and a well-stocked Library.

Our students also benefit from career and employment counselling provided by experienced local and international faculty. Furthermore, the Main Campus's Student Affairs and Alumni (SAA) Department supports our students in finding employment opportunities abroad.

TDS: What opportunities does your university provide to meritorious students?

CJJ: At UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus, we offer scholarships ranging from 20% to 100% for meritorious students. These scholarships are awarded based on the students' previous academic results and admission test performance. Each year, our university grants scholarships worth Tk 5 crore to outstanding students.

TDS: What steps are you taking to assist students as they enter their careers after graduation?

CJJ: Our experienced faculty members regularly emphasise the importance of research programmes to equip students with up-to-date education, helping them stay ahead in the modern workplace. Additionally, we organise seminars and workshops related to higher education and research on our campus to further support our students' career development.

TDS: What kind of careers are your students most likely to pursue?

CJJ: Since the UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus is a recent addition to Bangladesh, I can share that students from UCSI University Malaysia have excelled in careers across various sectors, including Communication Technology, International Quality Hotels, Fashion Design Institutes, Insurance Companies, and Government, Private, and Multinational Companies. They are successfully employed in numerous multinational companies around the world, such as Accenture, Citibank, Deloitte, DHL, Ernst & Young, Hewlett-Packard, HSBC, Nestlé, Samsung, Standard Chartered, and many more.

TDS: How much emphasis do you place on helping students develop their co-curricular skills?

CJJ: We place a strong emphasis on developing students' co-curricular skills, recognising their vital role in shaping well-rounded individuals. Our university has introduced a variety of clubs, including the Business Club, Adventure Club, Cultural Club, Debate Club, Photography Club, Football Club, and more, to nurture the diverse interests of our students.

These clubs offer opportunities for students to explore their passions, develop leadership and social skills, and actively engage with their peers. Our aim is for students to graduate with not only academic knowledge but also the practical skills and experiences necessary for success in their future endeavours.

TDS: What is the vision for the future of UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus to improve educational opportunities and learning experiences for local students?

CJJ: Moving forward, we have several strategic plans for the university's growth and development. One of our primary goals is to build a permanent campus in Bangladesh, modelled after our main campus in Malaysia. Additionally, we are continuously working on various initiatives to ensure our students have access to the latest facilities, making their learning experience truly innovative.

Our academic leadership includes a Malaysian Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and Provost, along with prominent local and international faculty members. We have established various clubs under Student Affairs & Alumni that engage students in workshops, seminars, events, industrial visits, domestic and international tours, and humanitarian activities, helping them develop leadership, social, and human qualities.

PAVING THE WAY TO WORLD-CLASS Education for Bangladeshi Students

SAUDIA AFRIN

Pursuing higher education is a pivotal moment in a student's life, marked by decisions that can shape their future. While local universities remain popular, an increasing number of Bangladeshi students are looking beyond borders, drawn by the wealth of opportunities that studying abroad offers. Securing a place at prestigious international universities, however, requires expert guidance and access to the latest information. Recognising this need, MH Global Group's sister concerns, AHZ and MIE Pathways, have positioned themselves as trusted mentors, dedicated to guiding Bangladeshi students through every step of their journey to global education.

"At AHZ and MIE Pathways, we pride ourselves on shaping academic journeys and go out of our way to ensure that our students have the best possible experience," said Golam Mortuza, Chief Executive Officer of MH Global Group.

Two international students from Bangladesh began the journey of AHZ in 2012 in London, recognising the opportunity to support their fellow countrymen and women in leveraging a UK education.

AHZ – When UK is the Destination

According to the latest UNESCO data, 52,799 Bangladeshi students studied abroad in 2023, with 6,586 choosing the UK, making it the second most popular destination after the US. The UK consistently remains a top choice for Bangladeshi students pursuing higher education.

Two international students from Bangladesh began the journey of AHZ in 2012 in London, recognising the opportunity to support their fellow countrymen and women in leveraging a UK education. Their aspirations were not only to advance their own lives but also to uplift the communities around them. Their commitment to improving the world remains evident at AHZ to this day. Since its inception, the platform has assisted more than 25,000 students in enrolling at UK institutions.

"We support Bangladeshi students by providing them with a free platform to connect with UK institutions that are looking to recruit international students," said Mortuza.

As AHZ focuses exclusively on supporting students who wish to study at UK universities, it partners with over 130 universities and centres across the UK. The platform operates nine offices in Bangladesh and 50 more globally, offering a range of essential services for students planning to study abroad. To reach as many students as possible, AHZ, which has been shortlisted for the PIEoneer Awards, is continuously expanding its global presence by establishing new offices to better cater to students' needs.

Mahfuz Islam, currently pursuing an MSc in Infection and Immunity at the University of Chester as a January 2024 intake student, shared: "It was a sudden decision. Last August, I reached out to AHZ, and they provided me with a list of available options within a very short timeframe. The counsellor also helped me find a programme closely aligned with my current academic background and future plans." Mahfuz also expressed his gratitude for the assistance he received in securing an annual scholarship of £2,500. He noted: "They are efficient, qualified, and know exactly what they are doing."

Counselling is perhaps one of the most crucial services offered by AHZ. Mortuza explained that these sessions provide a comprehensive overview of studying in the UK, including information on costs, available part-time jobs, career opportunities post-study, the climate, and, importantly, popular Bangladeshi food options.

"Most of our counselling team are UK graduates. They provide first-hand insight into their lives as students in the UK. Our counsellors play a crucial role in shaping study journeys. Our counselling services are designed to provide personalised guidance and support, ensuring that students make informed decisions and successfully navigate the complex process of applying to UK institutions," said Mortuza.

In addition to students from English medium backgrounds, those from the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) also apply to UK-based universities. Mortuza highlighted that over the past few years, more UK university entry requirements now align with Bangladeshi national school and university qualifications. "This means that even more Bangladeshi students will have the chance to realise their dream of studying in the UK," he added.

SEE PAGE J7

"We offer students an UNPARALLELEDRANGE OF SERVICES"

In conversation with Golam Mortuza, Chief Executive Officer, MH Global Group

The Daily Star (TDS): Can you provide an overview of AHZ?

Golam Mortuza (GM): AHZ is the largest UK-exclusive university representative. We provide comprehensive guidance and support at every step of an applicant's journey, ensuring a smooth transition to their desired university. AHZ started in London in 2012, and since then, we've supported more than 25,000 students to enrol in UK institutions.

> **One of the biggest benefits of working with AHZ is that we work exclusively with UK universities, meaning that our teams are not only experts in UK study but also have strong relationships with many prestigious institutions.**

Since 2012, we have always operated on a no-fee basis, meaning that the students we support can dedicate all their time and resources to funding their studies in the UK. We always seek to employ locally and support local economies and communities through the DMH Foundation. Most of our counselling team are UK graduates, and we currently have around 750 colleagues globally.

AHZ is wholly owned and operated by two international students from Bangladesh who saw an opportunity to support their fellow countrymen and women in using a UK education to not only better themselves but also to improve the communities around them. Their drive to make the world a better place continues to shine through at AHZ to this day.

TDS: How does AHZ support Bangladeshi students pursuing higher education in the UK?

GM: We support Bangladeshi students by providing a free platform to connect with UK institutions that are looking to recruit international students. AHZ does this through a number of helpful services. Arguably the most important is counselling. All our students are counselled by one of our trusted British Council-certified advisors, most of whom are UK graduates. During the counselling sessions, we provide an overview of what studying in the UK is like, the costs involved, available part-time jobs during their studies, career opportunities post-study, the weather, and, most importantly, where our students can get the best.

We have nine offices in Bangladesh and 50 more globally. We have been expanding our presence worldwide to ensure we can reach as many students as possible in an environment that best suits their needs.

TDS: How can students avail themselves of the facilities offered by the platform?

GM: The best way to get started with AHZ is to book an appointment to meet one of our counsellors, either face-to-face or online. You can do that by visiting our website, www.ahzassociates.co.uk, and filling out the contact details form. A member of our team will get back to you within 24 hours, or you can visit one of our offices.

TDS: What makes AHZ stand out compared to other similar platforms?

GM: AHZ stands out from our competitors because we offer students an unparalleled range of services; we support them with everything from applications to scholarships, and we can have offers turned around in as little as a few hours to the next day! One of the biggest benefits of working with AHZ is that we work exclusively with UK universities, meaning that our teams are not only experts in UK study but also have strong relationships with many prestigious institutions. As a result, we can offer the most up-to-date information and the quickest turnaround time possible.

We are a people-first, technology-second business. We aim to help students engage with their studies and support them throughout their entire journey.

TDS: What is AHZ's vision for the future?

GM: Our vision is to ensure that as many Bangladeshi students as possible get the opportunity to study in the UK. We want to see communities and families within Bangladesh grow and develop as a result of this incredible opportunity. We see education becoming more accessible in the coming years and want to be at the forefront of that. With entry requirements matched to Bangladeshi school and university qualifications, even more Bangladeshi students will have the chance to realise their dream of UK study.

TDS: Lastly, do you have any advice for students who are considering studying abroad?

GM: The best advice I can give is twofold. First, do your research and make sure that the institution, location, fees, and career outcomes align with where you want to be in the future. Second, act now—don't hesitate! The earlier you apply, the more likely you are to be accepted, and the sooner you can start your educational journey to the UK.

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The Daily Star

Unlocking Global Opportunities

FROM PAGE J1

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THANK YOU!

New postgraduate programmes are also on the horizon.

Next, we will explore the state-of-the-art collaborations between UCB and its partner institutions, including the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Monash University, and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

London School of Economics (LSE)

UCB has successfully partnered with the prestigious University of London. This partnership allows UCB to offer its students a full Bachelor of Science Honours degree under the academic supervision of the London School of Economics (LSE). This collaboration provides UCB students with a remarkable opportunity to pursue LSE curricula for three-year degrees in Accounting and Finance, Business and Management, Economics, and Finance.

In addition, UCB has introduced a unique course called the Certificate of Higher Education in Social Science (CHESS). This programme is specifically designed to integrate students who have completed their HSC in Bengali or English versions. Upon successfully completing CHESS, students can transition directly into the University of London degree programme and complete it in three years without the need for any additional qualifications.

Choosing to study under the London School of Economics (LSE) curriculum at UCB offers numerous advantages. Students can earn a University of London degree while benefiting from the academic rigour and prestige of LSE. Upon completion of their studies, they have the opportunity to attend the convocation ceremony in London, celebrating their achievements on a global stage. The programme also provides a seamless pathway to pursue a Master's degree at LSE or other top-tier universities, further enhancing their academic and career prospects.

Exceptionally high-performing students may have the opportunity to transfer to LSE, allowing them to experience the vibrant academic environment of one of the world's leading institutions. Additionally, students can participate in the LSE Summer School, a three-week programme that offers intensive courses and the opportunity to network with peers and professionals from around the world.

UCB students also gain access to valuable internship opportunities, helping them gain industry exposure and practical experience with top corporations. This hands-on experience, combined with the quality of education, positions graduates for successful career placement in leading companies in Bangladesh and multinational corporations, ensuring they are well-prepared to excel in their chosen fields.

UCB launched its University of London degree programme with the gracious presence of Dr. James Abdey from LSE, and the first batch of UCB students began their international education in Gulshan last October. It is expected that this cohort will complete their international degrees by May 2026.

University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

UCB launched its programme not long ago, and within a short period, it has shown remarkable progress in student recruitment. According to a UCB official, the number of students has doubled compared to the previous year in existing programmes. Inspired by this recent success, UCB plans to upgrade and expand its offerings by establishing new partnerships with globally recognised universities. A recent Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) is a prime example.

UCB is already preparing to launch UCLan academic programmes, aiming to blend academic excellence with cultural diversity. Through this partnership, UCB is committed to producing a new generation of leaders and innovators, equipping Bangladeshi students with a global perspective and industry-relevant skills.

UCLan sent a team to inspect UCB last July. "I've already received the official confirmation, and what I can tell you is that we've passed the accreditation validation and received 11 commendations for excellence—the highest number they've ever awarded to any institution, including their UK partners. So, they rated us better than their British partners, which I'm very pleased about. In the first year, the degree programmes will be in Business & Management and Software Engineering. The good news is these will also be direct entry programmes for HSC students, allowing them to complete a full three-year honours degree from the UK right here," said Prof. Hew Gill, President & Provost of UCB.

With training at UCB, students will be well-equipped to tackle challenges both globally and locally, thanks to their exposure to world-class education. UCB students can also easily secure placements and opportunities, such as joining the summer school at UCLan, where they can engage with real-world problems and industry challenges. In terms of access to online academic resources, UCB students will be able to take a virtual tour of UCLan, further enhancing their academic experience.

While UCLan programmes at UCB offer a globally consistent curriculum, this does not mean that the education is ahistorical or non-contextual with reference to Bangladesh. Instead, it will be aligned with local sensibilities and context-specific resources.

The assessment process will be uniform across all locations. UCB students can easily transfer between institutions if they wish, spending a year at UCB and then seamlessly continuing their studies in the UK.

SEE PAGE J6

UCB is not all about studies. They offer a wide range of facilities, including a library and various clubs, and each week is packed with different social and co-curricular activities. UCB's President shared that last month they successfully completed a Chess Championship and are also planning to celebrate World Photography Day and World Online Learning Day.

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Unlocking Global Opportunities

Obtaining an international qualification from the comfort of your home country not only makes international education affordable but also increases the chances of securing scholarships for fully funded Master's or PhD programmes in the future.

FROM PAGE J5

Monash University
UCB's exclusive partnership with Monash University enables it to offer the Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) and Monash College Diploma (MCD) programmes in Bangladesh. With these programmes, students benefit from a curriculum designed to meet international standards, preparing them for seamless entry into one of the world's leading universities. Additionally, studying at UCB offers a cost-effective alternative while maintaining the same academic rigour and support available at Monash University.

Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY)
MUFY is a pre-university comprehensive programme that provides students with a solid foundation, allowing for a smooth transition to their bachelor's degree. It qualifies students to enter all 10 Monash faculties with a wide range of subject choices, including business, engineering, architecture, law, medicine, and information technology. Successful completion of MUFY allows students guaranteed entry into the first year of their chosen undergraduate degree at Monash University in Australia or Malaysia.

The foundation programme has three intake sessions in January, July, and August. It has a duration of 10 months and is taught over two semesters. Each semester consists of at least four units, and completing the programme requires passing a minimum of eight units. However, students can also choose to complete bonus units each semester to increase their final score. This university pathway programme enables HSC, O, AS, or A level students to gear up and step into their guaranteed first-year entry at Monash University.

Monash MCD Programmes
The Monash College Diploma (MCD) is equivalent to the first year of a degree programme at Monash University in Australia and Malaysia, providing students with direct entry into the second year of degrees in data science, business, IT, and engineering. Monash College fully oversees and directs everything related to the annual teaching plan, semester structure, learning objectives, curriculum, testing, and evaluation process for UCB's MCD programmes. "Everything that we do under Monash is exactly similar to them and is marked by Monash. So, the marks we're getting, the exams we're taking, the way we're teaching students are identical to what students would get if they went directly to Melbourne," remarked Professor Hew Gill, Provost & President at UCB.

The MCD programmes are offered in three fields of study: business, engineering, and IT, and they are divided into two parts. The first part teaches students basic maths and science theories, while the second part covers the same subjects offered in the first year at Monash University, helping students gain specialised knowledge in engineering, IT, or business. The MCD in Business is a 9-month long programme, and students are free to choose from two main streams. The business stream is for students who want to pursue a business degree majoring in banking, finance, marketing, or accounting. Students can also opt for a specialised degree, such as a Bachelor of International Business, where they will develop the expertise to operate in global business environments and acquire the skills necessary to conduct business across various countries and settings. The commerce stream is for those looking to major in economics, finance, actuarial studies, or accounting and requires a higher level of mathematics.

The MCD in Engineering requires 12 months, while the IT programme requires 9 months to complete. After completing the Engineering MCD, students are eligible to transfer to the second year of various engineering degrees, including software engineering, robotics, aerospace, chemical, and biomedical engineering. Conversely, the IT MCD equips students to pursue a range of majors, from computer science to cybersecurity to game design or IT for business. Both of these programmes help students enter the most competitive and high-demand subjects in the world. Additionally, UCB students are eligible for special fee waivers when they enrol at Monash University.

One significant advantage of the MCD programmes is that they make world-class Monash degrees affordable by reducing the cost of the first year. If students were to pursue the first year in Australia, it would require at least 60 to 70 lakh BDT, whereas the amount would be around 35 to 40 lakh BDT if they completed the first year at the Monash Malaysia campus. However, S M Risalat Rahman, Assistant Manager at UCB, highlights that with the MCD programmes, students can complete the same first year for 8 to 9 lakh BDT, which makes a substantial difference to the overall spending for the Monash degree.

Unlock global opportunities with UIFY
UCB's International Foundation Year (UIFY) programme can give students a head start if they intend to pursue a degree with global prestige. The Level 3 UCB International Foundation Year (UIFY) for Higher Education Studies offers a unique opportunity for students to follow their desired career paths in more than 70 universities in the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, or Ireland. It is a one-year pre-university qualification exclusively crafted to enhance students' English language skills and provide a practical introduction to their chosen field of study, while also honing their research and study skills. Completing the foundation year gives Bangladeshi students, especially those from HSC backgrounds, the edge to excel in their undergraduate studies abroad.

Students can choose from fields such as business, engineering, computing, chemical engineering, higher finance, and health sciences through the UIFY programme. Eight universities in the UK, Australia, and Ireland offer guaranteed access to graduates of the NCC Educational Level 3 International Foundation Programme for Higher Studies. To gain entry into the UIFY programme, students must have completed either their GCSE/IGCSE 'O' levels or HSC with at least a GPA of 3.0 or above. HSC students are required to achieve an average of 50% with passes in four or more subjects, including Maths and English. Alternatively, they can gain admission with a valid score of 4.5 or above in the IELTS or by taking the free NCC Education Standard English Placement Test.

UCB is not all about studies. They offer a wide range of facilities, including a library and various clubs, and each week is packed with different social and co-curricular activities. UCB's President shared that last month they successfully completed a Chess Championship and are also planning to celebrate World Photography Day and World Online Learning Day. Their highly equipped labs are accessible to non-STEM students as well, provided they are members of the science club. There are also regular online sessions and physical visits from partner universities, offering students opportunities to engage directly and build connections that enhance their academic experience.

UCB offers a unique blend of opportunities for growth both academically and personally while ensuring a bright future in terms of employability and further higher education. Obtaining an international qualification from the comfort of your home country not only makes international education affordable but also increases the chances of securing scholarships for fully funded Master's or PhD programmes in the future. "I'd say now is a very exciting time for Bangladesh for many reasons. What Bangladesh needs now is a lot of bright, internationally educated people to take the country's economy to the next stage. So, don't think about going abroad; now is the time to serve the nation, and we can give you that international experience without having to go abroad," shared Professor Gill.

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Paving the Way to World-Class Education for Bangladeshi Students

As AHZ focuses exclusively on supporting students who wish to study at UK universities, it partners with over 130 universities and centres across the UK. The platform operates nine offices in Bangladesh and 50 more globally, offering a range of essential services for students planning to study abroad.

FROM PAGE J3

When asked about special considerations, he further explained: "If an applicant falls short of the requirements, we offer academic foundation courses through our partner NCUK. This allows us to support students who want to proceed to UK institutions but haven't met the requirements. We also work with all the major UK-based foundation providers. These courses have lower entry requirements but provide students with the opportunity to upgrade their NCTB qualifications."

MIE Pathways – Connecting the Dots

Due to variations in educational systems, cultural orientation, or language, many students fall short in certain areas when applying to international universities. To fill these gaps, students may require certifications such as the International Foundation Year or International Year One. Through MIE Pathways' partnership with NCUK—a global pathway provider that collaborates with universities in major study destinations like the UK, US, Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia—students gain access to a wide range of educational opportunities worldwide.

MIE Pathways, home to the NCUK Bangladesh centre, currently offers three courses designed to provide aspiring students with pathways to leading universities. "NCUK qualifications are designed to prepare international students for university study with guaranteed entry to universities worldwide. This means students can start a qualification in Bangladesh and progress to 50+ leading universities globally," mentioned Mortuza.

NCUK International Foundation Year

Imagine a Bangladeshi student who has never been outside the country and is now facing the challenge of managing everything on their own. The concerns about adapting to a new culture and language, along with maintaining a strong academic profile, are equally daunting for both the student and their parents. The NCUK International Foundation Year equips students to enter undergraduate degree programmes at over fifty institutions. It offers students the opportunity to study in small classes, build their confidence, adapt to the culture of their chosen destination, enhance their English proficiency, and strengthen their academic profile—all within Bangladesh before advancing to a guaranteed university placement.

NCUK International Year One

The International Year One programme enables students to complete the first year of an undergraduate degree at the MIE Pathways Centre in Bangladesh and then directly advance to Year 2 at a partner university. Students can choose from five subject routes, with progression options available to over 300 degree programmes at 26 prestigious universities in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia.

NCUK Master's Preparation

The NCUK Master's Preparation programme offers students the opportunity to focus on specific areas of improvement without completing a full qualification that may not be necessary. The Master's Pre-Sessional, delivered over 10 weeks, is designed for international students aiming to enhance their English language and academic study skills to ensure they are well-prepared for a master's degree.

In addition to improving English language skills and academic study abilities, the Master's Preparation course provides students with the opportunity to complete a 5,000-word dissertation. This practice dissertation helps students understand the requirements of academic research and writing, offering valuable experience before starting their master's programme. Depending on their English language proficiency, students can choose between the standard 20-week Master's Preparation course or the 30-week Master's Preparation (Enhanced) programme.

AHZ and MIE Pathways – Connecting Students to Opportunities

AHZ and MIE Pathways organise various events throughout the year to raise awareness among students. During large-scale exhibitions, partner universities participate to showcase their offerings, while smaller events provide students with the opportunity to meet AHZ and MIE Pathways staff, university academics, and representatives.

Earlier this year, MH Global Group organised the International Career and Education Expo and Emerging Leaders Award 2024 event in Dhaka, providing support for higher education, career development, networking, recognition, and more.

MH Global Group was established in response to the increasing demand for services beyond placing students into UK universities. In line with this, MH's other initiative, MIE English Academy, offers English coaching and testing through IELTS centres, further expanding the range of services available to Bangladeshi students.

AHZ and MIE Pathways Services at a Glance:

Personalised Counselling: Ensuring that all students are matched with their specific requirements, whether it's course, location, or budget.

University and Course Selection: Our counsellors have extensive knowledge of available university courses. We offer information on rankings, faculty expertise, campus facilities, and student life to help students make informed decisions.

Application Guidance: Our counsellors provide step-by-step assistance throughout the application process, including filling out forms, writing personal statements, and gathering required documents.

Test Preparation: Through our MIE English team, we support students with coaching and testing at IELTS centres.

Funding and Scholarships: Our counsellors provide up-to-date information on scholarship opportunities and ensure that students meet the funding requirements of their chosen institutions.

Visa Support: Our counsellors and compliance teams assist students in preparing their student visa applications.

Pre-Departure: Once students receive their visas, we organise a pre-departure briefing covering accommodation, travel, cultural adaptation, and campus life expectations.

UCSI University
BANGLADESH BRANCH CAMPUS
Insight

FromMalaysiatoBangladesh

UCSI's Journey of Educational Excellence

> **The UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus is committed to delivering top-notch teaching and learning facilities that meet international standards. The university is dedicated to investing in academic resources and services to enhance the student experience.**

PRIYAM PAUL

UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus, the first foreign university campus in Bangladesh, has its origins in Malaysia, where it was established in 1986. As one of Malaysia's top-ranked and largest private universities, UCSI has made notable strides by opening its inaugural branch in Bangladesh.

This campus provides significant advantages to Bangladeshi students, offering them the opportunity to pursue higher education at a globally recognised institution. Approved by the Ministries of Education in both Bangladesh and Malaysia, UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus has been operational since 2023, serving as a gateway to world-class education.

As a leading destination for higher education worldwide, UCSI's presence in Bangladesh is strategically designed to cater to the needs of Bangladeshi students. Students benefit from the flexibility of credit transfer options to the main Malaysian campus and other top global universities, facilitating their academic pursuits.

Located in Banani, Dhaka, the branch campus boasts excellent connectivity to all parts of the city via both public and private transportation.

The UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus is committed to delivering top-notch teaching and learning facilities that meet international standards. The university is dedicated to investing in academic resources and services to enhance the student experience.

UCSI Bangladesh places a strong emphasis on fostering an enriching and supportive educational environment. Its faculty members are highly qualified, comprising a blend of internationally and nationally acclaimed academics dedicated to nurturing students' academic growth and success.

"Our global reputation ensures that our students receive a high-quality education aligned with international standards. Our curriculum, teaching methodologies, and faculty expertise are all benchmarked against global best practices, providing an education that is not only of high quality but also competitive on an international scale," says Chan Joe Jim, Provost of UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus.

Ranking

UCSI University boasts an impressive ranking that reflects its rigorous academic standards and continuous efforts towards excellence. In the QS Asia University Rankings 2024, UCSI climbed 11 spots to secure the 61st position in Asia and 14th in Southeast Asia. The university has consistently improved its standing over the past seven years in this competitive annual ranking of Asia's top universities. Globally, UCSI is ranked 265th in the QS World University Rankings 2025, placing it in the top 1% of universities worldwide for the second consecutive year.

Additionally, UCSI ranks among the top 100 globally in Hospitality and Leisure Management and Arts and Design, within the top 350 in Business & Management Studies and the School of Graduate Studies, and within the top 550 in Social Sciences & Management. The university maintains solid foreign academic leadership, with a globally recognised standard upheld by its Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, and Provost in Bangladesh Branch Campus. This leadership ensures that students are well-supported and encouraged to reach their full potential from the start of their academic journey.

Key Features of UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus

The Bangladesh Branch Campus of UCSI University operates under the stringent regulation and approval of the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). All academic programmes and curricula are delivered by UCSI University, Malaysia, and implemented at the Bangladesh branch to ensure it upholds a centre of excellence.

The undergraduate exchange programmes are designed to include approximately two years of study in Bangladesh and two years in Malaysia. This structure enables students to gain both national and international learning experiences, aligning with their broader educational objectives.

"In addition to the on-campus facilities, our students have access to the online library and laboratories of our main campus in Malaysia. Our teaching staff comprises highly qualified educators with both local and international experience. Moreover, students have the opportunity to transfer credits to the Malaysian main campus or other leading universities globally," explains Chan Joe Jim, Provost of UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus.

The campus maintains international standards with cutting-edge logistical equipment, state-of-the-art laboratory facilities, a comprehensive library, and extensive educational resources. It provides excellent job opportunities with multinational companies worldwide and offers international pathways to countries such as Canada, Australia, the UK, and New Zealand. Importantly, degrees are awarded by UCSI University's main campus in Malaysia, ensuring global recognition.

Academic Programmes

UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus offers a diverse range of highly sought-after undergraduate and master's programmes, tailored to meet the evolving demands of the global job market and provide students with a solid educational foundation. These programmes are carefully crafted across various faculties and schools, enabling students to customise their educational paths according to their future aspirations. Graduates benefit from well-structured courses and a comprehensive learning experience, which enhances their prospects for securing employment both nationally and internationally.

"We have introduced exclusive Fast Track Master's Programmes this year in specialised fields such as Business Analytics, Sustainable Business, Logistics & Supply Chain Management, International Hospitality Management, and Technopreneurship. These programmes are designed to deepen the expertise of Master's degree holders in their respective areas. Students who meet certain prerequisites can complete their Fast Track Master's degree in just one year," explains Chan Joe Jim.

The most popular programmes include BBA, MBA, CSE, Business Information Systems, Psychology, Mass Communication, Supply Chain Management, Fashion Design with Marketing, and English Language and Communication. The following is a detailed list of the academic programmes currently offered:

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Master in International Hospitality Management
Master of Science in Technopreneurship
Master of Business Administration
Master in Logistics and Supply Chain Management

FAST TRACK MASTER'S IN SPECIALISED AREAS
Master in Logistics & Supply Chain Management
Master in International Hospitality Management
Master of Science in Technopreneurship
MBA (Business Analytics)
MBA (Sustainable Business)

UCSI University

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Accounting and Finance
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Branding and Advertising
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Business Administration
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Marketing
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Logistics Management
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Supply Chain Operations Management
Bachelor of Financial Economics (Hons)
Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Finance and Investment
Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Actuarial Science
Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Actuarial Science and Finance

FACULTY OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT
Bachelor of Hospitality Administration
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LIBERAL ARTS
BA (Hons) in Mass Communication (Marketing / Journalism / Film & Television)
BA (Hons) in Psychology

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING
Bachelor of Electrical and Electronics Engineering with Honours

FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND DIGITAL INNOVATION
Bachelor of Computer Science (Honours)
Bachelor of Computer Science (Hons) in Mobile Computing and Networking
BSc (Hons) in Business Information Systems

FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE
BA (Hons) in Graphic Design
BA (Hons) in Multimedia Design
BA (Hons) in Fashion Design with Marketing

Tuition Fees & Scholarships for the Bangladesh Branch Campus

UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus offers internationally recognised degrees at a local cost, significantly reducing foreign currency expenses and helping to retain talent within Bangladesh. Scholarships, ranging from 20% to 100%, are awarded based on merit, which is assessed through placement tests and previous academic performance.

By studying at UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus, students can cut foreign currency expenses by approximately 50%, as they complete their courses both in Dhaka and Malaysia. This arrangement results in a 50% reduction in tuition fees compared to studying entirely abroad. Additionally, the university provides scholarships amounting to Taka 5 crore annually, which not only promotes academic excellence but also enhances Bangladesh's reputation as an international study hub and a proponent of "edu-tourism."

Student Affairs & Alumni

UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus offers a vibrant array of student activities and recreational opportunities that enrich campus life. The university provides guidance for Extracurricular Learning Experience courses, encouraging students to engage in activities beyond the classroom. It also features a dynamic sports culture that caters to both dedicated athletes and casual players.

Chan Joe Jim elaborates on the role of Student Affairs & Alumni (SAA), stating, "The Student Affairs & Alumni (SAA) team represents students, ensuring a fulfilling and enjoyable campus experience. SAA supports students in their career pursuits, facilitating international job placements. Through the SAA department at the UCSI Main Campus, our students gain access to numerous job opportunities abroad. Additionally, our graduates receive preferential consideration for employment with Malaysian-invested companies in Bangladesh and enjoy priority for jobs in ASEAN countries."

The mission of Student Affairs & Alumni (SAA) is to advocate for students' rights, expand their opportunities, and enhance their overall experience. SAA is committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where every student can excel and succeed.

Consequently, UCSI University Bangladesh Branch Campus stands out as an excellent choice for students seeking a globally recognised institution that delivers high educational standards abroad at an affordable price.

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KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

Overall exports fell 4.34pc in FY2024

B1

Music with a mission

P3

US, China accuse each other of stoking regional tensions

P7

Tigers shouldn't overthink about facing Abrar

P11

BUDGET SUPPORT

Govt hunts for $8b from IMF, other lenders

Bangladesh seeks to shore up reserves, repay liabilities

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is seeking as much as $8 billion in budget support by December from the development partners, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to pay back foreign liabilities and boost foreign exchange reserves.

It is also working to get immediate funds from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank for rehabilitation programmes in areas recently devastated by floods.

Based on a primary assumption of loss and damage, the government has already sent a letter to the ADB, requesting $300 million for flood rehabilitation. It will seek a bigger amount from the World Bank, but a formal request has not been made yet.

Of the budget support, $3 billion is expected to come from the IMF on top of the global lender's existing $4.7 billion loan programme.

The government will seek as much as $5 billion from other development partners like the World Bank, ADB, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), said officials of the finance ministry and the Bangladesh Bank.

Recently, Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur told foreign media that they would seek $3 billion from the IMF. A finance ministry official said they have already started talks with the IMF for the funds.

The official said an IMF staff mission is likely to visit Bangladesh to discuss the loan towards the end of next month. After the visit, Bangladesh will formally send a letter to the IMF, seeking the additional loan.

- Govt to seek **$3b** from IMF
- Another **$5b** from other lenders
- IMF staff mission due next month
- **$300m** sought from ADB for flood-hit areas

IMF officials informed the finance ministry and the central bank that it was assessing how much it could lend Bangladesh, going beyond the existing quota for the country.

The officials said a meeting on the loan arrangement could be held on the sidelines of the World Bank-IMF Annual Meetings in Washington in October. Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed and the central bank governor are likely to take part in the meeting.

The IMF has so far released $2.3 billion under the $4.7 billion loan programme since its approval in January last year.

After the interim government took charge, the World Bank and the ADB held separate meetings with the finance adviser, the energy adviser and the central bank governor. Bangladesh sought more budget support from them during the meetings but did not specify any amount.

The energy adviser during meetings with the World Bank and the ADB sought $1 billion as immediate budget support, according to officials familiar with the development.

Officials at the Economic Relations Division said they could get funds from the World Bank under three arrangements -- a policy-based loan, diverted regional funds or from slow-moving projects.

Besides, Bangladesh could quickly get $1 billion to $1.5 billion from the ADB under two arrangements -- a policy-based loan or countercyclical support. Both JICA and AIIB could join the ADB arrangement, according to officials.

The interim government took charge amid pressure of high inflation and bleeding of foreign currency reserves which have been prevalent for almost two years.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Standing in floodwaters, Hosne Ara Begum, 60, hangs wet clothes out to dry in Gopal union under Feni's Chhagalnaiya upazila. Just like many of her neighbours, she returned home yesterday after a week as the floodwaters were receding.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

The long, dark past of UCB

Before Saifuzzaman, his father took control of the bank at gunpoint in 1999

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA *and*
MD MEHEDI HASAN

The central bank has just reconstituted the board of United Commercial Bank (UCB) for financial wrongdoings, but it has a darker past – a takeover at gunpoint by a politically influential family over a quarter of a century ago.

The saga of former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed's family that controlled the private bank's assets by force goes back to 1993 when Humayun Zahir, a director of the bank, was shot dead at his residence in Dhaka's Dhanmondi.

This dark chapter in the banking industry involved Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, the late father of Saifuzzaman. Akhtaruzzaman and his son have a long history of involvement in the Awami League politics and were blessed by former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

As the murder roiled the banking

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

GOVT, ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

TIB proposes a raft of reforms

Suggests two-term limit for PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday proposed a host of reform measures that would create a conducive state structure and the environment to build a transparent, accountable, corruption-free and discrimination-free "New Bangladesh".

"We are making these recommendations to assist the government. The authoritarian regime fell at the cost of unprecedented bloodshed and sacrifice through the movement of students and the people. One authoritarian regime should not be replaced by another," said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman at a press conference.

Chief among the recommendations is adding a provision in the constitution that would bar an individual from serving as the prime minister for more than two terms, a practice followed in the US.

IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

- Bring discipline, public safety, administrative normalcy
- UN-led investigations into past human rights violations
- Ensure proper legal procedures
- Form a task force for high-level corruption and money laundering Strategic areas

MORE ON PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Govt lifts ban on Jamaat, Shibir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday regained its right to do politics as the interim government revoked the executive order issued by the ousted Awami League government banning the Islamist party and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir.

The home ministry issued a gazette in this regard.

Jamaat, Shibir and all of Jamaat's front organisations were banned on August 1 as political parties and entities under the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009.

The home ministry on that day issued a gazette banning those outfits following the law ministry's approval. The AL government had taken the decision as per Section 18 (1) of the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009.

"The government has enough evidence that Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir were involved in recent killings and destructive and terrorist activities directly and through incitement," read the gazette.

Following a writ petition, the High Court in August 2013 declared Jamaat's registration with the Election Commission illegal. The Supreme Court later upheld the HC verdict, it added.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

SAFF U-20 C'SHIP

Next gen seal elusive silverware

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forward Mirajul Islam starred with a brilliant brace and an assist to power Bangladesh to a 4-1 victory over hosts Nepal in the title-decider of the SAFF U-20 Championship at the ANFA Complex in Lalitpur yesterday.

Rabby Hossain Rahul and Piash Ahmed Nova also netted home in an enthralling final where the two-time champions Nepal dominated much of the play. However, it was Bangladesh who rose to the challenge, lifting a trophy that had eluded them since the competition's inception in 2015.

Prior to the tournament, Bangladesh had finished runners-up three times in the previous five editions, during which they had failed to defeat Nepal in their last four encounters -- including a 2-1 loss in the group stage -- and, despite only having two

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

SAFF U-20 CHAMPIONSHIP 2024
CHAMPIONS

Bangladesh players and officials celebrate with the SAFF U-20 Championship trophy following their 4-1 win against Nepal in the final at the ANFA Complex in Lalitpur, Nepal yesterday.

PHOTO: **BFF**

'Hold talks with political parties on your tenure'

Fakhrul urges interim govt, says BNP hasn't forgotten 1/11

AGENCIES

The public and business community want a democratically elected government in the country, said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Speaking at a press conference at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office, he once again urged the interim government to engage in discussions with political parties on its tenure to prevent any misunderstandings.

"People want democracy and elections. We must keep that in mind," the BNP leader said.

"The major businesspersons in Bangladesh believe an elected government is essential for their businesses, industrial development, and the smooth functioning of the economy. They're clearly saying the sooner this happens, the better," he said.

"This is the reality. You [journalists] can verify this by speaking with the businesspeople and their leaders," he added.

Stating that the BNP has long been engaged in a

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Process on to bring back laundered money

Says chief adviser's office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has started the process to bring back the money laundered abroad and acquire local assets of the people who embezzled money from banks.

The information was shared by the office of the chief adviser of the interim government through a press release issued yesterday.

Bangladesh Bank's financial intelligence unit, criminal investigation department of police, and anti-corruption commission have started recovering the embezzled and laundered money, according to the press release.

The government has already contacted various foreign organisations seeking their assistance regarding the repatriation of the money.

"Some unscrupulous businessmen and other influential persons have in recent years embezzled huge sums of money anonymously and laundered it abroad through rampant corruption and fraud in the banking sector," it said.

The government is also working to determine the exact amount of money and assets laundered and embezzled from the banking sector, it also said, adding that the amount of embezzled money is believed to be over Tk 1 lakh crore.

It said reforms are already underway in banks and financial institutions associated with such corruption.

Besides, initiatives have been taken and the boards of Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank, National Bank, United Commercial Bank, Global Islami Bank, and Union Bank have been reconstituted.

It said reforms will also be initiated in the remaining banks and financial institutions.

The actual information of the embezzled money will be collected through the new management authority and the audit process will start to determine the actual amount of money embezzled from the banks.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

People push and shove each other to get close to an OMS truck to buy essentials at subsided prices in the capital's Mirpur-1 area. They had waited in queue for a long time. The food department yesterday sold OMS rice for Tk 30 a kg and flour for Tk 24 a kg.

Hasina made accused in 4 more cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has been sued in four more cases over the killings of three people and the attempted murder of another person during the student-led mass uprising.

Three of the cases were filed with Dhaka courts yesterday while another murder case was filed in Bogura two days ago.

Several former ministers, including Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, Asaduzzaman Khan, top police officers and at least three journalists, were among the accused.

With these, Hasina is now facing 75 cases related to the protests, including 63 on murder charges, seven on allegations of crimes against humanity and genocide, three on charges of abduction, and two for other charges.

Hasina and 30 others were sued over the death of grocery shop owner Mizanur Rahman during the quota reform movement in the capital's Banasree on July 19. His father Kamal Hossain filed the murder case with the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Tofazzal Hossain who

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Hold talks

FROM PAGE 1

movement for the restoration of democracy, Fakhrul said that elections are necessary for establishing democracy. "That's why we talk about elections; it is our right."

Fakhrul said they should not forget the depoliticisation efforts of the 1/11 regime. "During that time, there were attempts to abolish and eliminate our party. We cannot forget those things."

In response to a question about whether he sees any signs of 1/11 repeating, he said, "No, I do not see such signs. ... Some faces scare us. You have seen it too. We haven't seen them before... suddenly they're coming to the front page of the media... you (media) are propagating their theories and statements. I don't want to name anyone. I think this is not good for a healthy democratic process.

He, however, said BNP is willing to accept a reasonable time and offer full cooperation to the interim government. "We'll continue to do so as long as we believe the government is on the right track."

When asked to explain a logical time for the interim government, the BNP leader stated that it was a matter of discussion.

When his attention was drawn to the lifting of the ban on Jamaat-e-Islami, Fakhrul said, "We're not in favour of banning any political party, regardless of which party it is."

He said that the right to form organisations, which the constitution guarantees for every citizen, should be upheld.

However, the BNP leader said a party which doesn't believe in the independence of Bangladesh should not be supported.

However, the BNP leader said a party which doesn't believe in the independence of Bangladesh should not be supported.

Noting that many cases are now being filed randomly, Fakhrul requested the law enforcement agencies to conduct primary verification first before accepting these.

"I think this practice needs to be stopped completely. The way cases are being lodged will not consolidate this mass upsurge," he said, urging his party leaders and activists not to file any case that lack merit.

About the minority issue, Fakhrul said many campaigns are being carried out from abroad, especially from India, in a bid to undermine the mass upsurge in Bangladesh. "They want to make some political issues as communal ones, which is unacceptable," he said.

He also said the campaigns are being conducted targeting BNP, which is quite unfair.

"We're observing that some criminals in certain areas are indulging in offences such as occupying and establishing control, and efforts are being made to shift the blame onto the BNP. We would like to make it clear our leaders, activists are not involved in criminal activities," he said.

The BNP leader expressed surprise that leading and renowned newspapers are also reporting news involving the BNP in criminal acts. "I don't think it's justified. One or two individuals may commit misdeeds personally... ."

TIB proposes a raft of reforms

FROM PAGE 1

The same person should not hold the positions of the prime minister (head of government), the chief of a political party and the leader of parliament simultaneously.

TIB's recommendations for necessary reforms in the state structure to prevent corruption, and establish democracy, good governance and integrity are categorised into two groups: immediate and strategic areas.

The immediate priorities include ensuring discipline, public safety and administrative normalcy; conducting UN-led investigations into past human rights violations; ensuring proper legal procedures such that the judicial process remains unquestionable; and restoring normal economic activities.

A task force must be formed comprising the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU), the National Board of Revenue (NBR), the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Attorney General's Office to set an exemplary standard of effective accountability for high-level corruption and money laundering.

TIB demanded revealing the true picture of the banking sector following an independent and neutral investigation, and the formation of an "independent bank commission" with skilled specialists for the revival of the banking sector.

Strategic reforms include the introduction of proportional representation in the parliamentary system to ensure the true reflection of the people's verdict in the national parliament.

Additionally, an election-time interim government system should be introduced to ensure free, fair, neutral, and participatory parliamentary polls.

The Speaker should be free from party influence, avoid conflicts of interest and act as the guardian of parliament. They must conduct all parliamentary activities impartially.

The deputy speaker should be elected from the opposition in parliament.

In the absence of both the Speaker and the deputy speaker, members of the opposition parties included in the presidium should be allowed to perform the duties of the Speaker.

TIB also recommended amending Article 70 of the constitution to allow MPs the freedom to criticise their party and vote against it on different matters, including legislation, except for no-confidence motions and the budget.

Among the recommendations for democratic practices, TIB emphasised the need to abolish the monopoly and dynastic rule of a party chief and to determine party leadership through fair elections at all levels.

In the category of the rule of law and human rights, TIB called for immediate separation of the judiciary and specific policies and laws in consultation with the Supreme Court for the appointment of judges to the High Court.

FROM PAGE 1

IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

- Same person cannot be PM, party chief and leader of parliament at once
- Election-time interim government system
- Speaker to be free from party influence
- Deputy Speaker should be elected from the opposition in parliament
- MPs should be allowed the freedom to criticise their party

TIB also recommended repealing the 16th amendment to the constitution, which gave power to the Jatiya Sangsad to remove judges if allegations of incapability or misconduct against them are proved.

The other recommendations include ensuring accountability and exemplary punishment for multidimensional and unprecedented human rights violations through nationally and internationally acceptable, impartial and independent investigations.

The National Human Rights Commission must be granted the jurisdiction and capacity to investigate all allegations of human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances by security forces and law enforcement agencies, and to repeal all laws that violate human rights, including the Special Powers Act.

To prevent irregularities, corruption and money laundering, TIB called for ensuring the independence and capacity of the ACC and amending the Civil Service Act of 2018, the Money Laundering Prevention Act of 2012 and the Income Tax Act of 2023.

The agencies responsible for curbing and preventing corruption such as the ACC, the BFIU, the NBR, the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Attorney General's Office, the CID and other institutions concerned must develop professional skills free from party influence.

TIB recommended that no political appointments be made to institutions such as the Election Commission, ACC, Information Commission, NHRC, Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and Public Service Commission.

An independent working environment must be ensured in these institutions.

The Official Secrecy Act of 1923 and the Cyber Security Act of 2023 must be repealed and measures must be put in place to ensure personal information protection.

Additionally, TIB called for the necessary amendments to the constitution and relevant laws to make the local government system independent, strengthened and effective.

In the electricity, energy, and environment category, TIB proposed a short-, medium-, and long-term time-bound plan to gradually phase out the use of fossil fuels and promote renewable energy.

Supportive policies must be created to increase local and international investment in the renewable energy sector.

Moreover, TIB demanded the abolishment of the "Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act 2010", the removal of capacity charges and the cancellation of all ongoing development projects that are harmful to the environment and biodiversity.

"It is not possible to say how long it will take for the interim government to implement the recommendations made today [yesterday]. That decision lies with them. This government should be given the time it needs to meet the expectations of the people," Iftekharuzzaman said.

The government has been in office for only 20 days and it would not be fair to evaluate them so soon.

"They must fulfil the aspirations of the masses, even as they work amid the ruins," he added.

Govt lifts ban on Jamaat, Shibir

FROM PAGE 1

In yesterday's gazette notification, the home ministry said the government has cancelled the previous circular that banned Jamaat, Shibir and its front organisations as there is no specific evidence on their involvement in terrorist activities, and the government believes that these organisations are not involved in terrorist activities.

The decision will come into effect immediately, the notification said.

'AL BANNED JAMAAT TO CONTINUE REPRESSION'

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul yesterday said the AL did not ban Jamaat from its policy position, rather this was done to term the mass uprising "terrorist activity".

Speaking to reporters at his office at the Secretariat, he said some sections of the society had been demanding ban on Jamaat for many years, but the AL did not do it during its 15-year rule.

"They [Awami League] did it when the student movement was going on. They termed the mass uprising an act of the Jamaat-BNP terrorists and tried to brutally suppress the movement. You have got proof of this," Asif said.

The adviser said the interim government cannot be a part of the AL's narrative that the mass uprising spearheaded by students was a terrorist act.

In August 2013, the High Court declared Jamaat's registration illegal following a writ petition filed in 2009 by Bangladesh Tariqat Federation Secretary General Rezaul Haque Chandpuri and 24 others.

Jamaat was first banned in independent Bangladesh in 1972 over their anti-liberation role under a new constitutional provision that banned politics based on religion.

The ban, however, was lifted three years later when BNP founder Ziaur Rahman came to power and amended the constitution through martial law proclamation.

JAMAAT LIKELY TO MOVE SC

Jamaat is likely to file an application to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on Sunday seeking restoration of its appeal challenging a High Court verdict that scrapped its registration with the Election Commission as a political party, Mohammad Shishir Manir, a counsel for Jamaat, told The Daily Star yesterday.

On November 19 last year, a five-member bench of the Appellate Division, headed by then chief justice Obaidul Hassan, dismissed Jamaat's appeal for "default" as its counsels did not appear before the court that day.

Jamaat had filed the appeal against the HC verdict that on August 1, 2013, scrapped its registration.

Govt hunts for $8b from IMF, other lenders

FROM PAGE 1

The reserves stood at $20.5 billion on August 21 in line with the IMF's BPM-6 after the new government headed by Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus had taken charge earlier this month following the downfall of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's government through a student-led mass uprising.

Inflation remained high last month, with the consumer price index rising by 1.94 basis points to 11.66 percent from the previous month. Food inflation crossed 14 percent in July for the first time in 13 years.

When Hasina fled the country, the Awami League government left $156 billion in local and foreign loans for the country to carry. These included $88 billion from domestic sources and the remaining $68.33 billion was external debt.

The country is also struggling to deal with a fragile banking sector hit by scams and defaults caused by people with direct or indirect links to the previous government.

The interim government has taken some quick and drastic measures to tackle the situation surrounding finances while bringing reforms to all the sectors as promised by Yunus.

Policy rates against both local and foreign currencies have been increased, while strict measures have been taken for the banking sector which are longtime suggestions from the development partners for providing budget support.

Finance ministry officials said because of the reform measures taken by the interim government, development patterners are ready to provide more support.

The long, dark past of UCB

FROM PAGE 1

industry, Akhtaruzzaman, then the chairman of UCB, was arrested in the case but he fled the country after securing bail. He came back to Bangladesh in 1996 when the AL returned to power after 21 years in the political wilderness.

In 1999, members of this influential family along with armed men stormed the bank's headquarters where a board meeting was underway. The directors were abused verbally, assaulted and forced to sign their resignations. Bangladesh Bank then dissolved the entire board. Akhtaruzzaman returned to the bank's board of directors in 2010, a year after the AL was voted to power for the second time.

People familiar with those incidents say the takeover at gunpoint was one of the darkest chapters in Bangladesh's banking industry. It all started in 1991 after Bangladesh Bank removed Akhtaruzzaman from UCB board because of his failure to repay Tk 250 crore in loans that he took in favour of his own company.

Humayun Zahir, a director of the bank, protested when Akhtaruzzaman was reluctant to repay the loan despite being the chairman of the board. This is one of the oldest instances of defaulted loans in Bangladesh, said Sharif Zahir, son of Humayun Zahir.

"When my father protested and asked Babu [Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury] to return the loan, he targeted my father," said Sharif, currently the managing director of Ananta, a leading garment exporter and business group.

Sharif alleged that the bank was taken over by Akhtaruzzaman along with his nephew and S Alam Group owner Mohammed Saiful Alam, who is also known for banking scandals on his own right.

Sharif was a large shareholder of the bank in 1993, 1995, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2018, he said without mentioning the exact amount of his family shares with the bank. He also served UCB as the vice-chairman between 2013 and 2015.

However, in 2018, the first-generation private bank was taken over by force again, this time by Saifuzzaman, Sharif said.

The former land minister's family lost its grip on UCB on Tuesday as BB dissolved the lender's 18-member board.

The dissolved board was heavily dominated by Saifuzzaman's family members, including his sister Roxana Zaman Chaudhury and relatives Anisuzzaman Chowdhury and Asifuzzaman Chowdhury.

Saifuzzaman's wife, Rukhmila Zaman, had been serving as chairman of the bank until August 16, when the bank reconstituted the board on its own accord in an attempt to keep a portion of Saifuzzaman's family onboard, industry insiders say.

Sharif, who is now staying abroad, said he is coming back to Bangladesh in a day or two and plans to hold a meeting with the newly appointed directors to form a board to run the bank.

UCB was established in 1984 mainly by a group of Chattogram-based businesspersons, and was one of the high performing banks in Bangladesh.

Things started to change after the takeover by Saifuzzaman's family, as loan scandals became a norm rather than an exception.

The bank's defaulted loans rose to Tk 2,500 crore in 2023 from Tk 1,792 crore in 2016, although industry insiders say the actual figure is much higher.

In these seven years, the amount of written off loans more than doubled to Tk 2,471 crore from Tk 1,069 crore.

Meanwhile in the UK, Saifuzzaman acquired at least 260 properties, paying at least 134.76 million British pounds or Tk 1,888 crore, according to The Daily Star's calculation based on company filings that are publicly available on UK government websites.

The three-time AL lawmaker also has at least 537 mortgages against properties in the UK, a majority of which are in London.

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit found that Saifuzzaman and Rukhmila have also amassed huge fortunes in the US and Dubai.

A group of shareholders of the bank recently sent a letter to the central bank, alleging that although Rukhmila was the chairperson of the bank, it was Saifuzzaman who pulled the strings behind it all.

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'We want a sustainable embankment'

Say residents of 13 villages in Khulna's Paikgachha

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

After the flood-protection embankment was breached and 13 villages in Deluti union under Khulna's Paikgachha upazila were flooded last Thursday, around 7-8 thousand people had to leave their homes and take shelter on higher grounds, including other parts of the dyke, roadsides, and different educational institutions.

Kalpana Mandal and Chanchala Mandal of Kalinagar were among 300 families who have sheltered at Kalinagar College since then.

Many organisations are providing them with relief, including dry food, biscuits, or cooked food.

Although villagers repaired the dam last Tuesday, water has yet to recede from Kalpana's home.

"Our two mud houses were damaged in the flood. I managed to bring our three goats with us, but I couldn't manage much food for them yet. I am worried," said Kalpana.

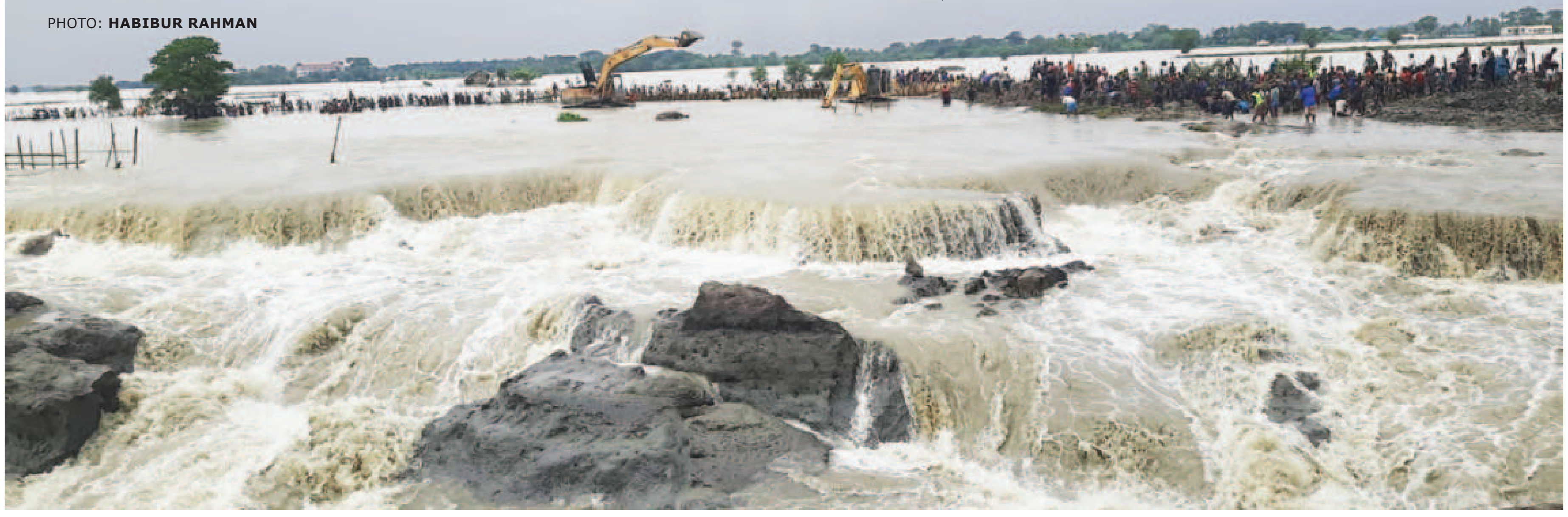
She said they had to face the same ordeal in May after Cyclone Remal.

"We had 11 cattle, which we had to sell since there was no way to feed those. Now we have only these three goats left, and there is hardly any food for them either," she said.

She wanted a permanent solution to the repeated breach of the dam.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

PHOTO: **HABIBUR RAHMAN**



Music with a mission

Young musicians unite to raise funds for flood victims in Moulvibazar

MINTU DESHWARA, *Moulvibazar*

With this month's flood ravaging communities, sweeping away homes and leaving people and livestock amid acute shortage of food and drinking water, a grim scenario now prevails across Moulvibazar.

In an effort to come forward and support the flood-hit people, young musicians have hit the streets, singing their soulful melodies to raise funds for relief campaign.

Every day, young singers from the town are performing at Choumohana Chatwar in Moulvibazar Sadar upazila and at Shaheed Minar premises and Bhabaniganj Bazar in Juri upazila to collect contributions for flood relief.

"The funds raised will directly reach flood-affected areas for relief effort. I am personally coordinating it," said Oishi Chakladar, a young singer.

Subrata Sutradhar, who brought his two daughters to join the effort, said, "My daughters want to contribute and stand beside the flood-hit people by singing songs."

Locals have praised the initiative saying such efforts will engage the community in addressing the crisis and provide valuable assistance to those affected by the flood.

Mir Yusuf Ali, an organiser of the initiative, said, "I posted on my Facebook on last Saturday about our initiative and received overwhelming response. About 50 artists and their families have joined us."

In Juri upazila, similar street performances by a group of cultural activists took place on Tuesday.

The musicians performed numerous songs, including "Manush dhoro manush bhojo", "Manush manusher jonno" and "Ami manab dharme manab karme sapinu e pran-mon", among others.

The event attracted people from all walks of life, with many seen to sing alongside.

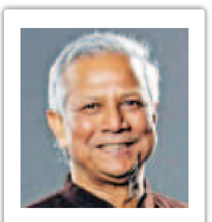
Husna Begum, a local, said, "Watching the children sing so soulfully

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Dr Yunus seeks int'l investment, support for reform

Meets UN, France, Canada, Malaysia envoys

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said the student-led revolution has ushered in a new era of hope for Bangladesh and created historical opportunities.

"It will be a big failure if these opportunities are not used... These chances may never come back," he said.

The Nobel Laureate made the remarks when foreign envoys and UN officials made separate calls on him at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday, according to the chief adviser's press wing.

He said the interim government will stay "as short as the people want or as long as they want".

However, the government is committed to launching vital reforms in the country's key institutions in an effort to hold a free, fair, and transparent election and help people truly enjoy

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Govt to probe 'model mosque' corruption

Says religious affairs adviser; plans to revamp Islamic Foundation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Religious Affairs Adviser AFM Khalid Hossain yesterday said the interim government will form an investigation committee to address allegations of corruption related to the construction of "model mosques."

Besides, legal action will be pursued against those found guilty of these corrupt practices, he added.

Speaking as the chief guest at a day-long seminar held at the Islamic Foundation in Agargaon, Hossain said the ministry will set up a committee to investigate those responsible for destroying the Islamic Foundation.

Hossain emphasised that the Islamic Foundation will undergo significant transformation to enhance its effectiveness. He said long-serving

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Contempt petition filed against seven ex-SC judges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a contempt of court petition with the High Court against three former chief justices and four former judges of the Appellate Division for punishing him in a case in October, 2020.

The accused former chief justices are Syed Mahmud Hossain, Hasan Foez Siddique and Obaidul Hassan and four former apex court judges are M Imman Ali, Mirza Hussain Haider, Abu Bakar Siddiquee and Md Nuruzzaman.

Advocate Md Eunus Ali Akond submitted the petition against the former judges, saying that they had punished the lawyers abusing their powers and in violation of the law.

In the petition, he prayed to the HC to issue a contempt of court rule against them.

Eunus Ali told The Daily Star that a hearing of the contempt of court petition may be held next Sunday.

An Appellate Division bench of the accused seven judges, when they were sitting judges, on October 12, 2020, barred Eunus Ali from practicing law --

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

A promising life cut short

Newly-wed software engineer killed by muggers

RAFIUL ISLAM

Just four months ago, Zarraf Ahmed, a young and promising software engineer, married Saima Rahman Labannya, dreaming of a shared future filled with possibilities.

To bring those dreams closer to reality, Labannya had travelled to Australia to pursue higher studies.

But in a cruel twist of fate, those dreams were shattered on Tuesday when Zarraf was stabbed to death by alleged muggers in Dhaka's Darussalam area.

The families are now left in utter shock and devastation, struggling to comprehend the heartbreaking loss.

"The loss of Zarraf has shattered dreams of his family and left a void that can never be filled. We want justice for the killing through a proper investigation," Ahsanul Haque Zahid, a childhood friend of the victim, told The Daily Star.

Ahsanul said Zarraf's wife went to Australia to purse her dream of higher study and Zarraf, a senior software engineer of Newroz Technologies Limited, was striving to make his mark in the country by founding his own enterprise.

"But everything is finished now due to the mindless act by the muggers," he said.

Labannya is now travelling back to Dhaka to say a final goodbye to her husband.

Hearing the news of Zarraf's death, his elderly parents with the help of other family members started for Dhaka in a private car from their village home in Naogaon in the afternoon.

But they were taken back to Naogaon after reaching Bogura as the couple fell ill and lost consciousness on numerous occasions on the journey, family members said.

Zarraf's cousin Kaniz Sharmin filed a murder case with Darussalam Police Station early yesterday.

Kaniz said Zarraf started for Dhaka around 10:00pm on Monday after visiting his parents in Naogaon.

After getting down from the bus, he took a rickshaw to reach his house.

As he reached Darussalam around 5:00am on Tuesday, two muggers intercepted the rickshaw. When he tried to resist them, the muggers stabbed him and took away his mobile phone, laptop and cash, she said quoting pedestrians who took him to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital.

Hospital authorities could not identify his body and he was kept there for several hours.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

POLICE REFORM

Home adviser seeks UK assistance

STAR REPORT

Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday said the government has initiated steps to reform the police force, aiming to create a more efficient, neutral, and people-friendly law enforcement agency.

To support this effort, the adviser has requested training and ancillary assistance from the UK.

Jahangir made this appeal during a meeting with the British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sarah Cooke at the Secretariat.

The meeting covered a range of topics, including inter-state cooperation in combating terrorism, tackling illegal immigration, support for police reform, flood rehabilitation, and aid for the Rohingya community, according to a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In response, Sarah Cooke confirmed that a UK expert team is scheduled to visit Bangladesh in September, offering the necessary cooperation for the police reform initiative.

Jahangir also informed the high commissioner

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

বাংলাদেশ সাবমেরিন ক্যাবলস্ পিএলসি (বিএসসিপিএলসি)
রহমান'স রেগনাম সেন্টার (৮ম ও ৯ম তলা)
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কোম্পানির শেয়ারহোল্ডার/বিনিয়োগকারীগণের জন্য নোটিশ

[অবণ্টিত/অদাবিকৃত নগদ লভ্যাংশের অর্থ ক্যাপিটাল মার্কেট স্টাবিলাইজেশন ফান্ড বা পুঁজিবাজার স্থিতিশীলকরণ তহবিলে স্থানান্তর সংক্রান্ত]

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বাংলাদেশ সিকিউরিটিজ অ্যান্ড এক্সচেঞ্জ কমিশন (বিএসইসি) এর গত ১৪ জানুয়ারি, ২০২১খ্রিঃ তারিখের নির্দেশনা নং- বিএসইসি/সিএমআরআরসিডি/২০২১-৩৮৬/০৩ এবং বাংলাদেশ সিকিউরিটিজ অ্যান্ড এক্সচেঞ্জ কমিশন (ক্যাপিটাল মার্কেট স্টাবিলাইজেশন ফান্ড) বিধি, ২০২১ অনুসারে লভ্যাংশ ঘোষণা/অনুমোদনের দিন/রেকর্ড ডেট হতে ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অধিক কাল যাবৎ অবণ্টিত/অদাবিকৃত নগদ লভ্যাংশের অর্থ ক্যাপিটাল মার্কেট স্টাবিলাইজেশন ফান্ড বা পুঁজিবাজার স্থিতিশীলকরণ তহবিলে স্থানান্তর করতে হবে।

এমতাবস্থায়, বিএসসিসিএলের যে সকল সম্মানিত শেয়ারহোল্ডার/বিনিয়োগকারীগণ এখনো ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের জন্য ঘোষিত নগদ লভ্যাংশের ওয়ারেন্ট সংগ্রহ করেননি তাদেরকে আগামী ২৯ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে কোম্পানির প্রধান কার্যালয়ে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপযুক্ত প্রমাণকসহ হাজির হয়ে বর্ণিত নগদ লভ্যাংশের ওয়ারেন্ট সংগ্রহ ও ৩০ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে নগদায়নের জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা হলো। তাছাড়া বিএসসিসিএলের যে সকল সম্মানিত শেয়ারহোল্ডার/বিনিয়োগকারীগণ এখনো ২০২১-২০২২ ও ২০২২-২০২৩ অর্থ বছরের জন্য ঘোষিত নগদ লভ্যাংশের ওয়ারেন্ট সংগ্রহ করেননি তাদেরকে অনতিবিলম্বে কোম্পানির প্রধান কার্যালয়ে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপযুক্ত প্রমাণকসহ হাজির হয়ে বর্ণিত নগদ লভ্যাংশের ওয়ারেন্ট সংগ্রহের জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা হলো।

এ প্রসঙ্গে উল্লেখ্য যে, ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের জন্য ঘোষিত নগদ লভ্যাংশ ওয়ারেন্টের বিপরীতে যে সকল ক্ষেত্রে আগামী ২৯ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে কোনও বৈধ দাবি পাওয়া যাবে না, সে সকল অবণ্টিত/অদাবিকৃত নগদ লভ্যাংশের অর্থ বিএসইসি'র নির্দেশনা অনুসরণকরতঃ ক্যাপিটাল মার্কেট স্টাবিলাইজেশন ফান্ড বা পুঁজিবাজার স্থিতিশীলকরণ তহবিলে স্থানান্তর করা হবে।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয়ে যে কোন প্রয়োজনে সম্মানিত শেয়ারহোল্ডার/বিনিয়োগকারীগণ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরাসরি উপস্থিত হয়ে অথবা ৮৮০২ ২২৬৬০৩৩১৫-৬ ফোন নাম্বারে অথবা cs@bsccl.com ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল প্রেরণের মাধ্যমে যোগাযোগ করতে পারেন। উল্লেখ্য যে, বর্ণিত সময়ের অবণ্টিত/অদাবিকৃত নগদ লভ্যাংশের তালিকা কোম্পানির ওয়েবসাইটঃ www.bsccl.com.bd-এ সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবলোকনের নিমিত্ত আপলোড করা হয়েছে।

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২৮ আগস্ট, ২০২৪খ্রিঃ

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কোম্পানি সচিব (অতিরিক্ত দায়িত্ব)
ফোনঃ ০২২২৬৬০৩৩১৩ (অফিস)
ই-মেইলঃ cs@bscplc.gov.bd

GD- 287

Mahfuz Alam special asst to chief adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahfuz Alam has been appointed as special assistant to the Chief Adviser to the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus, with the status of a secretary, on a contractual basis.

The public administration ministry, in a gazette notification issued yesterday, said Mahfuz will remain in office for the duration of the chief adviser's term or subject to his satisfaction and on condition of renouncing working relations with other institutions and organisations.

Mahfuz, a student of Dhaka University's Law Department for 2015-16 academic session, is the coordinator of the liaison committee of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

The gazette notification said his appointment will be effective from the date of his joining.

We want a sustainable

FROM PAGE 3

"Our ordeals keep recurring time and again. All our shrimp and fish in two enclosures were washed away this time. The river eroded away 35 bighas of my father-in-law's land over the years. Only seven bighas are left, which are at risk of being devoured by the river. We need a sustainable solution," Kalpana added.

Chanchala Mandal shared similar plights. "We have become destitute and have to live by asking others for food. I was cultivating watermelons; all of those have been washed away."

Sukriti Mohan Sarkar, a local school teacher, said students, government, private institutions, and voluntary organisations have stood beside the affected people, providing them with dry and cooked food, saline, polythene sheets, clothes, etc.

"However, many people in remote areas are yet to receive any help," he added.

Mohitosh Mandal of Harinkhola village said he incurred a loss of Tk 4 lakh as all prawns and lobsters of his three enclosures were washed away in flood.

Deluti union Chairman Ripon Kumar said while locals repaired the dam's breached part, it is uncertain how long it can hold Bhadra's water.

"Numerous houses were damaged, vast stretches of crop fields submerged, fish enclosures washed away, and hundreds of people were living in shelters and higher grounds after being displaced due to the flood. Without significant government assistance, there is hardly any scope to turn around from the situation," he said.

He too called for a sustainable embankment.

Saikat Mallik, senior fisheries officer of Paikgachha upazila, said 305 tonnes of fish and 194 tonnes of prawns and shrimps from more than 600 farms and enclosures have been washed away, causing damage worth around Tk 28.83 crore.

Abdul Karim, district disaster and rehabilitation officer in Khulna, said at least 2,466 families from 13 villages have been affected. "So far, about 4,500 people are in shelters and on the embankment."

Dr Yunus seeks int'l investment

FROM PAGE 3

the fruits of the student-led revolution, said Prof Yunus.

Under the previous government, the Election Commission was turned into an "election manipulation commission," he also said.

Prof Yunus also sought UNDP support to carry out vital reforms in wide-ranging areas such as the judiciary, police, election commission, and tax administration.

He told UNDP Resident Representative Stefan Liller that Bangladesh immediately needs far-reaching digitalisation efforts in tax and land administration so that a citizen can pay taxes or register their land and property sale without any hassles.

Bangladesh also needs vital reforms "to build a modern police force" and ensure a rule of law in the country, Dr Yunus added.

Liller offered the UN agency's full support for the wide-ranging reforms.

French Ambassador Marie Masdupuy said France is ready to support the interim government in their efforts to rebuild the country and expressed eagerness to extend expertise to fight corruption, human trafficking, forensic cybercrime, port and airport security, and financial crime.

The interim government's agenda to fight corruption would be a "key enabler" to further enhance trade and investments in Bangladesh, she said.

French firms were interested in setting up three solar parks in Bangladesh and installing "lightning arresters" in 15 districts, she added.

The envoy also said French President Emmanuel Macron has invited him to visit France at a convenient time.

Meanwhile, Prof Yunus urged Canada to invest in Bangladesh to help rebuild the country when Canadian High Commissioner Lilly Nichols called on him.

"We need big investments," he said, noting that the economy is in a total mess with a huge amount of debt.

Nichols said Bangladesh must ensure labour rights in factories to continue to enjoy trade preferences from Canada.

Prof Yunus said his government would uphold labour rights "as per the ILO standards".

The chief adviser also sought Malaysia's support for Bangladesh to become a member of ASEAN as Malaysian High Commissioner Haznah Md Hashim paid him a courtesy visit. Bangladesh can be a bridge between ASEAN and Saarc, Prof Yunus told Haznah.

Haznah raised tax issues being faced by Robi Axiata and other Malaysian companies, saying some 50 percent of Robi's revenue is paid as taxes.

She said a second Malaysian car manufacturer has signed an agreement with a Chittagong-based company for distributing and assembling cars.

How will we live

FROM PAGE 5

On August 5, he spoke to his mother over phone and told her that he would visit them again soon after the situation becomes normal. He also asked everyone to stay safe.

Later, he went to Mawna Bridge area at noon for some work, only to find himself in the middle of a clash between protesters and police. Amid the clash, Masum was hit by bullets in his chest twice. Locals rushed him to Bhaluka Upazila Health Complex in Mymensingh where doctors declared him dead.

On information, his family members came to the hospital and took his body to his village, where he was buried at the family graveyard on August 6, said his aunt Sabina Khatun.

"Masum was my only son among six children. As I am no longer capable of working, he took the responsibility of our five-member family on his own shoulder. His death has left us in dire straits. How are we going to survive now?" lamented his father.

His mother Morshida Khatun said, "Our son helped his four sisters get married. With him no more, our lives have become very uncertain now. Who will now look after us? We are at a loss."

The family members demanded proper investigation into Masum's killing to bring the perpetrators to book.

Govt to probe model

FROM PAGE 3

officials will be reassigned to field positions, while qualified and efficient field-level officers will be appointed to key roles at the head office.

The adviser criticised the recent deviations from the Foundation's core activities, vision, and mission, attributing these issues to political interference. He said the Foundation would be kept above political influence moving forward.Additionally, Hossain announced that intelligence agencies will assist in assessing the increase in wealth among Islamic Foundation officials and employees over the past 15 years.

He said legal action will be taken if any irregularities or corruption are found.

Music with a mission

FROM PAGE 3

for the flood-affected people, I decided to contribute."

Shadekul Alam, an expatriate, said, "It's an inspiring effort. It gives me hope that people will come together to support one another."

Milon Das, a battery run auto-rickshaw driver, said, "I have also contributed to help those in need."

Mridul Ghosh, a student and cultural activist who is the key organiser of the initiative, said, "We organised the event to raise funds for the flood-hit people, and the response has been encouraging."

"All the collected money will be used to provide relief to flood victims," he added.

Home adviser seeks

FROM PAGE 3

about the formation of a five-member neutral inquiry commission, led by a retired judge of the High Court Division, to investigate enforced disappearances that occurred during the previous Awami League-led government's tenure.

Sarah Cooke stressed the importance of delivering a fair trial for the violence and human rights violations that took place from June 5 to August 5.

"Those involved in these incidents must be brought under the law and justice quickly," she urged the adviser.

The adviser also updated the high commissioner on the visit of the United Nations fact-finding mission to Bangladesh, which is involved in investigating these human rights violations.

The British high commissioner expressed the UK's readiness to provide all necessary support and cooperation to the interim government, highlighting that the UK has been actively collaborating with Bangladesh for several years in combating terrorism.

Regarding the issue of Bangladeshi nationals living illegally in the UK, Sarah Cooke sought the adviser's cooperation, mentioning that standard operational procedures (SOP) would be followed in this regard.

Additionally, the adviser requested UK support in the rehabilitation and repatriation of the Rohingya refugees. In response, the high commissioner said the UK is working with the UN Security Council to keep the Rohingya issue at the forefront of the international community's attention.

The adviser also sought the UK's assistance in supporting the victims of recent floods.

A promising

FROM PAGE 3

Family members said they had assumed that he had fallen asleep after reaching home, and had switched off his phone. It was only when Labannya had called from Australia and told them that she was unable to reach Zarraf for a long time that they suspected something was wrong.

They started making calls to various hospitals and police stations, and around evening their worst fears were confirmed.

Rakibul Hasan, officer-in-charge of Darussalam Police Station, said they are trying to arrest the culprits.

Zarraf's body will be taken to Naogaon after an autopsy and he will be buried today after Labannya reaches home.

He was just a boy

FROM PAGE 5

His father, Majnu Miah, had recently taken loans and gone abroad to work, all in the hope of securing a better life for his family. He dreamt of his son completing his education and bringing pride to the family. But those dreams were shattered that fateful afternoon.

As Maruf joined a celebratory procession in Tangail town, the event spiraled into chaos near Tangail Sadar Police Station. Police opened fire, and the 10th grader was critically injured. He was rushed to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead upon arrival.

"My son was only a school-goer. He just went out to join a peaceful procession. Why did they have to shoot him to death?" Maruf's mother, Morsheda Akter, wept as she recalled the tragic day.

"We had high hopes for our son. It's all shattered now," she said.

Criminal proceedings have already begun in connection with Maruf's death. Local coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement demanded that a local road be named in Maruf's honour -- a request the administration promised to fulfill.

All our hope is gone

FROM PAGE 5

around 5:00pm for his workplace in Mohammadpur.

On the way, he fell in the line of fire when a clash was going on between student protesters and law enforcers.

Some students rushed him to a hospital in Mohakhali, where he was later admitted to the Intensive Care Unit on July 21.

He was put on life support the next day as he fell into a coma. Eventually, Jasim did not regain consciousness and passed away after fighting for his life for 11 days.

Jasim's body was taken to his village home and buried at the family graveyard on August 1.

Since then, Jasim's elder daughter Riya Moni, 11, has yet to stop her tears.

Jasim's wife Ruma Begum said, "We don't know how we will survive now. All our hope is lost. I demand justice for my husband's murder."

Sekender Ali Mridha, Jasim's father-in-law, said, "Jasim was shot without any reason. My daughter has now become a widow, her three children became orphans. How are they going to live?" said .

He called upon the government to provide support to Jasim's family.

Shomaji new Dhaka public prosecutor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed senior lawyer Ehsanul Haque Shomaji as Dhaka Metropolitan public prosecutor.

A gazette notification was issued yesterday by the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs in this regard.

He has replaced public prosecutor Abdullah Abu, appointed by the previous Awami League government.

Contempt

FROM PAGE 3

before both its Appellate and High Court divisions -- for three months over contempt of court by posting three derogatory comments about the judiciary on his Facebook.

The court also fined him Tk 25,000 and directed that he will have to serve 15 days of imprisonment if he fails to pay the fine.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 29

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

INVITATION FOR QUOTATION

Pubali Bank PLC., the largest Private commercial Bank in Bangladesh is hereby inviting sealed Quotations from the eligible Tenderers, who can participate the following tender as per terms & conditions stated below:

Procurement of Reconditioned Toyota Allion-Cars

Key Features:
Model – G; CC:1500, Year of Manufacture: 2018,
Color: Multiple (On available), Country of Origin: Japan,
Seating Capacity: 05 (Five), Mileage: Below 50,000 k.m.,
Push Start, Back Camera, DVD player, Fog Light, Spare Wheel, Necessary Tools, etc.
Auction Grade: 4 and above

Please visit our web site, **https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp** for details. Interested Parties may submit their offer by **11 September 2024** at 11.00 AM. Tender will be opened on **11 September 2024** at 11:30 AM.

Md. Kamruzzaman
General Manager & Division Head

পূবালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
PUBALI BANK PLC.

Establishment & General Services Division
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

Directorate General Defence Purchase
Ministry of Defence
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215
Web: www.dgdp.gov.bd
E-mail: info@dgdp.gov.bd

Tender Notice

1. Sealed tender in Foreign currency is invited from bonafide Manufacturer/ Dealer/ Supplier/ Importer (enlisted with DGDP) for supply of the following item for Bangladesh Navy:

Ser	Name of item	Date of selling		Date of opening	Cost of tender schedule	Tender No.	Currency
		From	To				
1.	SPARE PARTS FOR MAIN ENGINE (BRAND: PIELSTICK, CHINA) (QTY: 119 L/I)	29-08-2024	09-10-2024	10-10-2024	BDT 5,000.00	254.07.055.2024	Foreign

2. Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available in this Directorate General on payment as per invitation of tender selling rate (non-refundable) during office hours between 0900 hours to 1300 hours on the abovementioned date of selling. The tender can be dropped in the tender box latest by 1200 hours and the same will be opened at 1205 hours on the specified date of opening in the presence of the tenderers (if present).

Commander BN
For Director General
Directorate General Defence Purchase

আইএসপিআর/বিবিধ /২০২৪/৩৪৬
২৮/০৮/২৪

GD- 285

প্লট বিক্রয়
রাজউক পূর্বাচলে ১১ নং সেক্টরে
৫ কাঠার প্লট বিক্রয় করবো।
সম্মানিত ক্রেতাগণ যোগাযোগ করুন ঃ
01718 009146

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ঃ ৪৩ বীর, শেখ হাসিনা সেনানিবাস।
২। কাজের বিবরণ ঃ ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরের বাজেট কোড নং ১১৯০৬০১১০৪২৩৩/৩২৩১৩০১-প্রশিক্ষণ (এটিজি সাধারণ) খাতে বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ হতে এ্যাসল্ট কোর্স গ্রাউন্ড, বেয়নেট ফাইটিং গ্রাউন্ড, প্রশিক্ষণ ছাউনী সংস্কার, প্রশিক্ষণ মাঠ সংস্কার, শারীরিক প্রশিক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত সামগ্রী ক্রয় ও মেরামত এবং প্রশিক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত অন্য যে কোন রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ ব্যয় নির্বাহ বাবদ।
৩। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের তারিখ ঃ ০১ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪।
৪। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ঃ ০৪ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪।
৫। দরপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ঃ ০৫ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪।
৬। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময় ঃ ০৬ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ সকাল ১০০০ ঘটিকা।
৭। বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য ভিজিট করুন ঃ www.army.mil.bd

লেঃ কর্নেল
অধিনায়ক
৪৩ বীর
শেখ হাসিনা সেনানিবাস

আইএসপিআর/সেনা/ ২০২৪/৪৫১
২৮/০৮/২৪

GD-286

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড
প্রধান কার্যালয়
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নাসিরাবাদ, চট্টগ্রাম।
www.teaboard.gov.bd

স্মারক নম্বর: ২৬.০৯.০০০০.১০১.১১.০১৯.২৪.৮৮৬
তারিখ : ১৩ ভাদ্র ১৪৩১ বঙ্গাব্দ
২৮ আগস্ট ২০২৪ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

পুনঃ নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের ০১/০৪/২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখের ২৬.০০.০০০০.০৯০.০৯০.১১.০০১.১৭.৭৬ নং ছাড়পত্রের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড এবং বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন বাংলাদেশ চা গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট (বিটিআরআই) ও প্রকল্প উন্নয়ন ইউনিট (পিডিইউ) এর নিম্নবর্ণিত শূন্য পদে অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে নিয়োগের জন্য যোগ্য এবং প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকগণের কাছ থেকে দরখাস্ত আহবান করা হচ্ছে।

ক্রঃ নং	পদের নাম, কর্মস্থল ও বেতন স্কেল (জাতীয় বেতন স্কেল ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী)	পদ সংখ্যা	নিয়োগের ন্যূনতম শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতাসহ অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা
০১	সার্ভেয়ার পিডিইউ, বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ১০২০০-২৪৬৮০/- (গ্রেড: ১৪)	০২ (দুই)টি	মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট পরীক্ষা পাস ও তৎসহ সার্ভে ফাইনাল পরীক্ষা পাশ। অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।
০২	স্টোর কীপার পিডিইউ, বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ১০২০০-২৪৬৮০/- (গ্রেড: ১৪)	০১ (এক)টি	স্নাতক ডিগ্রীসহ বৈজ্ঞানিক যন্ত্রপাতি প্রকৌশলী দ্রব্যাদি, মনিহারী দ্রব্যাদি ও সাধারণ স্টোর রক্ষণাবেক্ষণে অভিজ্ঞতা।
০৩	হিসাব সহকারী পিডিইউ, বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/- (গ্রেড: ১৬)	০৩ (তিন)টি	স্নাতক ডিগ্রী অথবা ২য় বিভাগে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট পরীক্ষায় পাস। সুন্দর হস্তাক্ষরের প্রার্থীকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।
০৪	অফিস সহকারী কাম কম্পিউটার অপারেটর বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, প্রধান কার্যালয়, চট্টগ্রাম ও বিটিআরআই এবং পিডিইউ, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/-(গ্রেড: ১৬)	২২ (বাইশ)টি	বাংলা ও ইংরেজী টাইপিং-এ যথাক্রমে ১৫ ও ২০ গতিসম্পন্ন (প্রতি মিনিটে) এবং এইচএসসি পাস হতে হবে।
০৫	গাড়ীচালক বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, প্রধান কার্যালয়, চট্টগ্রাম এবং পিডিইউ, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/-(গ্রেড: ১৬)	০৪ (চার)টি	সরকার অনুমোদিত কোন প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে ভারী/মধ্যম/হালকা ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স প্রাপ্ত। কোন সরকারী বা স্বায়ত্তশাসিত অথবা প্রতিষ্ঠিত বাণিজ্যিক প্রতিষ্ঠানে ড্রাইভিং কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।
০৬	প্লাম্বার পিডিইউ, বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/- (গ্রেড: ১৬)	০১ (এক)টি	প্লাম্বিং কাজে ট্রেড অথবা ভোকেশনাল সার্টিফিকেট থাকতে হবে। ওয়াটার সাপ্লাই ও স্যানিটারী কার্যে বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।
০৭	অফিস সহায়ক বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, প্রধান কার্যালয়, চট্টগ্রাম ও বিটিআরআই, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ৮২৫০-২০০১০/- (গ্রেড: ২০)	১১ (এগারো)টি	৮ম শ্রেণী পাস হতে হবে এবং সেই সাথে সুস্বাস্থ্যের অধিকারী হতে হবে।
০৮	নিরাপত্তা প্রহরী বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, প্রধান কার্যালয়, চট্টগ্রাম ও বিটিআরআই, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ৮২৫০-২০০১০/- (গ্রেড: ২০)	০২ (দুই)টি	৮ম শ্রেণী পাস হতে হবে। সেই সাথে সুস্বাস্থ্যের অধিকারী হতে হবে। সামরিক বাহিনীর অবসরপ্রাপ্ত সিপাই পদের কর্মচারীদের ক্ষেত্রে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।
০৯	পরিচ্ছন্নতা কর্মী বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, প্রধান কার্যালয়, চট্টগ্রাম ও বিটিআরআই, শ্রীমঙ্গল, মৌলভীবাজার। বেতন স্কেল: ৮২৫০-২০০১০/- (গ্রেড: ২০)	০২ (দুই)টি	৮ম শ্রেণী পাস হতে হবে এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে অভিজ্ঞতাসহ সুস্বাস্থ্যে অধিকারী হতে হবে।

শর্তাবলীঃ
০১। চাকরির আবেদন ফরম বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ডের ওয়েবসাইটঃ www.teaboard.gov.bd-এ পাওয়া যাবে। প্রার্থীদের চাকরির নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরমে নির্দেশ অনুযায়ী প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্য-উপাত্ত প্রদান করতে হবে। অসম্পূর্ণ তথ্য সম্বলিত আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। আবেদনের সাথে সংযুক্ত কোন কিছুই ফেরতযোগ্য নয়।
০২। চাকরির আবেদন ফরমের সাথে অবশ্যই নিম্নোক্ত কাগজপত্র সংযুক্ত করতে হবেঃ
(ক) চাকরি প্রার্থীর সদ্য তোলা ৪ (চার) কপি ৫x৫ সে. মি. সাইজের রঙ্গিন ছবি আবেদন ফরমের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে (প্রথম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড অফিসার কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত হতে হবে)। তন্মধ্যে ১ কপি ছবি আবেদন ফরমের নির্ধারিত স্থানে আঠা দিয়ে এবং অবশিষ্ট ৩ কপি ছবি স্ট্যাপল করে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
(খ) সচিব, বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম এর অনুকূলে ০১-০৬ নং ক্রমিকের পদের জন্য ২০০/- (দুইশত) টাকা, ০৭-০৯ নং ক্রমিকের পদের জন্য ১০০ (একশত) টাকা মূল্যমানের ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার (অফেরতযোগ্য) আবেদনের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে অর্ডার এর নম্বর ও তারিখ এবং তা ইস্যুকৃত ব্যাংক শাখার নাম আবেদন ফরমে উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
০৩। নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে কোটা সংরক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত সরকারি নীতিমালা যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে।
০৪। সকল জেলার প্রার্থী আবেদন করতে পারবেন। তবে যারা ইতোপূর্বে বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ডের ১৭ এপ্রিল ২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখের ২৬.০৯.০০০০.১০১.১১.০১৯.২৪.৩৮১ নং নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির প্রেক্ষিতে আবেদন করেছেন তাদের পুনরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নাই।
০৫। প্রার্থীদের বয়স ১৯/০৫/২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত ১৮-৩০ বছর হতে হবে।
০৬। প্রার্থীদের মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় আবেদনে উল্লেখিত সকল কাগজপত্রের মূলকপি সঙ্গে আনতে হবে এবং সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) এর কপি, প্রথম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড অফিসার কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত চারিত্রিক সনদপত্র, ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ এর চেয়ারম্যান/পৌরসভার মেয়র/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক প্রার্থীর নিজ জেলা উল্লেখপূর্বক প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সার্টিফিকেট এর কপি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র অথবা জন্ম নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র এর কপিসহ ও সকল সনদ ও কাগজপত্রের কপি প্রথম শ্রেণীর গেজেটের কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত কপি জমা দিতে হবে।
০৭। বিদেশি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে অর্জিত ডিগ্রির ক্ষেত্রে বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন হতে ইস্যুকৃত সমমান সার্টিফিকেট অবশ্যই জমা দিতে হবে।
০৮। চাকরির আবেদন সচিব, বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ১৭১-১৭২, বায়েজিদ বোস্তামী সড়ক, নাসিরাবাদ, চট্টগ্রাম-৪২২০ ঠিকানায় আগামী ২৬/০৯/২০২৪খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে অফিস চলাকালীন পৌঁছাতে হবে। উক্ত তারিখের পর প্রাপ্ত কোন আবেদন গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
০৯। চাকরিরত প্রার্থীদের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে এবং নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যেই তাদের আবেদন পৌঁছাতে হবে। কোন অগ্রিম কপি গৃহীত হবে না।
১০। আবেদনপত্রের খামের উপরে ডান পাশে পদের নাম এবং জেলার নাম স্পষ্টাক্ষরে উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
১১। এই বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের কারণে লিখিত/ব্যবহারিক/মৌখিক পরীক্ষা গ্রহণে কর্তৃপক্ষ বাধ্য নয়। এক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।
১২। বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্তাবলী সংশোধন/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
১৩। লিখিত/ব্যবহারিক/মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোন প্রকার টিএ/ডি.এ. প্রদান করা হবে না।
১৪। আবেদনকারীর নাম ও আবেদনপত্রে উল্লিখিত বর্তমান ঠিকানা লিপিবদ্ধ করে ১০/- টাকার ডাকটিকেট সম্বলিত ১০" x ৪.৫" মাপের একটি ফেরত খাম আবেদনের সঙ্গে প্রেরণ করতে হবে।
১৫। যে কোন প্রকারের তদবির/সুপারিশ প্রার্থীর অযোগ্যতা বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

২৮.০৮.২০২৪
সচিব
বাংলাদেশ চা বোর্ড

GD- 281

Education system needs reform

Prof Salimullah tells event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The education system should be reformed, where basic education should be extended up to class 12, said Prof Salimullah Khan yesterday.

"All students must read all subjects of science, history, mathematics, and others till 12th class, which would be free of cost. After that, they should have opportunities to select subjects for their higher education," he said.

He was speaking at a discussion titled "What Kind of Education System We Want" at Dhaka University's RC Majumdar Arts Auditorium, organised by Amader Pathshala -- an initiative for deprived children.

Terming the current system of universities "sick," Prof Salimullah said there is no higher education system here at all. "We need to focus on technical education first. After completing the basic education, most students need to go for technical education to learn the basic skills of earning," he said.

Local universities could never truly become universities and couldn't achieve the international standard, he said, adding that college and professional education must be separated.

> **All students must read all subjects of science, history, mathematics, and others till 12th class, which would be free of cost. After that, they should have opportunities to select subjects for their higher education.**
>
> **PROF SALIMULLAH**

Regarding reforming the primary schools, he said the schools need to be turned into creative schools, where children will feel the happiness of invention.

Besides, investment will be required for the primary school teachers, he added.

"The teachers should get higher pay scales and get more respect and financial support. With these, the whole system can be reformed within the next 10 years," he added.

At the event, Prof Samina Luthfa of Sociology at Dhaka University said students have earned the power to hold teachers accountable about their duties following the July upsurge. "Now it's time to handle this power with responsibilities. You have the responsibility to become a proper human being. When you [students] get people's support and confidence, your responsibilities increase at the same time," she said.

"If you think you have liberated Bangladesh for the second time, so you have the rights to do anything you want; you can hit anyone anytime... This cannot happen," she added.

More than just NUMBERS

A 24-year-old mason fatally shot in the chest in Gazipur. A 16-year-old student gunned down by cops in Tangail. A 37-year-old driver shot dead in Dhaka. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

'How will we survive without him?'

Laments father of Masum who was shot dead on Aug 5

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Masum Billah, 24, started working as a mason a few years back as he could not continue his studies after passing SSC examination.

Hailing from Naluapara village in Netrakona's Durgapur upazila, he was working as a mason in Mawna area of Gazipur.

With his earning, he was taking care of his five-member family single-handedly, as his father Saidur Rahman, a marginal farmer, could hardly work any more due to old age.

On July 28, Masum visited his family and returned on the same night due to a call from workplace.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'He was just a boy, why did police shoot him?'

Says mother of Maruf who was killed in Tangail

MIRZA SHAKIL, *Tangail*

"We are finally free" is what 16-year-old Maruf thought when he came to know about Sheikh Hasina's resignation on August 5.

He thought the worst days were behind him, and his friends won't be killed again for demanding what is right.

After weeks, he finally felt safe.

So he joined the celebrations in a "free" country, only to be gunned down by cops in Tangail just hours after Hasina's fall.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'All our hope is gone'

Says wife of Jasim who was shot in Dhaka

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Jasim Uddin Howladar, 37, from Patuakhali's Dumki upazila, used to work as a driver for a Dhaka-based non-government organisation.

He was the lone earning member for his family comprising his elderly in-laws, wife and three children, who live in Pangashia villager under the upazila.

A bullet put an end to Jasim's life, and left his family facing days of uncertainty.

On July 19, Jasim left his house in Dhaka's Adabor area

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'Rebuild Shidhu-Kanu sculpture within 15 days'

Demand indigenous communities

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

People from indigenous communities in Kaharol upazila of Dinajpur yesterday demonstrated protesting the vandalism of Shidhu-Kanu sculpture at Kantanagar (Tevaga Intersection) on August 5.

They also blocked a road in front of Dinajpur Press Club for an hour as part of their agitation.

Speakers at the event demanded that the authorities concerned take prompt steps to rebuild the sculpture within next 15 days, and warned of greater movement, if their demand is not met.

They handed over a memorandum addressed to the chief adviser, to Shakil Ahmed, the deputy commissioner of Dinajpur, with 9-point demand including forming separate land commission for indigenous people, punishment for those who vandalised the Shidhu-Kanu sculpture, and punishment of those who vandalised, torched and looted houses of people belonging to indigenous communities across the country since August 5.

Around 2,000 people from the communities, alongside representatives of Adivasi Chhatra Janata, Jatiya Adivasi Parishad, and Adivasi Mukti Morcha, and students of different public universities and colleges joined the agitation.

PUBLIC ADMIN MINISTRY

Mokhlesur new senior secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Mokhlesur Rahman, an officer of BCS administration cadre from batch-82, has been appointed as the new senior secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration.

A Harvard University graduate, Mokhlesur previously served as deputy commissioner of Moulvibazar, divisional commissioner of Chattogram, secretary to ACC, and secretary to Public Service Commission.

His joined his office at the ministry yesterday afternoon, Mohammad Zakir Hossain, senior information officer of the ministry, told the media.

Earlier, Mohammed Mesbah Uddin Chowdhury was removed from the post of senior secretary to the ministry and was made an officer on special duty.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project
Supporting Implementation of Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP)
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka
www.mowca.gov.bd

Memo No. 32.00.0000.013.14.060.24.129 Date: 28.08.2024

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES– INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT)

The World Bank is supporting the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to achieve its vision on early childhood development to care, nurture, protect, respect, love, and cherish all children with utmost importance in order to build a strong foundation for their growth and development, through an IDA Credit for Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) project. BEIBEY objectives are to provide consumption support to vulnerable households with pregnant women and mothers of children under 4 years and increase knowledge of nurturing care services that contribute to early childhood development.

The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received credit SDR 158,000,000 (USD 210,000,000 equivalent) financing from the World Bank toward the cost of Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project to be implemented by Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting service of an Individual Consultant to provide support to ensure effective fund management of the Project.

1.	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
2.	Agency	:	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
3.	Procuring entity name	:	Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project
4.	Procuring entity district	:	Dhaka
5.	EOI for selection of	:	INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT
6.	EOI Ref No.	:	32.00.0000.013.14.060.24.129
KEY INFORMATION			
7.	Procurement method	:	Open Competitive. (The consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in The World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016 revised November 2017)
8.	Budget source & funds	:	Development Budget, IDA, Credit
9.	Development partner	:	IDA, World Bank
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
10.	Project name	:	"Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project" Supporting Implementation of Mother and Child Benefit Programme.
11.	EOI closing date	:	Expressions of Interest must be submitted to the undersigned address by 3:00pm on or before 17/09/24, in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Expression of Interest", contract Package number and position applied for. In addition to that soft copy of REOI will be required to be submitted through email to: pd.beibey.simcbp@gmail.com
12.	Information for the applicant		

Brief Description of the Assignment:

Contract Package No.	*Name of the position with duration*	*No. of position*	*(a) Required Minimum Qualification; (b) Experience and (c) Scope of works & Job Responsibilities*
BEIBEY -SIC-01	Senior Project Coordinator; 24 months	1	***a) Education Qualification*** ▪ Master's degree in Business Administration, Social Sciences, or any other relevant discipline along with a four-year honors degree from any reputed university with at least two first class and minimum second class in other academic stages. ***b) Experience:*** ▪ Proven ability to coordinate and manage complex projects, with at least 15 years of experience in project planning, implantation, and monitoring. ▪ Experience working with social protection issues is preferred. ▪ Experience in working with various agencies (government and non-government) and Development Partners. ***c) Scope of works:*** Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.mowca.gov.bd; https://www.cptu.gov.bd)
BEIBEY -SIC-02	Senior Financial Management Specialist; 24 months	1	***a) Education Qualification*** ▪ Minimum M. Com/ MBA in Accounting/ Finance and related subjects. ▪ Professional accounting qualifications (FCA or FCMA) will be an added advantage. ***b) Experience:*** ▪ At least eight (8) years of work experience in financial management in government/semi-government institutions, or with international donors, implementing development projects. ▪ Candidates having at least five (5) years of working as a Financial Management Specialist in World Bank-financed projects and/or other development partner projects/programs will be given preference. ▪ Extensive knowledge of Government budgeting, fund release, and reporting requirements and extensive knowledge of IDA's financial management and disbursement procedures. ***c) Scope of works:*** Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.mowca.gov.bd; https://www.cptu.gov.bd)
BEIBEY -SIC-03	Senior Procurement Specialist; 20 months	1	***a) Education Qualification*** ▪ At least Bachelor in Engineering, or Masters in procurement/commerce or other relevant fields. ▪ Professional certifications/degrees in Procurement from any recognized institution will be given preference. ***b) Experience:*** ▪ At least Ten (10) years of work experience in procurement in government/semi-government institutions, or with international donors, implementing development projects; or having had other responsibilities with a substantial procurement content especially in procurement of services and goods (i.e. preparation of bidding documents and requests for proposals; use of internationally accepted contract documents; understanding of principles underlying procurement practices; analytical capability in identifying and resolving procurement issues; etc.). ▪ At least total 08 (Eight) years' experience in carrying out public Procurement with primary responsibilities and substantial content of his/her position in practical application of internationally accepted procurement and contracting procedures and documents for works, goods and services. ▪ Of which at least 03 (Three) years' experience in managing internationally competitive procurement of large scale and complex civil works under projects funded by multilateral organizations such as ADB/AIIB and particularly World Bank. ***c) Scope of works:*** Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.mowca.gov.bd; https://www.cptu.gov.bd)
BEIBEY -SIC-04	Social and Environmental Specialist; 24 months	1	***a) Education Qualification*** ▪ At least a Master's Degree from a reputed university in Environmental Management, Natural Resource Management, Sociology, or other Social Sciences. ***b) Experience:*** ▪ At least five (5) years of relevant operational ES experience and proven track record in working on projects covering a broad range of environmental management and social development issues. Experience with World Bank projects is preferred. ***c) Scope of works***: Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.mowca.gov.bd; https://www.cptu.gov.bd)
BEIBEY -SIC-06	Senior MIS Specialist; 24 months	1	***a) Education Qualification:*** ▪ Master's degree with four years honors degree in Computer Science & Engineering from any Govt. or UGC approved Private Universities. ***b) Experiences:*** ▪ At least 10 years of relevant work experience in reputed organizations (after graduation full-time work experiences will be counted). ▪ The applicant should have experience in Web Development, Cloud ERP Systems, and Software Development Experience will be given preference. ▪ 3+ years of experience in PHP or Java application development, MySQL or Oracle, and UI/UX development ▪ 3+ years of experience in managing and delivering Cloud Systems. ▪ Expertise in data modeling and data warehouse design principles and ability to perform Database Performance Tuning and Optimization ***c) Scope of works***: Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.mowca.gov.bd; https://www.cptu.gov.bd)
BEIBEY -SIC-07(a) & SIC-07(b)	Programmer Specialist; 24 months	2	***a) Education Qualification:*** ▪ Master's degree with four years honors degree in Computer Science & Engineering from any Govt. or UGC approved Private Universities. ***b) Experiences:*** ▪ At least 5 years of experience in software development with a focus on Java Spring Boot, MySQL, and React. ▪ Proven experience in database optimization and DevOps practices. ▪ Strong understanding of microservices architecture and design patterns. ▪ Experience in developing and maintaining cloud-based MIS solutions. ▪ Experience in mentoring and guiding junior programmers, experience in Agile development methodologies ***c) Scope of works***: Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.mowca.gov.bd; https://www.cptu.gov.bd)

The Applicants are invited to provide information in detail including their qualifications to perform the service (complete CV along with a description of the similar assignment, experience in similar position and conditions, general qualification, and financial proposal)

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC) method set out in the Procurement Regulations. The Procurement Regulations can be viewed at the World Bank's external website: https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/178331533065871195-0290022020/original/ProcurementRegulations.pdf

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn in particular to:
(i) Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the Procurement Regulations setting forth the World Bank's policy on Conflict of Interest, and
(ii) Section III, paragraphs, 3.21-3.24 of the Procurement Regulations setting forth the World Bank's policy on Eligibility, including the specific pre-requisite conditions to be met for the eligibility, on exceptional basis of Government officials and civil servants of the Borrower's country under consulting contracts in the Borrower's country.

Individuals who are currently working as Financial/ Procurement/Project Coordinator/Social and Environmental Specialists/consultants on another World Bank-financed project may also compete in this selection process, but if they are selected they will be required before signing the proposed contract to provide documentary evidence of having satisfactorily complied with their existing contract's requirements with respect to early termination of the contract by the consultant, including advance notice period, to avoid disruption in implementation of that project.

The client reserves the right to accept or reject any/all Expressions of Interest (EOI) or cancel the EOI process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the affected applicant(s).

TOR can be found at the following website: http://www.mowca.gov.bd/; https://www.cptu.gov.bd; further information in this regard could be obtained from the undersigned during office hours (9:00am to 5:00pm BST).

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GD-282

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

My conscience drove me:

JEETU AHSAN

"I was deeply disturbed by a photo circulating on social media—a bloodied female student from Dhaka University. The image hit me hard, especially because I have a daughter."

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Actor Jeetu Ahsan, renowned for his powerful performances in film and television, found himself in the midst of protests during the recent anti-discrimination student movement. On August 4, Jeetu joined the student protesters at Shaheed Minar, standing in solidarity with those fighting against the violence and injustice gripping the country.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, Jeetu shared the profound impact recent events had on him, compelling him to take a stand.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

PHOTOS: COLLECTED

"I was deeply disturbed by a photo circulating on social media—a bloodied female student from Dhaka University. The image hit me hard, especially because I have a daughter. I couldn't help but think, what if that had been her? The thought of such violence against women was unbearable," he recalled.

This sense of outrage prompted Jeetu to voice his concerns on social media. "Shortly after, I learned that Abu Sayed from Rangpur was shot dead during the protests. His death, captured on video, spread rapidly online. No sane person can accept what had happened. I kept wondering why people were being shot when these issues could be resolved through dialogue," he said.

Jeetu's frustration grew when he heard about students being attacked while receiving treatment at hospitals, including Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). "It was sheer madness," he remarked. "Students, already critically injured, were being assaulted in a place meant for healing. How could that be acceptable? My conscience wouldn't let me stay silent."

Despite his family's advice to remain cautious, Jeetu felt a moral obligation to act. "There was a clash at Dhanmondi 27, where a student from Residential Model College lost his life. His birthday was the same as mine, September 12. I couldn't help but think about how many dreams he and his parents must have had, now all shattered," he reflected.

Driven by his conscience, Jeetu visited the scene at Dhanmondi 27 and later shared his thoughts on Facebook. "Everything I've done has been guided by my conscience. No one pressured me, and I wasn't afraid. Some friends warned me that speaking out could cause problems, but I did it anyway," he said.

Jeetu also spoke about the tragic incident involving Mugdho, a young student whose video distributing water during the protests went viral. "That video haunted me. I couldn't sleep that night. I just couldn't shake the scenes from my mind. After that, we faced an internet shutdown, and social media became inaccessible," he recalled.

Jeetu was one of the artistes who gathered in front of the Abahani Field on Sat Masjid Road, defying the downpour on August 2 to protest under the banner ***Artistes Against Genocide and Oppression***. He voiced his concerns to the media, condemning the oppression carried out by the former AL-led government. The following day, he participated in protests at Shaheed Minar, driven not by a desire for heroism but by a deep sense of responsibility. "Thousands of students and citizens were out there, and I stood with them," he shared.

It's been a few weeks since the interim government assumed leadership of the country's administration. Regarding this, Jeetu shared, "I want to see a beautiful Bangladesh, one that is free from discrimination. I understand that change won't happen overnight. It will take time, but the effort must begin now."

He further emphasised, "The country, our motherland, must always come first. If we prioritise patriotism, our nation will progress and become more beautiful."

He also expressed concern for those affected by the severe floods in several districts, where millions are stranded. "It's heartbreaking to witness the suffering of the flood victims. These people are enduring immense pain, and while this is a natural disaster, it doesn't lessen their hardship. I sincerely hope the water recedes quickly."

Reflecting on his career, Jeetu noted that he has been acting for over two decades, having made significant contributions to television dramas during his career. His work has been widely praised, following in the footsteps of his father, the esteemed actor Syed Ahsan Ali Sydney.

Jeetu remains active in the industry, performing in dramas, on OTT platforms, and in films. His portrayal of Hanif Sikdar in the film ***Gohin Baluchor***, directed by Badrul Anam Saud, received widespread acclaim and left a lasting impression on audiences.

When asked about his natural acting style, Jeetu replied, "I have a deep love for acting. This love is intertwined with my craft. I simply put in the effort; the rest is the audience's love. It's the quality work that stays in their hearts."

Badhan calls for midnight women's march against rape and violence

Azmeri Haque Badhan has been a vocal advocate against injustice since the start of the anti-discrimination student movement.

Now, she is organising a protest against rape and violence against women, calling for justice for the victims. Badhan urges all women to join the ***Shekol Bhangar Padayatra*** (March to Break the Chains) for women's rights, set to begin on Friday (August 30) at 11:59pm from Shahbagh to the National Parliament.

She emphasised, "I'm going. I urge everyone to join. The more people that come, the stronger this movement will become."

'Dushtu Kokil' hits 200m views, sets benchmark for Bengali cinema

Toofan, starring Shakib Khan, Mimi Chakraborty, and Nabila, quickly gained attention after its Eid-ul-Azha release.

Directed by Raihan Rafi, the film sparked interest, especially after the song ***Dushtu Kokil*** launched on June 26 on two major YouTube channels.

The song has set a new record for Bengali movie songs, surpassing 200 million views in just two months. ***Dushtu Kokil*** garnered over 138 million views on Chorki's YouTube channel and over 67 million on SVF, totaling over 205 million views.

NEWS

Journalist's body found floating

FROM PAGE 12

Rahanuma, daughter of Bakhtiar Shikdar of Noakhali's Sonaimuri upazila, was staying in a rented flat in Kalyanpur area.

Her husband Sayed Shuvro told Prothom Alo that they got married seven years ago without informing their families.

Rahanuma went to her office on Tuesday and did not return home, but sent the flat rent with a person at night.

"Later, I called her and asked why she sent money by someone else instead of coming home. She replied that she was busy and hung up. Later, around 3:00am, we got news that she had jumped into the Hatirjheel lake," Shuvro said.

He went to DMCH and saw her body there, he added.

"We never had any major fights, but for some time, Rahanuma wanted to live separately. We even went to the marriage registrar's office for our divorce, but it didn't happen due to the current situation in the country."

At 10:54pm on Tuesday, Rahanuma in a Facebook post, said, "It is better to die than to live a life akin to death."

Soon after, she posted another status at 11:06pm tagging one Fahim Faisal and sharing some photos at Dhaka University. The post read, "Good to have a friend like you. God bless you. I hope all your dreams come true soon. We had a lot of plans. Sorry, I can't fulfill the plans. May God bless you ..."

A few hours later, Fahim wrote on his Facebook page that read, "My friend is no more. Last [Tuesday] night, she spoke to me for the last time. If I had known it was our last conversation, I would have never let her go."

Speaking to reporters, Rahanuma's elder sister Rabita Sabah, an assistant professor at Jagannath University, said a girl like Rahanuma, who was involved in various voluntary organisations, was unlikely to die by suicide.

Rabita said she did not know what led to her sister's death and that police would investigate it.

She claimed that her sister was frustrated with her job and salaries.

Two days ago, Rahanuma wrote on her Facebook page, "Every day, we cover so many protests, but general journalists don't even have the time to fight for their own rights and dues, like salaries and benefits! Our job is just to cover news, even if it means going hungry."

After her death, several of her friends on their Facebook pages wrote that she was looking for a new job.

Asked, Sharif Niazi, inspector (investigation) of Hatirjheel Police Station, told The Daily Star that they were looking into all related issues. An unnatural death case was filed, he added.

Hasina made accused in 4 more cases

FROM PAGE 2

asked Khilgaon Police Station to register it as a first information report (FIR).

The court asked the OC of the same police station to register an FIR over the death of 14-year-old Ashiqul Islam on the same day. Hasina and 26 others were accused in the case filed by Ashiqul's mother Arisha Afroz.

The third case was filed against Hasina and 50 others on charges related to the attempted murder of a lawyer of the Dhaka Bar Association during the students' quota reform protest on July 18.

Advocate Abdul Baset Shamim filed the case with the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Tofazzal Hossain. The magistrate asked Mugda Police Station's OC to register the complainant's statement as an FIR.

In Bogura, Hasina, three local journalists and 130 others were sued in a murder case over the death of Md Shaheed, 35, who was shot dead on August 4, a day before Hasina's fall.

Shimu Begum, 34, the wife of the deceased, filed the case on Tuesday, said Bogura Sadar Police Station OC Saihan Olliullah.

Next gen seal elusive silverware

FROM PAGE 1

weeks of pre-tournament preparation, the charges of coach Maruful Haque flipped the script in commanding fashion,.

UEFA A-licenced coach Maruful, concerned about his players' fitness following their gruelling 4-3 penalty shootout win over India in the semi-final, made three changes to the starting lineup: defenders Rajib Hossain and Iftiar Hossain, as well as semifinal hero in goalkeeper Mohammad Asif.

From the outset, the home side applied relentless pressure, coming close to breaking the deadlock several times, but solid defending and Asif's brilliant goalkeeping kept Bangladesh in the hunt.

After surviving three scares, Bangladesh nearly took the lead in the 24th minute when Rostom Islam headed wide from a perfect free-kick by Rahul. Nepal continued to test Bangladesh from distance, only to be denied by the 17-year-old keeper.

Bangladesh eventually went in front against the run of play in first-half stoppage time, with Mirajul earning a free-kick after being fouled by defender Niraj Karka before expertly curling it into the top-left corner.

Seeking an equaliser, Nepal came out aggressively after the break, while Bangladesh went on to capitalise on counterattacks, striking twice in the span of 16 minutes.

First, it was Mirajul who doubled the cushion in the 55th minute with a close-range header following a flick on from Asadul Molla. Rahul then joined the party in the 71st minute with a precise finish inside the box after being set up by Mirajul, which led to frustrated home fans throwing water bottles towards the Bangladesh players.

Nepal did pull one back in the 81st minute with a header from Samir Tamang, providing the hosts a glimmer of hope, but Nova struck his side's fourth goal in the sixth minute of added time to cap off a memorable win.

'Don't buy any properties of S Alam Group'

FROM PAGE 12

The overall situation will improve after five to six months."

On Islami Bank, Mansur said he has asked the new board to make an action plan within a week. "We will provide all kinds of support to them. If they do not play a supportive role, the board will be changed again."

Asked what Bangladesh Bank will do if S Alam Group tries to sell properties that have not been mortgaged, Mansur said, "It has to be done through legal process. We will ask the government to take action."

On scams involving S Alam, he said S Alam may be the first person in history to rob banks with such meticulous planning. "I have never heard of such a well-planned bank looting using state machinery ... on such a wide scale."

The governor said the scams involving other people will also be investigated and action will be taken. "No one will be spared."

On forming a Banking Commission, Mansur said the commission will be formed within a month, but its exact modus operandi has not been finalised yet.

He said the commission will not act like the previous one. "It will have to be reconstituted brick by brick. It will be a different type of work. We will get assistance from foreign experts who have the expertise on dealing with the banking crisis in other countries. We will also learn from how Sri Lanka has dealt with the issues."

Responding to a query on inflation, Mansur said steps have been taken to control inflation. "We can reduce interest rate, if we can reduce the inflation rate in next six to seven months. However, the recent flood has caused a bit of concern."

On foreign currency reserves, he said there is no possibility of reduction in reserve. "It will increase in the future. The government's demand for dollar is being met from the interbank market."

He added that if the dollar price remained stable, there would be no reason for the import bill to increase. Oil price is stable in the global market and the prices of other products, including wheat and soybean, have dropped.

Regarding his predecessors, he said there was a lack of good governance. "The central bank also needs to be reformed. Because it also cannot avoid responsibility."

It won't be prudent to ban AL

FROM PAGE 12

AL, he said the Attorney General's Office was against it when the High Court's order to ban the AL was sought.

As per the constitution, people have the right to associate.

The AL led the struggle for Bangladesh's independence and it contributed to movements for democracy, he said.

"What they have done in the last 15 years is not in line with their tradition. It does not go with the spirit of the Liberation War. They established the most barbaric fascism in the history of Bangladesh," he added.

When a reporter told him that the Election Commission said its constitutional obligation was to hold an election within 90 days of dissolution of parliament, Prof Asif said, "The Election Commission should understand what their constitutional obligation was. Was holding a sham election its constitutional obligation too?"

The chief election commissioner in a recent article termed the previous government autocratic, he said.

"There is no reason for us to be guided by the [chief election commissioner's] words. We have enough legal experts."

He then said assaulting people on court premises was not acceptable under any circumstance, but added that Mahmudur Rahman, a senior journalist, was assaulted on court premises and many journalists were humiliated in many other ways over the last 15 years.

"There are many angry people out there: those who did not have a job for 15 years, people who were on the run fearing for their lives. There are families of people who were murdered and the victims of enforced disappearances. That anger was expressed. But I don't support this. We are thinking about ways to reduce the crowding [on court premises]."

Asked whether too many cases were being filed against key individuals in the previous government, he said, "If a family member of a deceased person files a case, the state has no right to stop them. We will try to ensure the proper process of investigation and prosecution."

Rescue op yet to begin

FROM PAGE 12

On Tuesday, the eight-member probe body was formed to investigate the fire incident at the factory, owned by former Awami League minister Golam Dastagir Gazi.

Families of many other missing people gathered in front of the factory over the last three days.

Holding a photo of her father, Raisa Akter Mim, 10, was waiting in front of the factory last night.

Mohammad Mamun, the father of the third-grader, has been missing since Sunday night when the factory was set ablaze.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Raisa said, "We have been waiting here for two days."

Mamun's brother-in-law Mohammad Rana said they looked for Mamun at many hospitals and morgues in Dhaka and Narayanganj, but did not find him. "We believe the bodies of many people, including Mamun, are inside the factory building."

Among those missing is Aman Ullah, 21, a worker at a local battery factory.

His parents Abdul Baten and Rashida Begum were waiting in front of factory building yesterday with their son's photo.

Rashida said her son told them over the phone around 10:00pm on Sunday that he got trapped inside the building. He requested the family members to rescue him.

"No one is giving us any information about my son. Please, give us his body at least," said Rashida.

The factory had been closed since August 5 after it came under a mob attack.

India floods kill 15 after heavy rains

AFP, *New Delhi*

Torrential rains in India caused heavy flooding that killed at least 15 people, local media reported yesterday.

Rivers across the coastal western state of Gujarat have broken their banks and more than 23,000 people have been evacuated from their homes, according to the reports.

The Business Standard newspaper said 15 people had been killed since Monday across eight of the state's districts.

Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea, chief minister Bhupendra Patel said in a social media post.

Monsoon rains cause widespread destruction every year, but experts say climate change is shifting weather patterns and increasing the number of extreme weather events.

Israeli soldiers operate during a raid in the Nur Shams camp for Palestinian refugees near the city of Tulkarem in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday. At least 9 Palestinians were killed in Israeli raids and strikes in several towns in the north of the occupied West Bank, a spokesman for the Red Crescent said.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Russian attacks kill six in east Ukraine

AFP, *Kyiv*

Russian bombardments on the eastern Ukraine region of Donetsk killed six people yesterday, the governor of the region said, as Moscow announced it had taken another village in the area.

The industrial region has suffered the worst fighting of Russia's invasion. The Kremlin claimed to have annexed it alongside three other territories in 2022.

"In the morning the Russians killed four people and destroyed a house in Izmailivka," the regional official Vadym Filashkin said on social media.

He added that two more people were killed in separate attacks near Chasiv Yar that damaged more than a dozen homes.

Russia's defence ministry announced on Wednesday that Russian forces had taken another settlement, some 20 kilometres (12 miles) from the logistics hub of Pokrovsk.

Regional authorities have recently ordered large-scale mandatory evacuations with Russian forces advancing towards Pokrovsk, once home to around 60,000 people.

Filashkin said that 2,718 people, including 392 children, had been evacuated from frontline areas on Tuesday.

He later said on state media that some 30,000 people remained in Pokrovsk and surrounding villages and that banks would shutter in the town by Sunday.

India rape protests spiral into political street clashes

AFP, *Kolkata*

Thousands of protesters clashed in India's eastern city of Kolkata yesterday, where demonstrations seeking justice for a murdered doctor spiralled into violent street skirmishes between political rivals.

The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in Kolkata on August 9 stoked nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women.

That sparked strikes by medics and rallies backed by thousands of ordinary citizens across India, although many doctors have since returned to work.

But repeated protests in West Bengal state capital Kolkata have transformed into clashes between the state's ruling All India Trinamool Congress (AITMC) and the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The Hindu-nationalist BJP is the party of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and holds power nationally, but sits in opposition in West Bengal.

"We want justice", BJP supporters chanted, referring to the murdered doctor, then demanding the resignation of AITMC leader Mamata Banerjee, the chief minister.

"Go back! Go back!" AITMC supporters shouted in return.

Banerjee accused the BJP of "dirty politics" and exploiting the doctor's death, speaking at a rally of party loyalists.

On Tuesday, police clashed with protesters, firing tear gas canisters and water cannons, and arresting at least 245 people.

US, China accuse each other of stoking regional tensions

AFP, *Beijing*

Top US and Chinese officials exchanged warnings against stoking regional tensions during a meeting in Beijing yesterday after China became embroiled in security rows with American allies Japan and the Philippines.

US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, making the first such trip by someone in his role since 2016, and Chinese top diplomat Wang Yi met in Beijing for talks that were meant to smooth over relations.

But after their meeting, state media reported that Wang cautioned Washington against supporting the Philippines in the disputed South China Sea.

"The United States must not use bilateral treaties as an excuse to undermine China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, nor should it support or condone the Philippines' actions of infringement," Wang told Sullivan, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

Sullivan, who is US President Joe Biden's most senior security aide, doubled down on Washington's pledges to defend its regional partners.

"Mr Sullivan reaffirmed the United States' commitment to defending its Indo-Pacific allies," the White House said in a readout of their meeting.

Sullivan also "expressed concern about the PRC's destabilizing actions against lawful Philippine maritime operations in the South China Sea", it said, using an acronym for the People's Republic of China.

Trump, Harris TV debate on Sept 10!

AFP, *Washington*

Donald Trump said Tuesday he had "reached an agreement" for a September 10 debate with Kamala Harris, two days after he threatened to pull out -- although there was no confirmation from the US vice president that a deal had been struck.

Trump posted on his Truth Social platform that the rivals had agreed that the ABC showdown would run under the same rules as CNN's June 27 debate, with no studio audience and each candidate's microphone muted when the other is speaking.

Calling ABC "by far the nastiest and most unfair newscaster in the business," Trump said the network had given him assurances that the debate in Philadelphia would be "fair."

But the Harris campaign responded by accusing Trump of moving the goalposts and was coy about whether it was accepting the terms.

Trump has previously balked at taking part in the debate, which comes on the heels of Harris's lightning rise as the Democratic White House nominee after Biden stepped aside.

Campus politics

FROM PAGE 12

operational so that the students' and teachers' opinions are taken into account. "However, we will know how long it will take to do that after discussions with the stakeholders."

Freedom of expression of students and teachers is mentioned in the Dhaka University Order, 1973, he said. "Those who founded the university formed the structures keeping these elements in mind."

The DU will prioritise rebuilding within a week the administrative structure required to resume academic activities.

"We are not waiting for a 100 percent perfect situation. We will resume [the activities] as much as we can. Such a situation is unprecedented in recent memory."

"My team hopes to start full-scale activities within a week. After taking office, we have been constantly talking to the stakeholders. We are trying to start the university's operations based on understanding with all. So, resuming the academic activities and reopening the dormitories is our first goal."

"The students have long been facing hurdles to an education-friendly environment. They have some reasonable suggestions, including those related to the student-teacher relationship and some others to infrastructural limitations. We will prioritise the issues that everyone is talking about in general," he added.

The next priority, Prof Niaz said, will be to cooperate with the outstanding researchers of the university. "It is a place of great interest to me. Our previous administration also took some initiatives to improve the university's rankings. Their good steps will be continued."

He said it would be a great challenge to make the students adapt to the changed situation.

"It has both physical and mental aspects. Maximum support will be given to get them out of trauma. I am committed to continuing to try to solve the problems of Dhaka University with everyone's advice."

Regarding the teachers' appointment on political considerations, the VC said such practices go against the spirit of the anti-discrimination movement, but his administration will first try to deal with the immediate crisis.

"It would be difficult for me to work on this agenda if the stakeholders do not agree with me or support me."

Prof Niaz called for opinions from the stakeholders. "My door is open for any suggestion and advice."

"If I don't accept the suggestion, I will disclose the reasons. At this critical time, it is very important to continue dialogue with everyone irrespective of party affiliation."

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স্মারক নংঃ জেপঢা/কা:উ-৪২/ঠিকাদার নবায়ন ও তালিকাভূক্তি-০৬/২০২৪/৯১৪ তারিখঃ ২৮-০৮-২০২৪খ্রিঃ

ঠিকাদারী লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ও নতুন ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নিম্মোক্ত সময়সূচী এবং ফি পরিশোধ সাপেক্ষে ঢাকা জেলা পরিষদের আওতায় তালিকাভূক্ত সকল শ্রেণীর ঠিকাদার/ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের জন্য তালিকাভুক্তি/নবায়নের লক্ষ্যে নির্ধারিত ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলি অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে জেলা পরিষদ কার্যালয় হতে জানা যাবে।

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Attacks on businesses must be prevented

These incidents have a serious impact on the economy

We are deeply concerned about the severe and still-unrelenting disruptions faced by business establishments after the fall of the Awami League government. Business leaders have also expressed deep concerns about the impact of these disruptions caused mostly by incidents of arson, looting, and vandalism but also rising extortion, logistical bottlenecks, etc. It is only reasonable to think that if these challenges persist and business leaders are not given the support they need to weather this crisis, it may significantly hurt their operational capabilities and also the prospects of our export-driven economy. Even mass layoffs and factory closures cannot be ruled out.

Our top priority, then, should be restoring law and order and protecting all industrial establishments from harm, regardless of the identity of their owners. A recent report by this daily highlighted the extensive damage caused by politically motivated attacks on businesses from August 4 to 27, saying that nearly three dozen industrial units were targeted during this period. Most of them were owned or controlled by individuals with ties to Awami League. These attacks, invariably followed by looting and vandalism, have led to significant financial losses. Among the hardest hit was the Gazi Group, owned by former textile and jute minister Golam Dastagir Gazi. Two of its factories in Narayanganj—Gazi Pipe and Gazi Auto Tyres—have been left in ruins following repeated attacks, with the latter estimating a loss of Tk 1,000 crore alone. About 2,650 officers and employees of this unit have also become unemployed.

The Bengal Group of Industries also suffered heavy losses, with several of its factories in Gazipur being damaged by arson, vandalism, and looting. Its estimated losses amounted to around Tk 462 crore. Among other well-known factories affected were those of the Beximco Group, owned by Salman F Rahman, and the Ha-Meem Group. Such examples reportedly abound, taking place across various industries and even in warehouses, although we are yet to know the full extent of such attacks or the damages caused. One thing is clear, however. The unprecedented scale of industrial attacks will have a debilitating impact not just on the workers and officers employed by factories but also their respective markets, resulting in a crisis that may shoot up domestic prices of relevant products.

Against this backdrop, increasing security is paramount. That may be a challenging task considering the recent turmoil witnessed in some security forces, but for the country to move ahead and businesses to flourish again, there is no alternative to taking strict actions. And we hope the law enforcement authorities will do just that. Going ahead, business leaders also need help to recoup their losses which they have already detailed, including favourable import terms, continuation of the export development fund, removal of existing barriers in consignment release and transportation, etc. The BGMEA, which represents garments manufacturers, also requested a soft loan of Tk 1,800-1,900 crore to pay one month's wages for the workers, which too deserves consideration. These financial, logistical and policy supports are essential to boost business confidence again.

Coordination vital in aid distribution

The authorities must streamline all flood relief efforts

It was very heartening to see the spontaneous response from people to help those affected by the recent floods in eastern districts—one of the worst in living memory. But one lingering problem that somewhat marred this response is the insufficient logistics in relief distribution in many of the affected areas. According to a report in this daily, local administrations are struggling to reach remote areas because of logistical issues. The lack of coordination among the groups involved is causing a problem as well. We believe an urgent plan is necessary to expand and streamline all such efforts to ensure smooth delivery of relief goods.

According to the report, even though the flood situation has started to improve, there are areas where people are still trapped by water, with no modes of transport and communication available. Local administrations and volunteers are facing difficulties in reaching these areas as they don't have enough boats, particularly in Feni, Cumilla, Lakshmipur and Noakhali districts. In Feni, teams of armed forces have been trying their best to reach as many people as possible; they have air-dropped food packets in some remote areas. But some places remain inaccessible. Volunteer groups are working on their own; locals and some volunteers told *Prothom Alo* that their aid efforts in Feni Sadar are mostly limited to places close to the Dhaka-Chattogram highway. In Cumilla, more than 1.1 million people in 14 upazilas are still marooned, and they haven't received any aid yet, *Samakal* reported.

There is another aspect that needs attention. As the floodwater recedes, the extent of damage is coming to view. Homesteads have been severely damaged; livestock, poultry and fish farms have been washed away, affecting people's livelihoods. In many areas, people are falling sick and there is no access to first aid and basic medications. The risks of various water-borne diseases breaking out also remain a considerable cause for concern.

Given the situation, the government needs to adopt a two-pronged approach. The first is to coordinate distribution of food and medicine especially for remote areas. The disaster management and relief ministry has already directed the DCs of flood-affected districts to coordinate with volunteers, armed forces, fire service, medical teams and others. The ministry should take the lead in this regard and guide these groups, providing necessary logistical support with the help of local government offices. The second is to plan for the post-flood scenario. People are going to need help to rebuild their lives; they will need support to make a living and survive any potential health crisis. The government must be prepared for that as well, and mobilise resources to provide the required support in the coming days.

DU must lead by example in abolishing partisan politics

A note to the new vice-chancellor

Saad Hammadi
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SAAD HAMMADI

As the tide of reform sweeps across institutions with changes taking place in the leadership positions, the interim government and university authorities must ensure that teachers and students are no longer dragged into party-based politics in academic institutions. The present political affiliation of teachers and students is counterproductive for academic excellence.

The brand of student politics that has been prevalent in Bangladesh's universities since the 1990s is nothing short of running criminal rackets in academic institutions. From controlling access to student accommodations, to assaulting and even killing students critical of the party in power and interference in every other institutional decision, student politics in the academic institutions earned the reputation of notoriety, serving the dictatorial aspirations of mainstream political parties.

This environment has undermined institutional autonomy, discipline, and integrity. I hope that Dhaka University, under the leadership of the new Vice-Chancellor Professor Niaz Ahmed Khan, who was also my teacher, will lead by example the abolition of party-based politics in all academic institutions.

Thuggery in the name of student politics

We must not forget the brutality that so-called student leaders of the mainstream political parties have waged against regular students. In October 2019, 21-year-old Abrar Fahad, a student at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), was killed inside the university's student dormitory by a group of students belonging to Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of the Bangladesh Awami League. He was tortured inside the student dormitory for several hours before he died from internal injuries. Abrar's life was cut short because of his criticism on Facebook against the previous government's deals with India.

The brutality against Abrar is not the first of the hallmarks of terrorism and violence that the present brand of student politics has unleashed in academic institutions. This has been the culture inside public universities since the 1990s.

The private universities have for the longest time strictly prevented activities of mainstream political parties in their institutions. However, in the last couple of years, student committees representing the BCL have been formed in some of these universities as well. Teachers have resorted to self-censorship in academic discussions about political periods and actions due to fear of reprisals. Most recently, general students have been attacked by BCL members at some of these universities for participating in protests against discrimination. A teacher at a private university shared with me her frustration about how the BCL leaders enjoyed preferential treatment inside the campus, which undermined institutional integrity.

আবরার ফাহাদ
হত্যার বিচার চাই

The brutality against Abrar Fahad is not the first of the hallmarks of terrorism and violence that the present brand of student politics has unleashed in academic institutions.

FILE PHOTO: **STAR**

Another teacher at a public university recently shared with me her fears about the repression being carried out against teachers, who are being forced to resign by students due to their political affiliation with the previous ruling Awami League party.

Universities are also grappled by a wave of ultra conservative demands of some student bodies that have time and again risen to breach the privacy and freedom of others. This includes denying religious freedom and dictating how female teachers and students should carry themselves. Bangladesh is only free from oppression and discrimination when the minority in the country can truly enjoy the same freedom as the majority.

Institutions must promote civil and political rights

Student politics have played significant role globally at shaping discourses and ushering in social and political changes, whether it was the civil rights movement in the US in the 1950s and 60s that prohibited racial discrimination in voting, education and employment, the 1952 Language Movement to recognise Bangla as the state language in East Pakistan, the Fridays for Future movement initiated by Greta Thunberg in 2018 against human-induced effects on climate, or the most recent student-led anti-discrimination movement that resulted in the fall of a tyrannical rule in Bangladesh.

The civil and political rights are a set of internationally recognised human rights that have paved the way for people to come together and organise for genuine causes in public interest. Students and the youth have led by example many of these movements for political change.

The right to freedom of expression, assembly, and association is fluid and entitled to everyone under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the Constitution of Bangladesh. They do not draw any distinction between race, age, gender, religion, ethnicity, economic, social, or political values.

This must not be confused with the thuggery that student wings of the mainstream political parties have brandished across academic institutions. To advance the political agenda of the parties in power, they have suppressed intellectual debates, academic and fundamental freedoms in institutions. This cannot be allowed to continue.

Institutional integrity critical for reform

A young teacher at Dhaka University, whom I spoke to recently, shared that she joined the university at a time when everyone endorsed the blue panel to be in the good books of the administration. The blue panel is the platform of teachers belonging to the Awami League camp. There is also a pink panel composed of left-leaning teachers and a white panel comprising supporters of the right-wing Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami. The panel that belongs to the party in government traditionally decides the recruitment and promotions in the university. Political orientation of candidates predominates merit and performance.

Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan is an expert in monitoring and evaluation. It is important that the existing political nexus of students, teachers and political parties do not determine the fate of teachers and functions of academic institutions. Instead, transparent and accountable systems should be in place to determine the recruitment and promotions of academics.

The university, as a matter of priority, should abandon all party-based politics through a policy and define the scope of student politics that strictly upholds the right to practice academic, intellectual, civil, political, social, cultural and religious freedom, and diversity.

The necessity for substantive police reform

Muhammad Nurul Huda
is former IGP of Bangladesh Police.

MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

For police reform to be substantive, the first order of business should be the enactment of a new Police Act to replace the present archaic legislation enacted in 1861. The act is weak in almost all the parameters needed to govern democratic police legislation.

The act makes it easier for others to abuse and misuse the police organisation because it gives the government the authority to exercise superintendence over the police, without defining the word superintendence or prescribing some guidelines to ensure that the use of power will be legitimate. It also does not establish any institutional and other arrangements to insulate the police from undesirable and illegitimate outside control, pressures and influences.

Besides, this law does not necessitate outlining objectives and performance standards, nor does it set up independent mechanisms to monitor and inspect police performance. The law is antiquated in its charter of duties, which is narrow and limited, and does not mandate the police to function as a professional and service-oriented organisation.

Another criticism is its dissonance with the requirements of democratic policing, which requires a police force to be publicly accountable and subject to the rule of law, rather than the whims of the party in power. In democratic policing, the force can intervene in the lives of citizens only under limited and controlled circumstances.

The principal characteristics of police organisation produced by the Police Act 1861 are: (i) preservation of status quo; and (ii) maintenance of order and avoidance of breach of peace. The law overemphasises the constabulary functions of the police as against the professional aspect of crime control. Except in the preamble, the act does not mention crime control. In fact, the duties of a police officer laid down in the law include obeying and executing all orders and warrants lawfully issued to him by any competent authority; collecting and communicating intelligence affecting the public peace; preventing the commission of offences and public nuisances; and detecting and bringing offenders to justice.

The duties also require police to apprehend all persons to whom he is legally authorised to apprehend; take charge of unclaimed property and furnish an inventory thereof to the district magistrate; keep order on the public roads and in the public streets, thoroughfares, and ghats and landing places and on all other places of public resort; and prevent obstructions on occasions of assemblies and processions on the public streets.

The principal objective was to administer a static, immobile and backward rural society living in villages and small towns. It envisages the exercise of authority without local accountability. It presupposes a society without any constitution, basic and fundamental rights, organised public opinion, mass media that projects and agitates public interest.

Police accountability is a crucial issue today. The advanced coercive, scientific, and technical tools available to police necessitate stricter accountability measures. The current system is not only ineffective but also lacks public trust. Therefore, it is essential to replace it with statutory bodies like the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) in England and Wales or the National Public Safety Commission in Japan. The IOPC is composed of civil society members, who investigate serious complaints against the police. Meanwhile, the commission in Japan ensures that police operations remain free from political influence. These apolitical commissions oversee police administration to protect it from daily political pressures both at national and prefectural levels.

Corruption arises from a combination of interconnected issues, such as inadequate salaries for police officers, extensive discretionary powers, outdated performance evaluation systems, substandard working conditions, ineffective internal oversight by superiors, and extremely weak external accountability mechanisms, including those through the judiciary, media, and parliament. If police officers feared job loss, they would have fewer reasons to engage in corruption. However, accepting bribes becomes a rational decision if the risk of losing their job is minimal compared to the financial gains from corruption.

Ensuring gender-sensitive policing is a critical element of ongoing police reform efforts in South Asia. Programmes and strategies aimed at changing police attitudes towards women involve the proactive induction of substantially large proportions of women into police forces of the region. A gender-sensitive training strategy for police personnel on how to handle the growing number of cases of domestic violence, harassment at workplaces and sexual assaults is also integral to the police reform agenda.

The three areas that need urgent attention if police were to be credibly transformed into a public-friendly, service-delivery organisation are corruption, inefficiency, and misbehaviour with the public. Policies and strategies seeking to reduce corruption in the police is needed although enhancing police efficiency through true professionalism and transforming public-frightening police into a public-friendly outfit have not been very successful in South Asia.

Any police reform strategy will have to consider several other key variables such as the structure of the government, the role of the judiciary, and political parties in administrative affairs of the country. The question is one of mandate of the police force and how serious the attempt to shift the basis of legitimacy of the police from an adversarial to a consensus or a community model is.

For too long the basic functioning of police has remained unchanged. Improving the quality of law enforcement needs to be a permanent and integral part of the national agenda, regardless of which party is in power.

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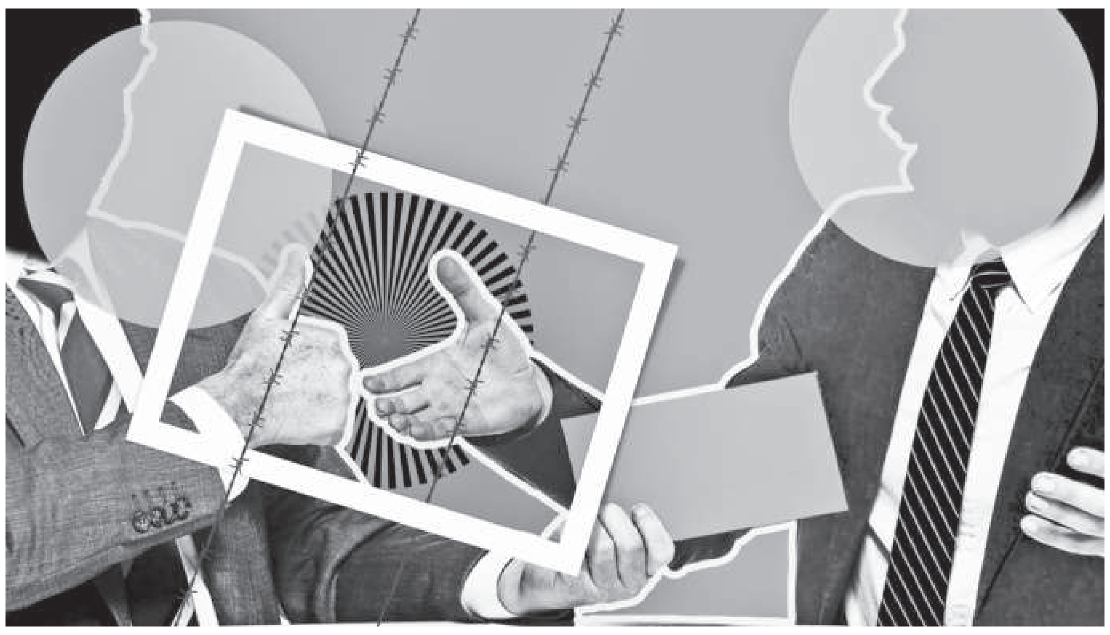

VISUAL: STAR

Transitions, coins, and lenses

KNOT SO TRUE

Dr Rubana Huq
is vice-chancellor of Asian University for Women.

RUBANA HUQ

I am glad I left my glasses at home today. For many years, I thought that I would not be able to live without them. Today, after almost 20 years, I am reading and writing without having to resort to my lenses. True, my vision is blurred; true I cannot read and write without comfort. But I do know that I now can exist without my lenses.

Working through a lens is probably good for our sight, but learning to survive without them is probably more rewarding for the spirit. So, point is, who do I love more? My soul or my sight?

I would rather be blind than soulless.

Hence the rant below....

Filter less and lens free transitions are often uncomfortable but necessary. Transitions also give many constituencies the opportunity to speculate, confuse and divert the conversation considering that any transition is a grey area that does not come without a blur.

Once upon a time, the state was super powerful. There was a time when the developing world operated through interventionist state model. If there were successful economic transformation, state took the credit as state was then capable of dominating social groups, including business. Gradually, in place of the states, significant trends of privileging the private sector were noticed to be on the rise along with a substantial increase in business power resulting in ultra-invigorated business associations.

When private sector became powerful in Bangladesh, the morals of the business sector came crashing down like a house of cards. The formula was easy. Being seen with "power" was important. A picture was necessary. A Facebook post was essential. Getting in and out of the "office" of power mattered the most. Very quickly, instead of addressing issues related to business, the prime consideration was always to flaunt the proximity to power.

Globally, businesses yielding significant influence in governments is not unusual. In the US alone, according to Center for Responsive Politics, businesses donated over $7 billion to candidates and committees in the 2022 election. University of Chicago published a study in 2023 where the school spotted that companies with political ties experienced a 15 percent average decline in stock prices as a result of corruption scandal. Ethical lapses surfaced and the companies lost confidence. American consumers, too, have become sceptical about investing in companies that compromise public interest and serve the interests of the politicians and donors.

In Bangladesh, we have gone the other way. When private sector became powerful in Bangladesh, the morals of the business sector came crashing down like a house of cards. The formula was easy. Being seen with "power" was important. A picture was necessary. A Facebook post was essential. Getting in and out of the "office" of power mattered the most. Very quickly, instead of addressing issues related to business, the prime consideration was always to flaunt the proximity to power.

In association elections, the positioning of political leaders on the stage became critical for victory. In most cases, the faces of the business leaders became the faces of the government. Most leaders after having served in the business associations moved to join the parliament. Parliament started to look like a tiered corporate sector, where wealth would be produced on a daily basis. One word from the leader of the parliament would rescue a sinking ship; one glance or a smile would salvage any ruin.

Thus, we rolled on. For years, faces popped up in the royal court to sing praises. For years, the court jesters routinely changed masks to adapt to the needs of the times and the business leaders shamelessly changed faces.

Elections in multiple business associations in the past have been controlled by the centre of power. During most of the association elections, rigging has been a standard practice. One association doesn't even have an accurate voter list. Non-manufacturers are voters. In spite of many attempts, this hasn't changed as it gives the contenders a chance to use the "sick" factory votes and reward them in one way or another. Instead of focusing on what's really needed for the sector, instead of policy directives, what has gagged the sector's growth is lack of focus on key areas and excessive stress on political alignment. Pictures with political leaders and advertisements on newspapers have been the focal point of any trade discourse.

"Onar shathey link bhalo", "onake PM pochonodo koren na"... were the only discussions that were mostly heard. Presidents have also been seen falling on their knees on airplanes and addressing the ex-PM for reducing source tax. Yours truly bears witness to one of those occasions.

In all honesty, the business associations have been subjected to an endless game of masquerade where garlands, pictures and faces changed with the direction of the political wind. The fact that this country is not ready for LDC graduation, the fact that sector diversification is needed, the fact that in terms of economic complexity, Bangladesh is lagging behind—these issues have never made it to the trade headlines. To be seen with the "centre" had always been the priority. To be travelling with the centre was key. To be delivering eulogies was essential. And...this has gone on...

Doing business while in politics is a risky proposition. While potential benefits exist, the potential for reputational damage, loss of trust, and legal challenges are significant. For most, the risks likely outweigh the rewards. Let's remind ourselves that we ought to weigh the potential benefits and drawbacks carefully before embarking on this path. Let us also not forget that there are demands on transparency and ethical conduct from both business leaders and politicians. Let us also not forget that prioritising good governance and acting in the public interest both MUST be key while navigating this demanding intersection.

What can we do to separate business from politics? Maybe build a few goals and acknowledge that "transparency" matters, that there must be an ethical compass and that there needs to be a clear wall between business and political activities. Maybe have independent watchdogs to ensure all of the above?

And yes, the road where we stand today is one of uncertainty. But let there not be a single coin to mar our journey. A democracy needs a full field filled with players ready to jump into a fair game. The game need not be dominated by a toss of a coin, where both sides look the same, and come with the same baggage and consequences. Let the change that's sweeping the country today not be a sole discourse on power, rather on the rewarding journey of self-correction.

We must be bold with health sector reforms

Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury
is convener at Bangladesh Health Watch, and professor of population and family health at Columbia University, New York.

AHMED MUSHTAQUE RAZA CHOWDHURY

The health sector holds an important place in a nation's development. The past few decades have witnessed some remarkable strides in Bangladesh's health sector. However, this has largely stalled since 2010. Between 1990 and 2010, Bangladesh reduced its maternal mortality ratio from 600 per 100,000 live births to 194, an astonishing achievement. After almost a decade, however, there has been little improvement. Such stagnation was similarly observed in several other indicators of a nation's development.

It is said that we harvested the "low-hanging fruits" well. Bangladesh is committed to reducing the maternal mortality ratio to 70 by 2030, but given the current situation, this seems like an unachievable target. To attain progress, we need to focus on the more difficult, "high-hanging fruits." Civil society activists and health experts repeatedly highlighted this challenge to the previous government, but sadly, serious efforts were not made. Instead, a sense of complacency prevailed. The result was that any idea suggesting reform faced resistance.

The anti-discrimination movement has inspired the nation and sparked hope among the masses. It has given us a chance to rethink our future. In the health sector, we now have an opportunity for comprehensive reform. If we want to move forward in line with the times, we must be ready to tackle some difficult tasks.

We know, for instance, that good governance is a major issue for development in Bangladesh. Poor governance leads to many problems, and the health sector is no exception. The absence of doctors in health centres is a perennial issue. The corruption that surfaced during the Covid pandemic is still fresh in our memory. We know these issues arise due to the lack of accountability and poor management. The private healthcare sector has become a behemoth without any control whatsoever, harbouring severe inequalities. In 1982, an ordinance was passed giving special priority to the private sector, but it has not been updated since. There is no clear regulatory provisions to control them, leading them to get away with unethical and illegal practices. Despite the presence of the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council which was established decades ago to monitor the professional behaviour of doctors, many still engage in unethical practices without facing any consequences.

Another significant drawback in our healthcare system is poor investment. Currently, the government's spendings on healthcare is one of the lowest globally: only 0.7 percent of the GDP. With such meagre investment, it is impossible to imagine modern healthcare. We have seen to our dismay that two of the important pillars of human development, health and education, were among the lowest priorities for the previous government. Our neighbour Sri Lanka, which is far ahead of us in most indicators, spends nearly four times more on health than we do in Bangladesh. Even the small funding that the health sector gets is not fully utilised, with the utilisation rates remaining below 80 percent. One of the main reasons for this is the lack of adequate capacity in the ministry of health, whose inefficiency in drafting a proper budget, planning, and utilising funds is very well-known. The lack of vision is yet another reason. A "poverty of vision" seems to have gripped the ministry. If we want to emerge as a prosperous nation, our health planners must have a clear vision befitting the health system of a developing country, and our budgets should be framed accordingly.

One of the benchmarks for countries that have made significant progress in health is their investment in primary healthcare. Bangladesh's primary healthcare system extends from upazilas to unions and community clinics. Ignoring the primary level and focusing on urban-based big hospitals is an action equivalent to nurturing social inequality. Increased investment in primary healthcare with an effective referral system would significantly reduce the pressure on urban hospitals.

One of the benchmarks for countries that have made significant progress in health is their investment in primary healthcare. Bangladesh's primary healthcare system extends from upazilas to unions and community clinics. Ignoring the primary level and focusing on urban-based big hospitals is an action equivalent to nurturing social inequality. Increased investment in primary healthcare with an effective referral system would significantly reduce the pressure on urban hospitals.

In addition, another significant issue plaguing Bangladesh's healthcare system is its human resources. Doctors, nurses, and midwives are in severely short supply. To address this crisis, the previous governments licensed new institutions in both the public and private sectors which contributed in alleviating the crisis to some extent. However, there is no effective mechanism in place to ensure the quality of these institutions. Similarly, we need to focus on research. Recently, Bangladesh Health Watch published an extensive research-based book documenting Bangladesh's first 50 years, which shows how Bangladesh has surpassed its neighbours in various health indicators. One of the findings revealed that in recent years, Pakistan has been able to overtake Bangladesh in health research.

The previous government had expressed its commitment to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Unfortunately, it never felt the need to explain in detail how this would be done or where the additional funds would come from.

The recent uprising is a massive achievement, with tremendous sacrifices made by students and common citizens. We know that every crisis also presents an opportunity. After World War II, the European countries built their health systems on the ruins of war, ensuring free healthcare for all citizens. In the 1990s, after a horrific genocide, Rwanda launched its UHC programme. As I see it, the student revolution has similarly given us a golden opportunity to overhaul our broken health system. Experts have agreed on what needs to be done. This can be broadly divided into five actions: i) establish a high-powered permanent national health commission to create and monitor a roadmap for implementing UHC nationwide; ii) establish a national health security office to ensure accountability in the health system by separating the ministry of health's roles as a "purchaser" and "provider"; iii) ensure good governance and proper management; iv) increase healthcare investment to two percent of GDP, with increased priority for primary healthcare; and v) enhance the quality, efficiency, and oversight of institutions involved in professional health education and research.

I believe that if we follow this path, we will confidently move towards achieving our national goals. While we have made significant achievements, complacency cannot be allowed and must be kept at bay. To bring about a real and lasting change, there is no alternative to reform. This is something the student leaders have repeatedly emphasised. The interim government must take a bold stance and move towards reforms in the health sector that lead to the public being served.

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e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders are invited through the national e-GP portal for the following procurement of works/goods.

e-Tender ID	Name of Works	Closing & Opening Date & Time	Procuring Entity/ Contact Persons
1008688	Supply of Printronix printer Ribbon and Others printer Toner office of the Executive Engineer, NOCS Sitalakhya, DPDC.	1/09/2024 14:00 pm	(Engr. Md. Kamal Hossain) Superintending Engineer SE, NOCS, Circle Fatulla Panchoboti, Fatulla, Narayangonj. Phone: 02997746700 Email: sefatulla@dpdc.gov.bd
1010299	Supply of Stationary Items for office of the Executive Engineer NOCS, Sitalakhya, DPDC	17/09/2024 14:30 pm	
1010330	Supply of Printronix printer Ribbon and Others printer Toner office of the executive Engineer, NOCS Fatulla, DPDC	11/09/2024 15.00 pm	

The interested persons/firms/organizations may visit website (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) to get the details.

DGM (HR) Public Relations, DPDC

Process on to bring back laundered money

Says chief adviser's office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has started the process to bring back the money laundered abroad and acquire local assets of the people who embezzled money from banks.

The information was shared by the office of the chief adviser of the interim government through a press release issued yesterday.

Bangladesh Bank's financial intelligence unit, criminal investigation department of police, and anti-corruption commission have started recovering the embezzled and laundered money, according to the press release.

The government has already contacted various foreign organisations seeking their assistance regarding the repatriation of the money.

"Some unscrupulous businessmen and other influential persons have in recent years embezzled huge sums of money anonymously and laundered it abroad through rampant corruption and fraud in the banking sector," it said.

The government is also working to determine the exact amount of money and assets laundered and embezzled from the banking sector, it also said, adding that the amount of embezzled money is believed to be over Tk 1 lakh crore.

It said reforms are already underway in banks and financial institutions associated with such corruption.

Besides, initiatives have been taken and the boards of Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank, National Bank, United Commercial Bank, Global Islami Bank, and Union Bank have been reconstituted.

It said reforms will also be initiated in the remaining banks and financial institutions.

The actual information of the embezzled money will be collected through the new management authority and the audit process will start to determine the actual amount of money embezzled from the banks.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

People push and shove each other to get close to an OMS truck to buy essentials at subsided prices in the capital's Mirpur-1 area. They had waited in queue for a long time. The food department yesterday sold OMS rice for Tk 30 a kg and flour for Tk 24 a kg.

Hasina made accused in 4 more cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has been sued in four more cases over the killings of three people and the attempted murder of another person during the student-led mass uprising.

Three of the cases were filed with Dhaka courts yesterday while another murder case was filed in Bogura two days ago.

Several former ministers, including Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, Asaduzzaman Khan, top police officers and at least three journalists, were among the accused.

With these, Hasina is now facing 75 cases related to the protests, including 63 on murder charges, seven on allegations of crimes against humanity and genocide, three on charges of abduction, and two for other charges.

Hasina and 30 others were sued over the death of grocery shop owner Mizanur Rahman during the quota reform movement in the capital's Banasree on July 19. His father Kamal Hossain filed the murder case with the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Tofazzal Hossain who

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Hold talks

FROM PAGE 1

movement for the restoration of democracy, Fakhrul said that elections are necessary for establishing democracy. "That's why we talk about elections; it is our right."

Fakhrul said they should not forget the depoliticisation efforts of the 1/11 regime. "During that time, there were attempts to abolish and eliminate our party. We cannot forget those things."

In response to a question about whether he sees any signs of 1/11 repeating, he said, "No, I do not see such signs. ... Some faces scare us. You have seen it too. We haven't seen them before... suddenly they're coming to the front page of the media... you (media) are propagating their theories and statements. I don't want to name anyone. I think this is not good for a healthy democratic process.

He, however, said BNP is willing to accept a reasonable time and offer full cooperation to the interim government. "We'll continue to do so as long as we believe the government is on the right track."

When asked to explain a logical time for the interim government, the BNP leader stated that it was a matter of discussion.

When his attention was drawn to the lifting of the ban on Jamaat-e-Islami, Fakhrul said, "We're not in favour of banning any political party, regardless of which party it is."

He said that the right to form organisations, which the constitution guarantees for every citizen, should be upheld.

However, the BNP leader said a party which doesn't believe in the independence of Bangladesh should not be supported.

However, the BNP leader said a party which doesn't believe in the independence of Bangladesh should not be supported.

Noting that many cases are now being filed randomly, Fakhrul requested the law enforcement agencies to conduct primary verification first before accepting these.

"I think this practice needs to be stopped completely. The way cases are being lodged will not consolidate this mass upsurge," he said, urging his party leaders and activists not to file any case that lack merit.

About the minority issue, Fakhrul said many campaigns are being carried out from abroad, especially from India, in a bid to undermine the mass upsurge in Bangladesh. "They want to make some political issues as communal ones, which is unacceptable," he said.

He also said the campaigns are being conducted targeting BNP, which is quite unfair.

"We're observing that some criminals in certain areas are indulging in offences such as occupying and establishing control, and efforts are being made to shift the blame onto the BNP. We would like to make it clear our leaders, activists are not involved in criminal activities," he said.

The BNP leader expressed surprise that leading and renowned newspapers are also reporting news involving the BNP in criminal acts. "I don't think it's justified. One or two individuals may commit misdeeds personally... ."

TIB proposes a raft of reforms

FROM PAGE 1

The same person should not hold the positions of the prime minister (head of government), the chief of a political party and the leader of parliament simultaneously.

TIB's recommendations for necessary reforms in the state structure to prevent corruption, and establish democracy, good governance and integrity are categorised into two groups: immediate and strategic areas.

The immediate priorities include ensuring discipline, public safety and administrative normalcy; conducting UN-led investigations into past human rights violations; ensuring proper legal procedures such that the judicial process remains unquestionable; and restoring normal economic activities.

A task force must be formed comprising the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU), the National Board of Revenue (NBR), the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Attorney General's Office to set an exemplary standard of effective accountability for high-level corruption and money laundering.

TIB demanded revealing the true picture of the banking sector following an independent and neutral investigation, and the formation of an "independent bank commission" with skilled specialists for the revival of the banking sector.

Strategic reforms include the introduction of proportional representation in the parliamentary system to ensure the true reflection of the people's verdict in the national parliament.

Additionally, an election-time interim government system should be introduced to ensure free, fair, neutral, and participatory parliamentary polls.

The Speaker should be free from party influence, avoid conflicts of interest and act as the guardian of parliament. They must conduct all parliamentary activities impartially.

The deputy speaker should be elected from the opposition in parliament.

In the absence of both the Speaker and the deputy speaker, members of the opposition parties included in the presidium should be allowed to perform the duties of the Speaker.

TIB also recommended amending Article 70 of the constitution to allow MPs the freedom to criticise their party and vote against it on different matters, including legislation, except for no-confidence motions and the budget.

Among the recommendations for democratic practices, TIB emphasised the need to abolish the monopoly and dynastic rule of a party chief and to determine party leadership through fair elections at all levels.

In the category of the rule of law and human rights, TIB called for immediate separation of the judiciary and specific policies and laws in consultation with the Supreme Court for the appointment of judges to the High Court.

FROM PAGE 1

IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

- Same person cannot be PM, party chief and leader of parliament at once
- Election-time interim government system
- Speaker to be free from party influence
- Deputy Speaker should be elected from the opposition in parliament
- MPs should be allowed the freedom to criticise their party

TIB also recommended repealing the 16th amendment to the constitution, which gave power to the Jatiya Sangsad to remove judges if allegations of incapability or misconduct against them are proved.

The other recommendations include ensuring accountability and exemplary punishment for multidimensional and unprecedented human rights violations through nationally and internationally acceptable, impartial and independent investigations.

The National Human Rights Commission must be granted the jurisdiction and capacity to investigate all allegations of human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances by security forces and law enforcement agencies, and to repeal all laws that violate human rights, including the Special Powers Act.

To prevent irregularities, corruption and money laundering, TIB called for ensuring the independence and capacity of the ACC and amending the Civil Service Act of 2018, the Money Laundering Prevention Act of 2012 and the Income Tax Act of 2023.

The agencies responsible for curbing and preventing corruption such as the ACC, the BFIU, the NBR, the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Attorney General's Office, the CID and other institutions concerned must develop professional skills free from party influence.

TIB recommended that no political appointments be made to institutions such as the Election Commission, ACC, Information Commission, NHRC, Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and Public Service Commission.

An independent working environment must be ensured in these institutions.

The Official Secrecy Act of 1923 and the Cyber Security Act of 2023 must be repealed and measures must be put in place to ensure personal information protection.

Additionally, TIB called for the necessary amendments to the constitution and relevant laws to make the local government system independent, strengthened and effective.

In the electricity, energy, and environment category, TIB proposed a short-, medium-, and long-term time-bound plan to gradually phase out the use of fossil fuels and promote renewable energy.

Supportive policies must be created to increase local and international investment in the renewable energy sector.

Moreover, TIB demanded the abolishment of the "Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act 2010", the removal of capacity charges and the cancellation of all ongoing development projects that are harmful to the environment and biodiversity.

"It is not possible to say how long it will take for the interim government to implement the recommendations made today [yesterday]. That decision lies with them. This government should be given the time it needs to meet the expectations of the people," Iftekharuzzaman said.

The government has been in office for only 20 days and it would not be fair to evaluate them so soon.

"They must fulfil the aspirations of the masses, even as they work amid the ruins," he added.

Govt lifts ban on Jamaat, Shibir

FROM PAGE 1

In yesterday's gazette notification, the home ministry said the government has cancelled the previous circular that banned Jamaat, Shibir and its front organisations as there is no specific evidence on their involvement in terrorist activities, and the government believes that these organisations are not involved in terrorist activities.

The decision will come into effect immediately, the notification said.

'AL BANNED JAMAAT TO CONTINUE REPRESSION'

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul yesterday said the AL did not ban Jamaat from its policy position, rather this was done to term the mass uprising "terrorist activity".

Speaking to reporters at his office at the Secretariat, he said some sections of the society had been demanding ban on Jamaat for many years, but the AL did not do it during its 15-year rule.

"They [Awami League] did it when the student movement was going on. They termed the mass uprising an act of the Jamaat-BNP terrorists and tried to brutally suppress the movement. You have got proof of this," Asif said.

The adviser said the interim government cannot be a part of the AL's narrative that the mass uprising spearheaded by students was a terrorist act.

In August 2013, the High Court declared Jamaat's registration illegal following a writ petition filed in 2009 by Bangladesh Tariqat Federation Secretary General Rezaul Haque Chandpuri and 24 others.

Jamaat was first banned in independent Bangladesh in 1972 over their anti-liberation role under a new constitutional provision that banned politics based on religion.

The ban, however, was lifted three years later when BNP founder Ziaur Rahman came to power and amended the constitution through martial law proclamation.

JAMAAT LIKELY TO MOVE SC

Jamaat is likely to file an application to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on Sunday seeking restoration of its appeal challenging a High Court verdict that scrapped its registration with the Election Commission as a political party, Mohammad Shishir Manir, a counsel for Jamaat, told The Daily Star yesterday.

On November 19 last year, a five-member bench of the Appellate Division, headed by then chief justice Obaidul Hassan, dismissed Jamaat's appeal for "default" as its counsels did not appear before the court that day.

Jamaat had filed the appeal against the HC verdict that on August 1, 2013, scrapped its registration.

Govt hunts for $8b from IMF, other lenders

FROM PAGE 1

The reserves stood at $20.5 billion on August 21 in line with the IMF's BPM-6 after the new government headed by Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus had taken charge earlier this month following the downfall of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's government through a student-led mass uprising.

Inflation remained high last month, with the consumer price index rising by 1.94 basis points to 11.66 percent from the previous month. Food inflation crossed 14 percent in July for the first time in 13 years.

When Hasina fled the country, the Awami League government left $156 billion in local and foreign loans for the country to carry. These included $88 billion from domestic sources and the remaining $68.33 billion was external debt.

The country is also struggling to deal with a fragile banking sector hit by scams and defaults caused by people with direct or indirect links to the previous government.

The interim government has taken some quick and drastic measures to tackle the situation surrounding finances while bringing reforms to all the sectors as promised by Yunus.

Policy rates against both local and foreign currencies have been increased, while strict measures have been taken for the banking sector which are longtime suggestions from the development partners for providing budget support.

Finance ministry officials said because of the reform measures taken by the interim government, development patterners are ready to provide more support.

The long, dark past of UCB

FROM PAGE 1

industry, Akhtaruzzaman, then the chairman of UCB, was arrested in the case but he fled the country after securing bail. He came back to Bangladesh in 1996 when the AL returned to power after 21 years in the political wilderness.

In 1999, members of this influential family along with armed men stormed the bank's headquarters where a board meeting was underway. The directors were abused verbally, assaulted and forced to sign their resignations. Bangladesh Bank then dissolved the entire board. Akhtaruzzaman returned to the bank's board of directors in 2010, a year after the AL was voted to power for the second time.

People familiar with those incidents say the takeover at gunpoint was one of the darkest chapters in Bangladesh's banking industry. It all started in 1991 after Bangladesh Bank removed Akhtaruzzaman from UCB board because of his failure to repay Tk 250 crore in loans that he took in favour of his own company.

Humayun Zahir, a director of the bank, protested when Akhtaruzzaman was reluctant to repay the loan despite being the chairman of the board. This is one of the oldest instances of defaulted loans in Bangladesh, said Sharif Zahir, son of Humayun Zahir.

"When my father protested and asked Babu [Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury] to return the loan, he targeted my father," said Sharif, currently the managing director of Ananta, a leading garment exporter and business group.

Sharif alleged that the bank was taken over by Akhtaruzzaman along with his nephew and S Alam Group owner Mohammed Saiful Alam, who is also known for banking scandals on his own right.

Sharif was a large shareholder of the bank in 1993, 1995, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2018, he said without mentioning the exact amount of his family shares with the bank. He also served UCB as the vice-chairman between 2013 and 2015.

However, in 2018, the first-generation private bank was taken over by force again, this time by Saifuzzaman, Sharif said.

The former land minister's family lost its grip on UCB on Tuesday as BB dissolved the lender's 18-member board.

The dissolved board was heavily dominated by Saifuzzaman's family members, including his sister Roxana Zaman Chaudhury and relatives Anisuzzaman Chowdhury and Asifuzzaman Chowdhury.

Saifuzzaman's wife, Rukhmila Zaman, had been serving as chairman of the bank until August 16, when the bank reconstituted the board on its own accord in an attempt to keep a portion of Saifuzzaman's family onboard, industry insiders say.

Sharif, who is now staying abroad, said he is coming back to Bangladesh in a day or two and plans to hold a meeting with the newly appointed directors to form a board to run the bank.

UCB was established in 1984 mainly by a group of Chattogram-based businesspersons, and was one of the high performing banks in Bangladesh.

Things started to change after the takeover by Saifuzzaman's family, as loan scandals became a norm rather than an exception.

The bank's defaulted loans rose to Tk 2,500 crore in 2023 from Tk 1,792 crore in 2016, although industry insiders say the actual figure is much higher.

In these seven years, the amount of written off loans more than doubled to Tk 2,471 crore from Tk 1,069 crore.

Meanwhile in the UK, Saifuzzaman acquired at least 260 properties, paying at least 134.76 million British pounds or Tk 1,888 crore, according to The Daily Star's calculation based on company filings that are publicly available on UK government websites.

The three-time AL lawmaker also has at least 537 mortgages against properties in the UK, a majority of which are in London.

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit found that Saifuzzaman and Rukhmila have also amassed huge fortunes in the US and Dubai.

A group of shareholders of the bank recently sent a letter to the central bank, alleging that although Rukhmila was the chairperson of the bank, it was Saifuzzaman who pulled the strings behind it all.

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What to WATCH

T SPORTS
England vs Sri Lanka
Second Test, Day 1
Live from 4:00 pm
Sony Sports 2 and 5
US Open
Live from 9:00 pm

'Hope this championship inspires the nation to unite'

I would like to dedicate this trophy and championship to the heroes who sacrificed their lives for a new Bangladesh. We want to dedicate this trophy to the martyrs of July and August, as well as to the flood-affected people of the country, because we played for them to win the trophy. I think they will be happy with this triumph.

Head coach Maruful Haque after a 4-1 victory over hosts Nepal at the ANFA complex in Lalitpur saw Bangladesh clinch their maiden trophy in the regional youth championship in their sixth attempt.

SPORTS REPORTER

When Bangladesh coach Maruful Haque announced before departing for Nepal that his team would not only play in the final but also lift the SAFF U-20 Championship trophy, there was little hope of clinching the elusive title, especially given only a two-week preparation period.

The youth footballers had been idle for the past two months since the completion of the Bangladesh Premier League in May. However, the UEFA A-licenced coach made incredible strides in a short time, preparing the players to be match-fit.

Eventually, proving why Maruful is regarded as the best local coach in the country, the boys in red and green overcame three-time champions India in the penultimate hurdle and two-time champions Nepal in yesterday's final.

Ecstasy was in abundance among the Bangladesh players and coaching staff following a 4-1 victory at the ANFA Complex in Lalitpur, but they did not forget the heroes who died in the anti-discrimination student-led movement during July-August, as well as the flood victims of late, and dedicated the victory to them.

"I would like to dedicate this trophy to the heroes who sacrificed their lives for a new Bangladesh. We also faced severe flooding, and many people and families are suffering from a lack of food and drinking water. Our new government is working to rebond the nation, and I hope this championship will inspire all Bangladeshis to unite and support the country's reform," said coach Maruful at the post-match conference, adding that his players executed the style of play he wanted from the start of the all-important match.

Working as a unit with utmost determination were the promising bunch, comprising Mirajul Islam, Rabby Hossain Rahul, Mohammad Asif, Mehedi Hasan Srabon, Piash Ahmed Nova, Asadul Mollah, Ashraful Haque, Shakil Ahmed Topu, and others, who did not let the initial pressure from Nepal derail them from their ultimate objective.

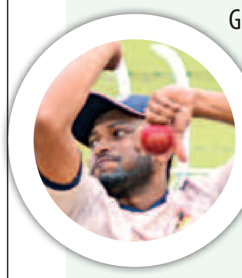
Mirajul – the tournament's top scorer, with four goals, and its most valuable player – said, "To tell the truth, I never thought I would be the top scorer; it was beyond my expectations. My goal was to advance Bangladesh."

Asif, who was named the best goalkeeper of the tournament, said, "We had never been champions from U-17 to U-20, and we were deeply disappointed after being runners-up in 2022. This time, we wanted to leave the pitch with smiles instead of tears. I can't express my excitement at becoming champions."

Rahul, who also scored one of the four goals in the final, said, "It is impossible to fully express my feelings, and I think this is the biggest achievement of my footballing career. I shared with my teammates that Nepal would be morally high after beating us in the group stage, but we aimed to take advantage of that."

SHORT CORNER

'Shakib earned many things for himself but not for nation'



Dr Asif Nazrul, the adviser for Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs to the Interim Government, said that Bangladesh cricketer Shakib Al Hasan has not 'earned anything for the nation' but hoped that the all-rounder would not be arrested when he returns to Bangladesh over a murder case filed against him. Comparing Shakib's case with that of former national team goalkeeper and BNP leader Aminul Haque, who was denied bail time and again during the Awami League regime, Nazrul said: "Shakib has earned many things for himself but not for the nation while Aminul had won for Bangladesh."

Malan retires from international cricket

Dawid Malan retired from international cricket on Wednesday, with the batter saying his England career "has not been easy". Malan signed a 12-month central contract in October and was England's leading run-scorer in their woeful 50-over World Cup title defence in India in the weeks that followed.

Bangladesh Women's 'A' team to tour Sri Lanka in September

Bangladesh Women's cricket 'A' team will tour Sri Lanka for seven white-ball matches in September, a press release by Sri Lanka Cricket confirmed on Wednesday. Bangladesh will arrive in Sri Lanka on September 5 and play two 50-over matches followed by a five-match T20 series.

**Read full stories on The Daily Star website*

Tigers shouldn't overthink about facing Abrar, experts suggest

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Bangladesh should keep their focus on getting a positive result from the series-deciding second Test against Pakistan and play according to their strength rather than concentrating on the opposition squad, cricket experts opined on Wednesday.

The Tigers humiliated Pakistan in the opening Test with a 10-wicket win, forcing the hosts to make several changes for the second Test squad.

Pakistan, who went into the first match in Rawalpindi with four seamers and no frontline spinner in the playing XI, brought in in-form leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed alongside uncapped all-rounder Kamran Ghulam and pacer Aamir Jamal for the second Test.

Abrar's inclusion looked obvious since the two Bangladesh spinners – Shakib Al Hasan and Mehedi Hasan Miraz – picked up seven wickets to guide the tourists to a historic victory.

The 25-year-old Abrar, who made a brilliant start to his Test career by taking 38 wickets in six Tests, had a successful outing against Bangladesh 'A' during a recent four-day contest, finishing with figures of 4-103. Pakistan will surely want a similar performance from him in the crucial second Test.

"Whoever is included or not, we have to think about getting a positive result from the match. Previously, we won the first Tests against teams like Australia and New Zealand but in the second Tests, we were unable to earn even a draw," local coach Wahidul Gani told the Daily Star yesterday.

"We have played well against Pakistan but our improvement will be noticed if we can earn at least a draw in the second match. They will definitely pick a spinner and probably Abrar is the best spinner for them at the moment.

"They will also definitely back their pacers but we have to play according to our strength. I think Bangladesh need to go into this match with the aim of winning," the veteran coach added.

In recent past, Bangladeshi batters weren't challenged by leggies in red-ball cricket and the likely presence of a leg-spinner could be a cause for concern for the visitors.

The last time Bangladesh faced a proper leggie was 22 Tests ago in 2021 when they toured Sri Lanka for a two-match Test series and they had to face Wanindu Hasaranga in the opening Test in Pallekele.

Bangladeshi batters handled Hasaranga exceptionally well in that contest as he remained wicketless despite bowling 45 overs in two innings and was eventually dropped for the second Test.

In recent times, Bangladesh only faced Chinaman spinners like Afghanistan's Zahir Khan (in 2023) and India's Kuldeep Yadav (in 2022) in red-ball cricket, with both finishing with good amount of success against Bangladeshi batters.

"Playing with a leg-spinner in Tests is very common for Pakistan. Leggies like Yasir Shah, Danish Kaneria played for them over the years," said coach Sohel Islam, who monitored some of the Test cricketers in Bangladesh Tigers camp before their departure for Pakistan.

"They made a wrong call by playing without a spinner in the first Test. Abrar was initially in the squad and was later dropped. Abrar bowls really well in red-ball cricket. We played leg-spinners in red-ball cricket before and also took preparation against them. Let's see how the batters deal with him this time," he concluded.

Alcaraz relishing 'intense' rivalry with Djokovic

REUTERS, *New York*

Carlos Alcaraz said he enjoys a good friendship with Novak Djokovic away from the court but the Spaniard also relishes the intense rivalry he has with the Serbian great as the pair move towards a possible final match-up at the US Open.

"Every time that we step on the court, we play really high (level) tennis," Alcaraz told reporters after his first-round win at the US Open on Tuesday.

"Every time that we face each other, it has been a really good and intense match."

A changing of the guard appeared complete earlier this year when the 21-year-old Alcaraz thrashed 24-time Grand Slam champion Djokovic in the Wimbledon final in July to defend his crown and capture his fourth major title. But fortunes can change quickly in tennis. Alcaraz was almost inconsolable after falling to Djokovic in the Olympic final at Roland Garros earlier this month, saying he felt that he had let down Spain. Djokovic described winning the Olympic gold medal as his "biggest sporting achievement".

"We have a really good friendship off the court," Alcaraz said. "We talk a lot in the lockers every time that we see each other around.

"Once we step on the court, there are no friends here on tour, but after that, after the court, I have a really good relationship with a lot of players, and one of them is Novak." With Djokovic seeded second and Alcaraz third, the pair could be on a collision course to meet in the final in New York.

The new UCL format explained

AFP, *Paris*

All eyes will be on Monaco today as the draw of the updated version of the UEFA Champions League for the 2024-25 season will take place at 10:00 pm.

The new format of the league will see 36 clubs feature in the competition proper, an increase from 32 under the old format.

There is an extra place for the fifth-best European league according to UEFA's ranking, which means France's Ligue 1 now has three automatic qualifiers.

In addition, there is an extra berth for each of the two leagues with the highest coefficient ranking from last season in UEFA competition, which this year are Germany and Italy.

The remaining extra slot goes to a national champion to emerge from the qualifying rounds, which will be completed this midweek.

Since 2003, the Champions League featured 32 clubs split into eight groups of four, with the top two from each section advancing to the last 16.

That has now changed radically, and from this season the 36 clubs will be pooled together in one league, in a so-called 'Swiss system' more commonly associated with chess.

Before, participating teams played six games in the group stage, facing each opponent home and away. Now clubs will each have eight games.

The 36 teams will be split into four seeded pots of nine. Every club will play two teams from each pot, one at home and one away.

This "raises the prospect for fans of seeing the top teams go head to head more often and earlier in the competition," UEFA say, a nod to the fact this format was introduced at a time when the spectre of a breakaway Super League hung over European football.

No team will come up against another club from the same domestic league, and every club can only face a maximum of two teams from any one country.

Whereas in past years the group stage ended in December, the expansion of the Champions League means the two extra matchdays will be staged in January.

The number of games is increasing from 96 in the old group stage, up to 144 in the new league phase.

The 36 clubs will be ranked together in the one league, with the top eight all progressing to the last 16 and the format of the competition from that point on remaining the same.

However, it will be seeded, taking into account positions in the league phase.

In addition, a play-off round will be introduced, with the teams finishing from 9th to 24th in the league phase going through to a two-legged knockout tie to decide the remaining spots in the last 16. These play-off ties will be seeded.

The bottom 12 teams in the league phase will be eliminated, with no access to the second-tier Europa League, as was the case in the past.

'No worry' over Mbappe's Liga form

REUTERS, *Madrid*

Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti is not worried about Kylian Mbappe's start at the club after the France striker failed to score in his opening two league games. Mbappe, 25, joined the La Liga and Champions League winners as a free agent from Paris St Germain in June, bringing an end to a transfer saga that had rumbled on for years.

Despite making a promising start by scoring on his debut to help Real earn a 2-0 win over Europa League champions Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup final two weeks ago, Mbappe has yet to find the net in two La Liga games with Real and struggled in a draw at Mallorca and in a dour home win against Real Valladolid.

"His last goal was on August 14th. It has only been two weeks since, that is no reason to worry. Neither we are not worried as a club, nor him," Ancelotti told a press conference on Wednesday, ahead of Thursday's La Liga match at Las Palmas. "He is very happy here, delighted, sure he wants to score in the next game. So does Vinicius, who has yet to score this season and I don't see him worried either. "(Mbappe) is progressing really well, I see him doing better every day, excited, motivated, training well. He is very humble. I think his adaptation is going really well."

Ancelotti said a slow start was to be expected after key midfielder Toni Kroos retired, while they are also trying to fit Mbappe into a new centre-forward role.

"Every year has its own challenge because there are changes in the structure of a team, the system that is implemented," Ancelotti said.

"Last year we also needed time at the start of the season, we needed a late goal to get a result in many games. It will take some time until we find our mojo and the best version of ourselves but it's a normal thing.

"I didn't ask Toni Kroos to be Aurelien Tchouameni last year, just as I won't ask Tchouameni to be Kroos. Each player has his own characteristics. The team has to adapt to the characteristics that Tchouameni has, which are very important for us."

With a game in hand, Real Madrid are fifth in the La Liga standings on four points, five behind leaders Barcelona.

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GAZI TYRES FACTORY FIRE

Rescue op yet to begin

Families of 'missing' ones gather at site; experts unable to inspect risky building a day after fire doused

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days have passed since a massive fire broke out at Gazi Tyres factory in Narayanganj's Rupganj, but the fire service is yet to launch a rescue operation in the six-storey factory building.

A technical team of the Fire Service and Civil Defence went to the factory yesterday afternoon to check whether the structure was safe for conducting the operation. The team members did not enter the building as it was risky.

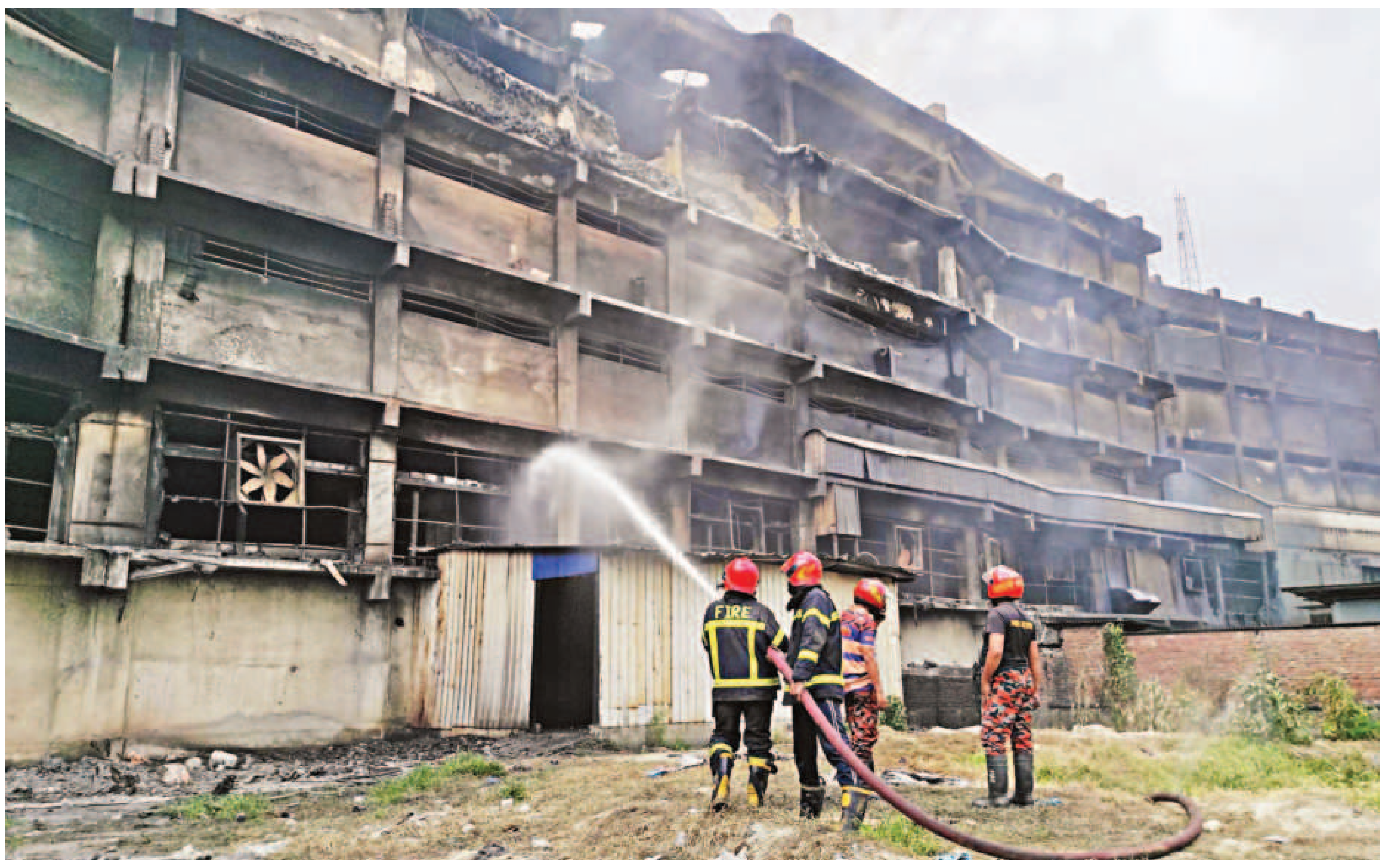
The team operated drones to look for victims trapped inside the building, but did not find anyone.

Officials said they will decide about the rescue operation today.

Hamidur Rahman, additional district magistrate of Naryanganj and also the chief of an investigation committee, told The Daily Star that they would bring experts and advanced equipment from the capital to carry out the rescue operation if the local fire service cannot do the job.

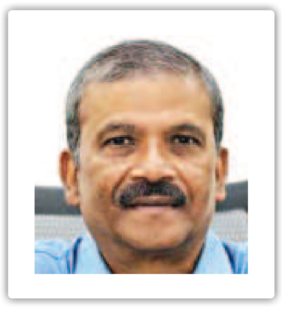
Hamidur said they were making a list of the people who were claimed to have been missing by their family members.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4


Firefighters spraying water to cool the Gazi Auto Tyres Factory in Narayanganj's Rupganj around 12:30pm yesterday. Though they could douse the fire on Tuesday, after a 32-hour hectic effort, small fires continue to flare up due to the extreme heat. The six-storey factory, owned by former Awami League minister Golam Dastagir Gazi, was set on fire by arsonists on Sunday night. PHOTO: **SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM**

It won't be prudent to ban AL

Says law adviser



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul yesterday said it will not be prudent to ban the Awami League as a party.

"If a political party is involved in militant and anti-state activities, if that is truly the case, then an honest investigation should be conducted and the party may be banned," he told reporters at the Secretariat yesterday.

As a reporter reminded him that some groups were demanding a ban on the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Star INTERVIEW

Campus politics should focus on education

Newly appointed DU VC Prof Niaz shares his views

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

The focus of student politics should be issues relating to academia, said Professor Niaz Ahmed Khan, the new vice-chancellor of Dhaka University.

"I believe that if politics is to be done on campus, it should be related to education. We will talk about curriculum, the relationship between the university and society and between students and teachers. These should be the main aspects of student politics," he said.

Prof Niaz was talking to The Daily Star and other media outlets yesterday, his first day as the VC. He spoke about the crucial issues of student-teacher politics as questions were raised on partisan politics polluting the campus.

Prof Niaz said a greater social consensus is required to decide whether such politics should exist on the campus. "It is difficult to decide on our own."

Asked whether he wants to make Ducsu (DU Central Students' Union) effective again, Prof Niaz said he will take measures to make the university's existing structures

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Journalist's body found floating in Hatirjheel

Rahanuma Sarah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of a journalist at GTV, also known as Gazi Television, was found floating in Hatirjheel lake in the capital early yesterday.

Rahanuma Sarah, 32, was the newsroom editor of the channel.

Pedestrians pulled her out and took her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where doctors declared her dead around 2:00am.

Md Saiful Islam, officer-in-charge of Hatirjheel Police Station, said a restaurant employee spotted her floating in the lake.

The OC said whether it is suicide or murder will be known only after getting the autopsy report.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Floods upend lives of thousands

Extent of damage getting clear as water starts receding in many areas

SAJJAD HOSSAIN *and* **SIFAYET ULLAH**

The extent of the devastation from the floods is becoming visible as the waters are receding.

Thousands of homes have been washed away and many small businesses are destroyed.

Mohammad Mostafa, 66, a resident of Chhagalnaiya, Feni, said his paddy field on two and a half acres and stored rice were ruined.

"I don't know what we will eat when the relief effort stops," he said.

In Chhagalnaiya, hundreds of locals were running after trucks carrying relief materials yesterday.

Officials said around 80 percent of the upazila was inundated.

Due to heavy rain, the level of water increased in eight upazilas of Noakhali yesterday, reports our correspondent there.

In Lakshmipur, officials said 90 percent of the district was still flooded and over 8 lakh people were marooned.

Families, including the elderly, women and children, have been living on the sides of roads in the district.

Abul Kalam, a 62-year-old farmer of Char Kelakopa area, said he had been sleeping on a plastic sheet under the open sky for a week. There was three-feet-deep water in his hut.

"Never in my life have I seen a flood lasting this long," he said.

Around 200 others were seen in similar conditions in the area.

"I have my three cows with me. They are hungry too. We are surviving on people's handouts," he said.

In Cumilla, the level of floodwater is falling along the Gumti river.

Abdul Latif, superintendent engineer at Cumilla East Water Development Board, said the river is flowing 22cm below the danger level. But as the embankment is broken, villages are still getting flooded in Burichang and Brahmmanpara upazilas.

"We are surviving on people's handouts. I have my three cows with me on the street. They are hungry too."

Abul Kalam, a farmer in Lakshmipur

The disaster management ministry announced that the flood situation will improve soon.

Water levels in all rivers are falling, and heavy rain is not likely, Additional Secretary KM Ali Reza told a press briefing.

Over 58 lakh people in 11 districts were affected by the floods. The disaster has so far claimed 31 lives.

Twelve people drowned in Cumilla, six in Noakhali, two in Feni, five in Chattogram, three in Cox's Bazar, and one each in Khagrachhari, Brahmanbaria, and Lakshmipur. Two people remain missing in Moulvibazar.

The government has opened 4,003 shelters, providing refuge to over 5.4 lakh people.

'Don't buy any properties of S Alam Group'

BB governor says those will be sold later to refund depositors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People who deposited money in Islami Bank and other Shariah-based banks will be given their money back after selling of S Alam Group's assets, said Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur yesterday.

Speaking at a press conference at the central bank headquarters, Mansur urged people not to buy assets of S Alam Group.

"No one should touch the wealth of this group for the sake of the country. We want to use the assets to refund the depositors."

Mansur also urged the depositors and customers to be patient. "Don't withdraw money all at once. Then no one will get the money. Many have kept money in these banks for getting good interest. Don't be impatient now."

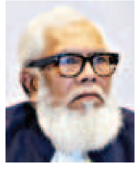
He added that they will not return the money by printing more money. "Because that will not be good for the nation and inflation will be 100 percent.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Bank accounts of Salman, Sheikh Selim, Quader frozen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit yesterday asked banks to freeze the accounts of Salman F Rahman, former adviser on private industry affairs to Sheikh Hasina; and Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, former lawmaker; and their family members.

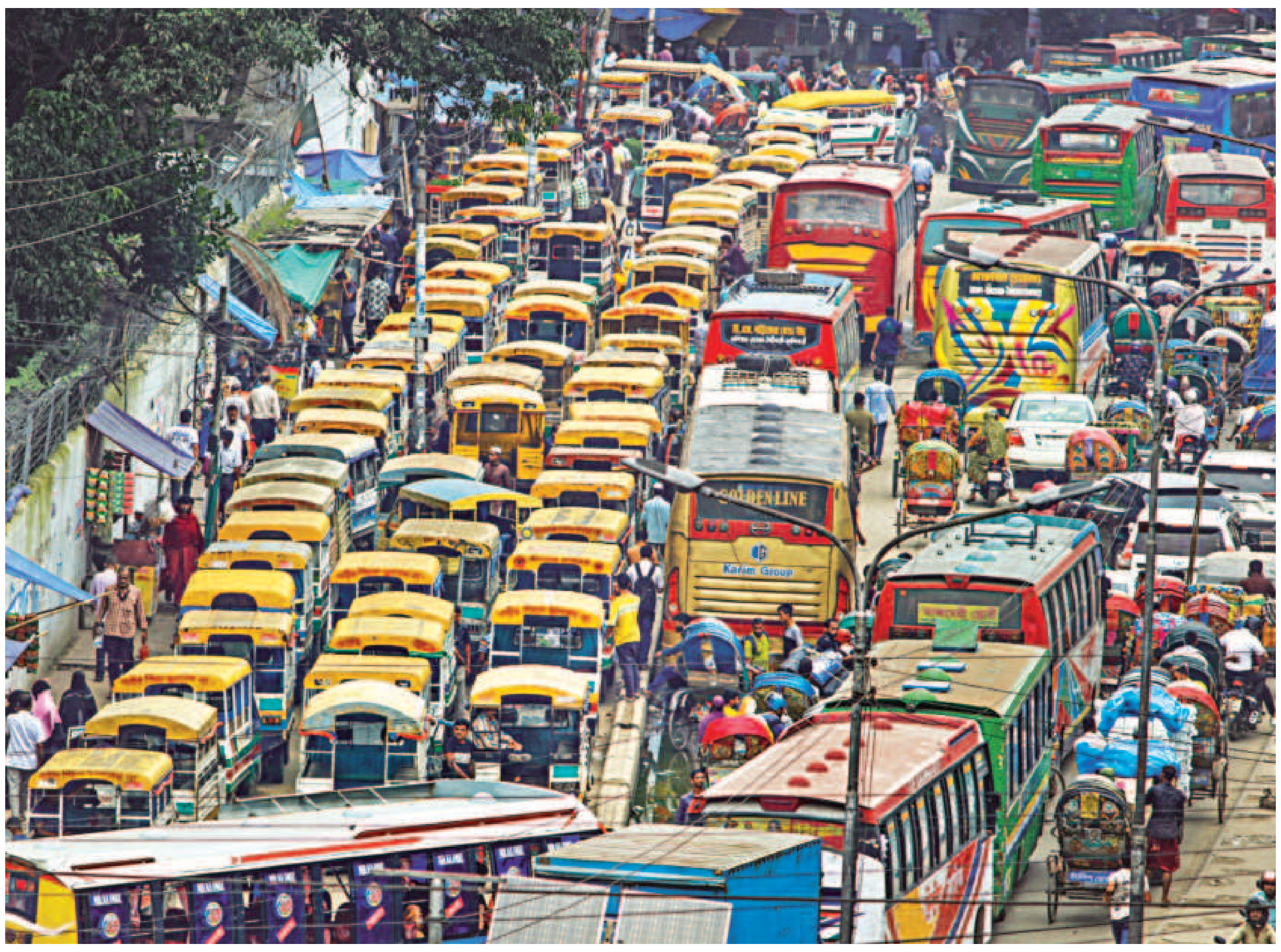


The BFIU also ordered freezing the accounts of Obaidul Quader, former road transport and bridges minister; Md Akiz Uddin, a former deputy managing director of Islami Bank and also a personal secretary to the S Alam Group chairman; and their family members.

The banks have been ordered to keep the accounts, including those of their businesses, frozen for the next 30 days, according to letters.

They were also instructed to suspend transactions between the family members for an initial period of 30 days.

The BFIU ordered the banks to provide detailed information on all the accounts by the next five working days.


Illegally parked people carriers, popularly known as legunas, occupy a portion of the street in front of Golap Shah Mazar at Gulistan. It disrupts traffic flow on one of the busiest roads in Dhaka. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

Now, Israel launches deadly West Bank ops

UN says West Bank raids risk 'deepening the already catastrophic situation'

AFP, *Jenin*

Israel launched a large-scale military operation Wednesday in the occupied West Bank, where the army said it killed nine Palestinian fighters, while the nearly 11-month Gaza war showed no signs of abating.

The offensive has killed more than 40,000 people in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry. It has also caused widespread destruction, displaced nearly all of Gaza's 2.4 million people at least once and triggered a humanitarian crisis.

In the West Bank in the early hours of yesterday, the Israeli military launched a series of coordinated raids across four cities -- Jenin, Nablus, Tubas and Tulkarem.

Columns of Israeli armoured vehicles entered two refugee camps, in Tulkarem and Tubas, as well as Jenin.

By midday, they were blocking entrances to the towns and camps, AFP photographers said, with soldiers firing at the camps from which gunfire and explosions were heard.

Israeli bulldozers dug up asphalt from the streets, with the army saying it was looking for roadside bombs.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said Israeli forces killed nine people and wounded 15 others in the raids, revising its previous toll of 10 dead.

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Victim pinpoints DGFI detention centre

ZYMA ISLAM

If there is one thing that differentiates the arbitrary detention of HM Rana from the other victims of enforced disappearance, it is that he knows exactly where he was inside the Dhaka Cantonment.

Almost every victim of enforced disappearance who came back alive said they were blindfolded the entire time while they were being transported and until they were taken inside their cells, or interrogation rooms.

They were similarly blindfolded when they were taken out of the centre and dropped off in random places.

INT'L DAY OF THE VICTIMS OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

HM Rana, a musician with Closeup-1 fame, was not picked up in the same manner as others. Other victims usually say they were picked up by men in plainclothes who showed up in unregistered microbuses with tinted windows in the middle of the night.

Since Rana's uncle was also in the military, he was escorted to the centre by a military officer on February 14 this year.

It was the day of his wedding reception.

"I was taken to a two-storey building with a chocolate-brown gate to the left of the CSD TESS restaurant next to the post office," said Rana,

'WE WANT TO KNOW IF THEY ARE ALIVE' -- PAGE 3

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

A woman drying paddy in the sun next to her home in Katabomarak Ghona area of Feni Sadar upazila yesterday. The paddy, which would be used as poultry feed, was damaged when floodwaters entered her house.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Bangladesh signs UN treaty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh signed the instrument of accession to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances yesterday.

The signing, led by Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, took place during the weekly meeting of the interim government's advisory council amid applause from the council members, according to chief adviser's press wing.

"It is a historic occasion," Yunus said.

The move comes just one day before the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances.

Earlier this week, the interim government established a commission to investigate cases of enforced disappearances during Sheikh Hasina's 15-year rule.

Speaking on the signing of the convention, Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan said the practice of making people disappear with the intent to suppress dissent was over.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Hasina and 28 journos accused in ICT case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A complaint was filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, 28 journalists, and others yesterday on charges of crimes against humanity and genocide.

The complaint was filed with the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal.

It mentioned that the accused journalists termed the protesting students and people razakars and terrorists who were on a rampage.

Referring to a press conference, the complaint said the accused journalists "through different questions, made instigating remarks and provoked Sheikh Hasina to eliminate the protesting students and general public".

Several ministers of the Awami League government, noted educationist Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, former Supreme Court judge Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik, Dhaka University teacher Prof Mesbah Kamal were also accused.

Supreme Court lawyer MH Gazi Tamim filed the complaint on behalf of Golam

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Govt to take reform ideas from parties

To hold dialogue with them regularly

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has decided to engage in regular dialogue with the political parties to get reform proposals from them.

The decision was made yesterday during a meeting of the government's advisory council at the State Guesthouse Jamuna.

"We will continue the process of holding dialogue with the political parties. We will accept the reform proposals that would come from them. We have discussed a method in this regard," Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan told reporters after the meeting.

The move came at a time when the BNP called upon the interim government to hold talks with the political parties regarding the next general election.

A BNP delegation, led by party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, yesterday met with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and made similar requests.

Law on providing security to Bangabandhu's family members to be repealed.

The government will sit with several other political parties tomorrow to exchange views, said sources at the chief adviser's press wing.

The advisory council yesterday also approved the scrapping of the law on protecting the family members of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. It also made some decisions, including cancelling the scope

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Scope to whiten black money shuts

Yunus seeks Swiss help to bring back laundered money

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government yesterday decided to cancel the provision for whitening black money.

"The government does not earn much from [the provision to whiten black money]; rather such practice raises questions about values," Syeda Rizwana Hasan, the environment adviser, told reporters after the meeting of the advisory council of the interim government at the state guest house Jamuna.

As a result, the government has decided to scrap the provision, which was supposed to remain in place until June 2025.

"Now it cannot be said that the black money will be whitened," she said, adding

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

No BNP-Jamaat alliance exists now

Fakhrul tells Star in an exclusive interview

The BNP has been hounded over the last 18 years. The party chief, Khaleda Zia, was put in jail and not allowed treatment abroad while her son, Tarique Rahman, has been living in London since 2008 and faces a prison sentence back home. But with the Awami League regime gone, change is in the offing. BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir talks about a host of issues with Special Correspondent Partha Pratim Bhattacharjee.

TDS: You have said that the BNP agrees to give reasonable time for reforms before elections. How much time are you willing to give the interim government for that?

Fakhrul: The interim government is not elected. It is, in fact, selected. The main responsibility of this incumbent is to reform institutions -- that are on the verge of complete collapse -- that are indispensable for holding a free and impartial election.

It is difficult to say how much time will be needed for that as the previous Awami League government destroyed each of these institutions.

TDS: You urged the interim government for a roadmap for the next election and its reform plan. Where do you think immediate reforms are necessary? And if the BNP is voted to power, will it move to endorse those reforms at the parliament?

Fakhrul: The immediate past government has totally destroyed the judiciary, election commission as well as law enforcement. These institutions were politicised and criminalised. This is where we need immediate reforms.

Bangladesh's economy is facing problems that cannot be resolved

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 3 SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Exim Bank freed from the grip of Mazumder

BB reconstitutes the board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The control of influential businessman Nazrul Islam Mazumder over Exim Bank ended yesterday as the Bangladesh Bank reconstituted the board of the Shariah-based lender.

Mazumder, who founded the bank along with Shahjahan Kabir in 1999, has been its chairman since 2007. His wife Nasreen Islam was also removed from the reconstituted five-member board.

The couple's shareholding in the bank stood at 6 percent after transferring a portion of their shares to their children -- Walid Ibne Islam and Anika Islam -- in November 2022.

Mazumder's removal from his bank board comes on the heels of

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Without using the footbridge, which is yards away, jaywalkers scale the fences of the central reservation of a street in front of Baitul Mukarram Mosque in the capital yesterday. Many put their and others' lives at risk just to save a few minutes or to avoid climbing the stairs of the footbridge.

Flood raises spectre of diseases

At least 6 die, around 3,000 admitted to hospitals: DGHS

SAJJAD HOSSAIN, SIFAYET ULLAH, *and* HELEMUL ALAM

A week into the ongoing flood situation in the country, outbreaks of waterborne disease are being reported from affected districts.

In the 24 hours till yesterday morning, at least six people died and around 3,000 patients were hospitalised because of waterborne diseases in flood-affected areas, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Of the deceased, four people died in Feni, one in Noakhali, and one in Lakshmipur.

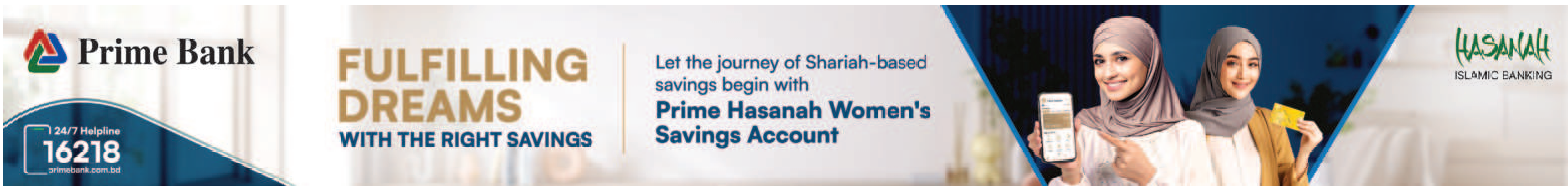
Among the cases, the highest was in Cumilla at 1,606, followed by 686 in Feni, 246 in Moulvibazar, 172 in Noakhali, 120 in Lakshmipur, 81 in Sunamganj, 44 in Habiganj, 10 in Rangamati, and eight in Chattogram.

The diseases broke out mainly in the areas where people did not get fresh drinking water or water purification tablets.

In Lakshmipur, Jahid Hossain, a resident of Kolakopa village in Charbadam union under Ramgati upazila, said he had been suffering from diarrhoea for the last three days. "Without access to fresh water or water purification tablets, I have been forced to drink dirty floodwater."

Gias Uddin, a farmer from the union's Azad Nagar

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



BFIU freezes bank accounts of former chief justice, attorney general

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) yesterday asked banks to freeze all accounts belonging to former chief justice Obaidul Hassan and former attorney general Amin Uddin.

The anti-money laundering agency also ordered banks to block all accounts belonging to their respective spouses, according to a letter sent out by BFIU.

The move is a part of dozens of instructions issued by the BFIU to block accounts of top functionaries, including ministers, of the immediate past Awami League government, which was ousted by a mass uprising on August 5.

The AL, led by former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, ruled the country for 15 years, the longest tenure of any government since independence.

Amin Uddin, who was appointed as attorney general in October 2020, resigned two days after Hasina's ouster.

Obaidul, who was appointed as the nation's 24th chief justice in September last year, quit on August 10.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus shows the instrument of accession to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances after signing it yesterday during a meeting of the advisory council.

PHOTO: PID

BSEC freezes 20 BO accounts

Those are linked to several ex-ministers, MPs, their families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) decided to freeze the beneficiary owner's (BO) accounts of 20 investors linked with several former ministers and former members of parliament.

The stock market regulator ordered the freeze in a commission meeting held at its head office in the capital yesterday.

According to the order, individuals will keep their funds, but any withdrawals will be disallowed during the freezing period.

The owners of the frozen BO accounts include former minister for home affairs Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, his wife Lutful Tahmina Khan, his son Safi Muddaser Khan and his daughter Shafia Tasnim Khan.

Former foreign minister Mohammed Hasan Mahmud, his spouse Nurun Fatema Hasan and his daughter Nafisa Zumaina Mahmud, and former state minister Mohammad Ali Arafat and his wife Sharmin Mustary are also on the list.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

Court issues travel ban on 14 former AL ministers, MPs

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued a travel ban on 14 former Awami League ministers and lawmakers in connection with corruption allegations brought against them.

The others are former social welfare minister Dipu Moni, former health minister Zahid Maleque, former education minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, former food minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder, former industrial minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun, former industrial deputy minister Kamal Ahmed Majumder, and former lawmakers Salim Uddin, Mamunur Rashid Kiron, Kujendra Lal Tripura, Kajim Uddin, Noor-E-Alam Chowdhury Liton, Shahjahan Khan, Kamrul Islam and Ziaur Rahman.

Judge Mohammed Ash-Shams Joglul Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court in Dhaka passed the order after Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Deputy Director Abu Hena Ashiqur Rahman, who is also conducting the investigation, submitted an application.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Scope to whiten

FROM PAGE 1

that the government's action against money laundering has started.

The former government made room to allow both individuals and companies to whiten money without facing scrutiny and by paying a 15 percent tax, a move that drew sharp criticism from economists, trade bodies and civil society.

Backtracking on its promise to eliminate black money, the then government hoped the initiative would increase the flow of money into the economy despite such measures failing to yield any fruitful benefits in the past.

According to the provision, no authority can raise any question if a taxpayer pays tax at fixed rates for immovable properties such as flats and land and 15 percent tax on other assets, including cash, irrespective of the existing laws of the country.

Before the last national election, the Awami League's election manifesto promised strong measures against those hoarding undisclosed money as well as those engaged in corruption.

But economists and corruption watchdogs said that successive governments allowing the whitening of black money was akin to "licencing corruption".

Since independence, schemes to legalise undeclared money have been introduced at least 22 times. But the response has been lukewarm.

According to data from the National Board of Revenue (NBR), nearly Tk 45,522 crore was whitened between 1972 and 2022, with the collector getting Tk 4,641 crore in taxes in total.

In fiscal 2020-21, the government offered full amnesty to black money; a record Tk 20,600 crore was legalised, yielding the NBR Tk 2,064 crore.

In fiscal 2006-07, the caretaker government offered the scope to legalise black money after paying a penalty, which is not normally levied. That year, Tk 9,682 crore was whitened.

Meanwhile, Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser to the interim government, yesterday sought cooperation from Switzerland to bring back money stolen from Bangladesh when the ambassador of Switzerland, Reto Renggli, paid a courtesy call to him at his office, according to a press release of chief adviser's office.

"Is there any way to return the money?" Yunus asked Renggli.

Yunus said a lot of stolen money has been transferred abroad. "It is important," he said.

In response, Renggli said Switzerland is always "willing to cooperate in compliance with globally recognised procedures and standards and in line with proposals it has put forward in recent years".

The envoy said Switzerland would support the interim government and strengthen economic ties with the country.

No BNP-Jamaat alliance exists now

FROM PAGE 1

immediately. But some measures are needed right away in the banking sector. It may not be possible within a short time but there should at least be a start for making some drastic changes.

We want reforms in largely four sectors -- Election Commission, law enforcement agencies, civil bureaucracy and judiciary. But the interim government should consult with political parties and stakeholders before their reform initiatives. And yes, we will certainly endorse reforms that are in line with consultations with political parties.

TDS: Where does the BNP stand about bringing back the acting chairman, Tarique Rahman?

Fakhrul: We want to bring him back. We believe that the cases against him have no merit, were fabricated and filed out of vengeance. His return would benefit both the country and the party.

TDS: During the meeting with the chief adviser, Professor Muhammad Yunus, you demanded withdrawal of cases against BNP leaders and activists across the country. There are several cases against Tarique Rahman and 111 against you. Has there been any progress?

Fakhrul: Yes, we did and we also spoke to the attorney general. We are drawing up a list and will provide it to the government.

Around 2,000 BNP members and activists have already got bail but their cases are still pending. We wanted to have the cases withdrawn as they are totally false. The sooner the cases are withdrawn, the better.

TDS: You have repeatedly asked that your party chief, Khaleda Zia, be allowed to travel abroad for better treatment. Any updates on that front?

Fakhrul: We, as well as the medical board, are working on it. It is not possible to send her abroad right now. It is yet to be decided whether she will be able to fly given her current health. Also, it is not decided where she would go. It really depends on her physical condition.

TDS: How well is the BNP prepared for an election?

Fakhrul: We did not sit idle for the last 15 years. We held district and sub-district meetings virtually connecting with party acting chairman Tarique Rahman and other party leaders. We held the party's standing committee meetings every week. We are completely prepared for the next elections.

TDS: There have been numerous reports of one extortion gang replacing the previous one. Many of the victims say, the extortion and persecution is still on, just that the people doing it have changed. The BNP has already expelled a few party men for their involvement in such activities. But what would you say about this political culture?

Fakhrul: Very unfortunate. During any political changeover, some incidents happen. It is part of the burden that we bear. Our society did not change overnight with the fall of the Awami League. There are still many who are criminals and I would strongly object to likening criminals to BNP activists. There may be many affiliated with the BNP, but a criminal will never get any support from the party.

The BNP has taken action against those involved with such activities. But I object to headlines that say the BNP is involved in these hostile takeovers.

TDS: We have seen since 1991 that the incumbents sideline the opposition in this winner-take-all culture. How do you plan to overcome this?

Fakhrul: We need a system of peaceful transfer of power, which we couldn't establish in five decades. We have developed a culture where one needs to be forced out of power. This is dangerous. A political consensus is the only way to end this. Democracy must be allowed to flourish.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

A good system —caretaker government— was formed. We have a proposal to introduce a caretaker system permanently to hold elections within 90 days. We will have to incorporate this provision into the constitution.

TDS: The Jamaat-e-Islami has been a key political ally of the BNP. But you appear to be distancing yourself from the Jamaat for some time. What is the status of the BNP-Jamaat relation?

Fakhrul: The alliance we had with the Jamaat had become dysfunctional long ago. But we were carrying out our anti-government campaigns simultaneously on the basis of mutual consultations. That was how we conducted our campaigns till the fall of the previous regime.

Since then, we have been in touch with other parties considering that the interim government is in power and there will be an election soon. Hence an overall political compact is necessary. But at the moment we are not in an alliance.

TDS: Sheikh Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy expressed a desire to work together with the BNP putting aside the longstanding rivalry. How do you respond to that?

Fakhrul: After the fall of the Awami League, BNP chief Khaleda Zia said she doesn't want the politics of destruction, revenge, and vengeance.

But the Awami League will have to answer for its activities of the last 15 years. The party must be held accountable for ruining the country's politics and destroying the economy. We have no objection to a political party adhering to democratic principles. We firmly believe every political party and every person has the right to do politics.

TDS: There is a demand to ban the Awami League. Do you think that one of the oldest parties of the country should be banned?

Fakhrul: Neither I nor my party favours banning any political party. BNP founder Ziaur Rahman introduced multi-party democracy. The Awami League had started a one-party rule, but our leader Khaleda Zia started parliamentary democracy. So, no, we don't support banning any political party.

TDS: We have seen that the BNP has a pro-China foreign policy, while the Awami League is pro-Indian. What will be your stance this time if the BNP is voted to power?

Fakhrul: We don't want friendship with any particular country. We want friendship with all. Also, we don't want any country to build relations with a particular party. We will develop a foreign policy based on mutual interest.

TDS: There have been numerous allegations against BNP's 2001–06 tenure. Will the BNP take lessons from its earlier mistakes? What is the guarantee that another Hawa Bhaban will not come back if the party is voted to power?

Fakhrul: Some media and individuals propagated this narrative that Hawa Bhaban was undermining the party and its leadership. The BNP has never done anything that went against the people. There might have been mistakes, though.

Hawa Bhaban was a personal office. Can anyone give me an example that someone was tortured or forcibly confined there? Some compare Hawa Bhaban with "Aynaghar" (a facility to forcibly confine mostly political opponents illegally and torture them). That is gross misrepresentation. It's a conspiracy to belittle the BNP's achievements.

If there is an election, people will decide which party is good, which is not. We will have to accept the election result. If we can't come to power, we accept defeat and go back.

Victim pinpoints

FROM PAGE 1

adding that the compound had a garden in front of it.

"Many old cars were parked in front of the building."

Rana gave The Daily Star a photo of the building.

"When I entered, I was taken through a metal detector arch similar to the ones seen at airports. There was a reception and behind the desk was a plaque reading 'Directorate General of Forces Intelligence'. A logbook at the reception had pages full of names with blue or red check marks. I saw that my name was written along with my reporting time -- Rana, 8:00am," he said.

He was led to a room that had sofas. "A man in a suit came in, followed by another. The men had sidearms and badges with DGFI written on them," said Rana.

And thus began the interrogation, which lasted 48 hours.

"At one point, they brought in various tools of torture and laid them out on a table in front of us. There were pliers and a bunch of rods with metal attachments running through their lengths. A man brought in a device with an extension cord that could be used to give electric shocks," he said.

As the questioning went on, the men brought the torture devices towards Rana and threatened him. "They brought the shock device towards my head and zapped my hair. A man with pliers threatened to pull my tongue out," he said.

At one point, they brought in a video camera and asked Rana to strip. As Rana was about to take off his clothes, a lady officer came in, and he was stopped.

"You know what to do when a body part has cancer right? You cut it off. You have come to the place, where we cut out the cancer of society," Rana quoted one of the men saying.

"I had heard about the fabled 'Aynaghar' and was fully convinced that this was one of those places," said Rana. "Late at night when I was alone with just two guards, I asked them if more people were in the facility. They said there were."

Before Rana was detained, he said he was getting dozens of calls every day from people claiming to be DGFI officers. "It was strange. They kept asking me to come in and said that if I didn't, they would have to come and get me, and that it would not go down well," he said.

Rana was let go on February 15, a day after his planned wedding reception.

"We never got a chance to have a big wedding, so on our anniversary – February 14 – we had arranged a reception. I had gotten my wife the red bridal dress of her dreams. I was taken into the DGFI at 8:00am in the morning, and the entire time, my family thought I would be coming back to attend the reception, but I never showed up. Guests arrived and left puzzled," he said.

He said he still does not know why he was picked up.

Earlier this month, a delegation of rights activists, led by Mayer Daak, a platform of the families of the victims of enforced disappearance, went to the DGFI headquarters seeking information about the victims.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE (2009-2024)

Rab	206
Police	104
Rab-DB	12
DB	240
Industrial police	1
Ansar-police	2
CID	6
DB-DGFI	2
DGFI	7
Others	129
TOTAL	**709**

SOURCE: ODHIKAR

The delegation was told that the DGFI has 23 facilities. To date, nobody has been given information about where the facilities are or if any detainees are held there.

The Daily Star was unable to contact the DGFI to get their comments.

Victims frequently allege that the DGFI had confined them to the cells, but statistics provided by Odhikar show that they are often not the force in the forefront.

Odhikar logged cases of 709 people who had been victims of enforced disappearance between 2009 and June 2024. Out of those, 206 people were picked up by Rab, 240 people were picked by the Detective Branch of police, and 104 by the police.

Only in 9 cases it was alleged that the DGFI was involved in picking up the victims, while in the cases of 129 others, the abductors could not be identified.

The rest were allegedly taken by the police's Criminal Investigation Department, Ansar, and Industrial Police.

Bangladesh signs UN treaty

FROM PAGE 1

She did not, however, respond directly to a question of whether Rab would be brought to justice as a force. She instead said, "According to the terms of this charter, it would take effect after the signing."

A commission has already been set up to look into the past cases of enforced disappearances in Bangladesh, she added.

Hasina and 28 journos accused in ICT case

FROM PAGE 1

Razzaque, father of Nasib Hasan Rihan, 17, who was shot dead in the capital's Shyamoli Ring Road area on August 5.

The class-XI student was shot in the head when police opened fire, the complaint said.

Ataur Rahman, deputy director (admin) of the tribunal's investigation agency, said the complaint was registered and a probe was launched.

Hasina is now accused in eight complaints filed over crimes against humanity and genocide.

Seven of the complaints are about individuals killed during the quota reform protests and subsequent people's uprising that led to the fall of her government.

The other one is about the killings after a Hefazat-e-Islam rally in the capital in May, 2013.

According to yesterday's complaint, some of the 52 accused shot dead unarmed people as per the direction and plan of the other accused. The former were provoked and instigated by the latter.

The accused journalists were "sycophants", who in support of the AL government, "published false news to instigate" the genocide and crimes against humanity committed by the then government and law enforcers.

They are Naimul Islam Khan, former press secretary to Hasina; Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, former media adviser to the Hasina; Farida Yasmin, former president of Jatiya Press Club; Shyamal Dutta, editor of Bhorer Kagoj; Mozammel Babu of Ekattor TV; Nabanita Chowdhury and Subhash Singh Roy of abnews24.com; Ahmed Zobair of Somoy TV; Tushar Abdullah of Ekhon TV; Saiful Alam, editor of Jugantor; Naeem Nizam, editor of Bangladesh Pratidin; and Abed Khan, former editor of Samakal.

The other accused journalists are Probhash Amin, Farzana Rupa, Shakil Ahmed, Mithila Farzana, Zayadul Ahsan Pintu, Monjurul Islam, Ashish Saikat, Manash Ghosh, Pranab Saha, Masuda Bhatti, Munni Saha, JE Mamun, Swadesh Roy, Soma Islam, Shyamal Sarkar, and Ajay Das.

Former ministers and state ministers accused are Obaidul Quader, Asadduzzaman Khan Kamal, Anisul Huq, Hasan Mahmud, Hasanul Haque Inu, Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, Zunaid Ahmed Palak, Mohammad Ali Arafat, and Jahangir Kabir Nanak.

Besides, former mayor Atiqul Islam, former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, former DB chief Harun Or Rashid, former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, former director general of RAB Harun Or Rashid, former DMP joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarkar, Maj Gen (sacked) Ziaul Ahsan, former OC of Adabor Police Station Mahabub Rahman, Chhatra League president Saddam and general secretary Sheikh Wali Asif Inan, and former prime minister's deputy press secretary Ashraful Alam Khokon.

The Hasina-led government formed the International Crimes Tribunal in March 2010 to try those who committed crimes against humanity during the Liberation War. Later ICT-2 was formed. At least six BNP and Jamaat leaders were executed following the ICT verdicts.

The filing of complaints against Hasina with the ICT started after Law Adviser Asif Nazrul on August 15 said the involvement of the highest position holders of the immediate past government has been examined, and it is possible to put them on trial.

'We want to know if they are alive'

Say family members of two enforced disappearance victims in Ctg

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

In Chattogram, families of two individuals, who were allegedly picked up by law enforcers years ago, are still desperately seeking answers.

Jahid Hasan, 18, was reportedly taken by members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-7) on October 14, 2018.

Jahid, son of late Md Yasin, was a key witness in a shootout involving Jubo League leader Asim Roy Babu.

The incident occurred in Chattogram's Muradpur on October 12, 2018, where Babu was killed and four Rab personnel were injured. Jahid was Babu's personal driver and had been interviewed by the media about the incident.

Jahid Hasan

Shahidul Alam

According to Jahid's elder brother, Mehedi Hasan Biplob, the family was awakened around 3:30am by men claiming to be administrative officials.

These men, armed and dressed in plain clothes, broke into the home, seized Jahid, and took him away in a black SUV.

Despite Biplob's efforts to locate Jahid and file complaints with Rab and local police, his whereabouts still remain unknown.

"We have tried everything to find Jahid. My mother is bedridden; she does not know whether her son is alive. We are now preparing to file a case," said Biplob.

Lieutenant Commander Mifta Uddin Ahmed, then CO of Rab-7, said at that time, "Rab is also searching for Jahid, as we did not find him during the gunfight."

The second missing person, BNP leader ASM Shahidul Alam Siraj, has been unaccounted for since March 6, 2012.

Siraj, a prominent figure in Fatickchhari upazila and former chairman of Lelang Union Parishad, disappeared after attending BNP's "Dhaka Cholo" movement.

His mobile phone was found switched off the following morning.

Azim Aunon, Siraj's elder son, voicing his

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Amid the daily chaos of Mirpur Road, a large pothole filled with water near Dhaka College stands as a silent hazard. Marked but unfenced, it forces vehicles and pedestrians to navigate a perilous path. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Polls soon after stability returns

Hopes BNP; Fakhrul calls on Yunus

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said his party is optimistic that the interim government led by Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus will hold an election by restoring stability soon in the country.

"We're hopeful that this interim government led by Professor Yunus can take the country to a stable situation shortly with their sincerity, patriotism and competence. At the same time, they can go for an election," said the senior BNP leader.

Fakhrul was talking to reporters after a meeting with the chief adviser at the state guest house Jamuna in Dhaka.

Talking about the meeting that lasted for over an hour, the BNP leader said the chief adviser invited them for a discussion. "It has been a very fruitful discussion," he said.

He said they believe this government would bring necessary reforms (to different systems and institutions of the state).

Replying to a question if the date for election came up for discussion in the meeting, Fakhrul said, "We've not discussed any date (for holding election). We won't say the date. They will say it."

He said there will be talks with political parties in phases.

Fakhrul was accompanied by BNP standing committee members Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury and Salahuddin Ahmed in the meeting that started at 4:00pm.

Planning and Education Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud and Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul were also present at the meeting.

Overhaul election system

Urge experts, propose proportional representation and bicameral legislature

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election experts yesterday proposed major reforms like introduction of proportional representation system, bicameral legislature and neutral administration and police for an acceptable election system.

They made these proposals while taking part in a discussion organised by Sushashoner Janno Nagarik on reform of the election system at the Daily Star Centre.

They also called for the inclusion of representatives from the treasury, opposition benches, and the third-largest party in parliament in the search committee responsible for appointing the Chief Election Commissioner and other election commissioners.

They also urged political parties to practice democracy inside their own parties.

Former CEC Justice Abdur Rouf said the proportional representation system will enable voters to vote for a party rather than an individual candidate.

"The current nomination system will be transformed if we adopt a proportional representation (PR) system, which will also put an end to the practice of trading party nominations for money. It will simply reduce 80 percent corruption," said Rouf.

"In the current system, some spend Tk 20 crore for getting nomination, another Tk 20 crore on motorcycles and goons. So, they aim to make Tk 200 crore [through corruption once elected as MP] during his or her period," he added.

PR is an electoral system in which the distribution of seats corresponds with the proportion of the total votes cast for each party. For example, if a party gained 40 percent of the total votes, the PR system would allow them to get 40 percent of the seats in parliament.

Currently Bangladesh practices the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system in which the candidate receiving the highest number of votes in a constituency wins a seat in parliament.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Reintroduce "no vote" option on ballot papers
- Let EC publish posters on behalf of candidates
- Organise projection meetings for candidates
- Make candidates disclose foreign assets
- Appoint returning officers from among EC officials

Local governance expert Tofail Ahmed said bicameral legislature, a system in which the legislature comprises two houses, is practiced successfully in many countries that also creates a balance while enacting laws.

Election expert Abdul Alim suggested that all political parties should conduct

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

No alternative to rewriting constitution

Says Prof Ali Riaz

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To repair the democratic institutions of the state, there is no option other than rewriting the constitution, even if it requires a constitutional assembly, said Prof Ali Riaz yesterday.

He said the former Awami League government destroyed the state institutions to maintain its hold on power, and without strengthening these institutions, democratic reconstruction is impossible.

"But in this situation, there is hardly any scope to amend the constitution. So, my personal opinion is to rewrite the constitution," said Ali Riaz, a distinguished professor of politics and government at Illinois State University, during a press conference organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) at a city hotel.

The responsibility of addressing these ongoing critical issues does not lie solely with the government but also with citizens, who must act in the best interest of future generations, he said.

At the event, Prof Riaz said CGS plans to hold a series of dialogues titled "Democratic Reconstruction" over the next five months.

These dialogues will be held to gather insights and recommendations from civil society, intellectuals, and experts across various sectors to establish a sustainable democracy and ensure justice in the country, he added.

A total of eight dialogues will be held in Dhaka, with four additional sessions in Chattorgram, Rajshahi, Sylhet, and Khulna, according to CGS.

The dialogues will focus on

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Withdraw all CSA and DSA cases

Demand rights activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All repressive laws and draft laws that hinder freedom of expression should be scrapped, as those were formulated to keep the former government in power, said rights activists yesterday.

They demanded that all the cases, including those filed against journalists, under the Cyber Security Act (CSA) and now repealed Digital Security Act should be withdrawn.

They made the demands at a press conference organised by Forum for Freedom of Expression, Bangladesh (FExB) at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Criticising the CSA, rights activist and researcher Rezaur Rahman Lenin said the cyber security law fails to distinguish between activities in the public interest and criminal activities.

"Almost all definitions in the law contain

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Australia to give AUS $1b to flood victims

Acting envoy meets CA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Acting Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Nardia Simpson, paid a courtesy call on Chief Adviser to the interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus, at the state guesthouse Jamuna yesterday.

During the meeting, she expressed condolences for the loss of lives during the student-led protests and reaffirmed Australia's commitment to working with the interim government of Bangladesh.

Their discussions covered a wide range of issues, including security in the Bay of Bengal, the Rohingya crisis, human rights, economic cooperation, tax tariffs, and minority rights.

Simpson highlighted Australia's ongoing efforts to promote peacebuilding, culture, and leadership development in the Rohingya camps. She also announced that Australia would donate AUS $1 billion to support flood-affected people in Bangladesh.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

The Daily Star and ActionAid Bangladesh are jointly organising Season 3 of "Our Planet, Our Responsibility". A grooming session was held for the nine finalist teams selected under three categories -- Water Rights, Energy Transition, and Circular Economy -- at the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday. On August 31, the finalist teams will present their ideas to the judges as they compete for the championship title.

POLICE INACTION

Rickshaws rule Dhaka streets

RAFIUL ISLAM

It was around 11:30am.

A pair of rickshaws passed by State Guest House Jamuna, the residence and office of the chief adviser of the interim government, located on Hare Road.

Within a short time, at least 10 more rickshaws, including two battery-powered ones, traversed the same route.

This has become the new normal seen all throughout the city, but even just over a month ago this would have been very unusual as rickshaws are banned from plying on most major roads of Dhaka.

But ever since the student-led protests intensified, and especially after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, the pedal and battery-run rickshaws are ruling city streets in full view of police.

Rickshaw-pullers started to completely flout the ban when Dhaka's traffic system collapsed amid the absence of police for around a weeks following the AL government's fall.

While traffic police have been on the streets since August 12, they are largely limited to directing traffic, but are not enforcing laws.

"My income has increased now that we can go anywhere in the city," Zubair Hossain, a pedal rickshaw puller, told The Daily Star while taking a breather in front of the chief justice's residence yesterday.

Zubair said he came to Dhaka six months ago, but before August 5, he could only operate his rickshaw in the alleyways of Farmgate, Nakhalpara, Karwan Bazar, Madhubagh, and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Minutes later Zubair started pedalling his rickshaw towards Moghbazar through Shaheed Captain Mansur Ali Sarak, another road where rickshaws are banned.

A study carried out by the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) in 2019 said Dhaka had over 11 lakh pedal rickshaws.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

PHOTO: STAR

The photo was taken from Dhaka's Karwan Bazar intersection yesterday.

Rickshaws rule Dhaka

FROM PAGE 3

Also, there were more than 2 lakh battery-run rickshaws in the city.

Pedal rickshaws are allowed only on designated roads while battery-run rickshaws usually operate on feeder roads.

In the past few days, this correspondent observed various major roads in Ramna, Tejgaon, Mirpur, Uttara, Airport, and Motijheel, where rickshaws were frequently seen.

In the past, police and ansar members used to guard the exits of feeder roads to prevent rickshaws from entering the thoroughfares and major roads. But they were not seen during recent visits.

Rickshaw-puller Maznu Mia along with others were seen waiting for passengers in front of the Apex Footwear outlet in Farmgate, adjacent to the busy Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

Asked how they managed to get to the major road, Maznu smiled and said nobody stops them now.

"In the past, police and ansar members used to puncture rickshaw tires, take away seats or sometimes even seize rickshaws if we operated on VIP roads," he said.

The rickshaw operations on major roads cause problems for drivers of private cars, buses and CNG-run auto-rickshaws as the slow-moving three-wheelers often go to the right lanes which are supposed to be fast lanes, the drivers said.

"This situation cannot go on. The rickshaw pullers do not obey any street law. We are always in fear of accident now," said Sujan Mia, a driver of Bihanga Paribahan.

Other motorists said the presence of both pedal and battery-run rickshaws was a problem as they move at different speeds, so deciding when to change lanes and overtake has become harder.

Several traffic constables, on condition of anonymity, said they no longer stop anyone because they want to avoid the hassles they faced before and after August 5.

"Look, there are only a few traffic police on the streets, and our supervisors often stay on the side of the road," said a constable on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

Khondaker Nazmul Hassan, additional commissioner (traffic) of DMP, said, "We are taking steps [against rickshaws] and are hopeful that we will be able to bring a visible change to the traffic system withing two weeks."

During the student-led protests that culminated in the toppling of the AL government, many law enforcers were opening fire on protesters as hundreds died over just three weeks of violence. Many police personnel were also killed, and the force is still recovering from a crisis of credibility.

Tipu Munshi

FROM PAGE 5

shot in Badda on July 19.

Following the incident, a case was filed based on a complaint lodged by Sumon's mother, Masuma Begum, against 179 individuals, including ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Tipu Munshi from the capital's Gulshan area early yesterday.

DMCH plans

FROM PAGE 5

set up specialised wards on an emergency basis for the treatment of those injured in the anti-discrimination student movement recently, said the hospital director.

Md Asaduzzaman said in addition, initiatives have been taken to renovate the cabins, increase the number of beds in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), ensure timely attendance and strengthen cleanliness activities for all officers, employees and staff.

He said hospital authorities will not allow representatives of pharmaceutical companies and external brokers at the hospital.

More than 5,000 patients are treated at the outdoor and emergency departments of the hospital every day, he said. More than 4,000 patients take in-house treatment in the 2,600-bed hospital every day.

No victims

FROM PAGE 5

reviewed videos and images captured by drones. The fire burned for a long time -- almost three days -- due to different chemicals stored inside, which intensified the heat. The building's condition clearly reflects this. It not only just burned but also underwent extensive damaged," he also said.

Prof Raquib explained that the fourth and fifth floors of the six-story building collapsed onto the third floor, causing the third floor to buckle under the weight.

Drawing from past experience, the Buet professor said, "When the Rangs Building was demolished, our Buet team was also involved. The situation here is even more hazardous than it was there. Demolishing this building must be done with meticulous planning to avert any accidents."

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 30

	Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-30	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Mirza Abbas cleared of graft charges

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday acquitted BNP standing committee member Mirza Abbas in a 2007 graft case.

Judge Masud Parvez of the Special Judge's Court-6 of Dhaka delivered the verdict in presence of him at the courtroom, said a court staffer.

On August 16, 2007, Anti-Corruption Commission filed one case with Ramna Police Station against Abbas and his wife Afroza for amassing wealth worth over Tk 5.67 crore beyond known sources of income, and concealing wealth statement of Tk 23 lakh to the commission.

The ACC on May 14, 2008, pressed charges against him and Afroza in the case.

In June 2008, the court framed charges against Abbas and his wife. It recorded statements of 24 prosecution witnesses.

Withdraw all CSA

FROM PAGE 3

vagueness and inadequacy," he said.

"In a completely undemocratic process, the previous authoritarian government took initiatives to draft new laws and policies, while amending old laws, to take away people's rights and increase and control state power. Citizen's participation and accountability in the formulation and implementation of these laws was nil," he added.

Saleem Samad, general secretary of FExB, said laws made in public interest should be formulated and amended, in consultation with the public and higher stakeholders.

Khairuzzaman Kamal, treasurer of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), said cyber security laws are essential when they deal with people's interests and women's security, and to prevent all kinds of bullying.

Dr Syeda Aireen Jaman, secretary general of PEN International, Bangladesh, said during this interim period, it will be good to have a new ordinance in place that is in line with the "UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity," alongside the protection of human rights.

Rezwan Islam of Global Voices and human rights advocate Sharmin Khan also spoke at the event.

Overhaul election

FROM PAGE 3

primary elections in each constituency to select their candidates.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar mentioned that one of the advisers of the interim government has requested a draft proposal for a law to appoint the CEC and other ECs. They plan to submit the finalised proposal to the government.

He also emphasised that student politics on campuses should be free from sycophancy.

Rights activist Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb emphasised the need for mechanisms that would allow expatriate Bangladeshis to cast their votes. He also called for efforts to curb the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

DU Professor Robaet Ferdous stated that all institutions, including the Election Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Public Service Commission, and others, have utterly failed.

"Caretaker government should be incorporated in the constitution permanently," he proposed.

Prothom Alo Joint Editor Sohrab Hassan said if political parties do not practice internal democracy, all proposals and discussions will be in vain.

Dilip Kumar Sarker, central coordinator of Shujan, presented a set of reform proposals that includes reintroducing the "no vote" option on ballot papers, having the Election Commission publish posters on behalf of candidates, organising a projection meeting for all candidates in a constituency, requiring candidates to disclose their foreign assets in their affidavits, and appointing returning officers from among EC officials.

Samakal Advisory Editor Abu Sayeed Khan, former election commission additional secretary Jesmin Tuli, Fair Election Monitoring Committee chair Munira Khan, a key organsier of the anti-discrimination student protest Ariful Islam and others addressed the programme.

We want

FROM PAGE 3

family's distress, said, "We don't know if my father is alive or not. We have seen others return from secret facilities; we hope for the same."

Advocate Akhtar Kabir Chowdhury, president of the Sanak-TIB Chattogram chapter, advised the families to seek legal recourse and appeal to the interim government.

"The issue of missing persons must be taken seriously. Legal avenues and appeals could provide some resolution," he said.

No alternative

FROM PAGE 3

eight key topics -- the constitution, ensuring justice for victims of human rights violations and serious legal breaches, the judiciary, civil administration, constitutional bodies, law enforcement agencies (including intelligence agencies), economic policies (including the banking sector and foreign loans), and the media.

Addressing these topics is essential for rebuilding democracy, said Prof Riaz, adding that a rushed election without tackling these fundamental issues would be ineffective.

In reply to a query, Prof Riaz said there are limitations in amending the constitution. He rather suggested that there might be options to reconstruct it instead.

Zillur Rahman, executive director of CGS, said, "We have been working on how the state can reinforce its democratic institutions."

He also expressed hope that these dialogues will play a crucial role in shaping the country's democratic future.

Addressing the media, Zillur Rahman said, "Regardless of what we did in the past, let us be united now and work with due responsibility in this new situation. We should work to take mass media to a respective position so that no one can call it 'puppet media'."

"As journalists, we should act accordingly so that no one can file a case against us or put handcuffs on our hands in any changeover situations," he added.

Gonoforum pledges

FROM PAGE 5

Dr Kamal emphasised that Gonoforum will start its journey anew through the celebration of its founding anniversary.

"It is the moral responsibility of all political parties and the country's people to give proper time and all-out cooperation to the interim government led by Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus to reform the state institutions and create an environment for a fair election."

In his written speech, he said said a new opportunity has been created to establish democracy and justice in the country after the mass movement. People are dreaming of an independent and discrimination-free new Bangladesh.

YUNUS CASE

SC adjourns petition hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday adjourned until Monday the hearing on a leave to appeal petition challenging a High Court order that upheld the indictment against Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and six other officials of Grameen Telecom in a graft case.

The case was filed by the ACC on May 30, 2023 against Yunus and 13 others on charge of misappropriating about Tk 25.22 crore of Grameen Telecom Workers' Profit Participation Fund and laundering money.

The six Grameen Telecom officials are Managing Director Nazmul Islam, and Directors Ashraful Hassan, Naznin Sultana, Md Shahjahan, Nurjahan Begum, and SM Huzzatul Islam Latifee.

On July 24 this year, the HC summarily rejected a petition filed by Prof Yunus and six other officials of Grameen Telecom, challenging a Dhaka court's order that framed charges against them.

Invitation to BID (ITB)
Walk-in Cold Room for Vaccine Storage

Tender Ref. No: icddr,b/SCM/OTM/24/08/NS-24-3724 Date: August 30, 2024

icddr,b invites renowned equipment manufacturers and authorized agents/distributors to participate in the bid for the Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Validation of Walk-in Cold Room for Vaccine storage, icddr,b, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.

Bid documents are available in web address below:
https://www.icddrb.org/work-with-us/tender-notices

Detail terms and conditions of the tender are available in ITB Document

Pre-Bid Meeting: A Pre-bid meeting will be held on **September 09, 2024 at 11:00AM-12.00PM** at Facilities Management Conference Room, Chiller Building, 3rd Floor, icddr,b, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.

Bid Submission: Tenders should be dropped into the tender box kept in the Supply Chain Management office, Chiller Building Ground Floor, icddr,b Mohakhali, Dhaka on or before 3:00PM on **September 19, 2024** which will be opened at 3:30PM on the same day, in presence, of the tenderers, if any. Please refer to the bid document for further details.

icddr,b reserves the right to accept or reject any bid wholly or partly without assigning reasons. This ITB will be part of the contract and binding upon the bidder.

icddr,b

Senior Manager, Supply Chain Management
Tel: +88 02 222277001-10, Ext# 4414/4403/4400

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC)
Office of the Project Director
Chattogram and Cox's Bazar District Irrigation Development
Project Through Surface Water Utilization
Website: www.badc.gov.bd

Memo No. 12.06.1519.257.14.001.24.550 Date: 28.08.2024

e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders for the procurement of following Works and Goods are invited in e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by the Project Director, Chattogram and Cox's Bazar District Irrigation Development Project Through Surface Water Utilization, BADC, 26/Ka, FIDC Road, Kalurghat, Chattogram-4100.

Sl No.	Tender ID	Title	Publishing date, closing date
1	1005826 to 1005830, 1005832 to 1005840, 1005842 to 1005856, 1005858 to 1005861, 1005865, 1005867, 1005869 to 1005871	Re-Excavation of Irrigation and drainage Khal/canal with leveling, dressing and compaction of excavated soil to embankment including pumping & bailing out water from khal at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
2	1005934, 1005936 to 1005939	Construction of Outlet Structure on the both side of embankment of khal/canal at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
3	1005959 to 1005962, 1005964	Excavation of Pond/Reservoir with leveling, dressing and compaction of excavated soil to embankment at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
4	1005985, 1005987, 1005988, 1005993	Construction of Crop protection Embankment	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
5	1006010 to 1006013	Sinking, installation and Commissioning of Artesian well at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
6	1006043 to 1006047, 1006049 to 1006051	Construction of medium size irrigation Structure (Cross Dam/Culvert etc.) at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
7	1006080 to 1006082, 1006084 to 1006087, 1006090, 1006091	Construction of small size irrigation Structure (Foot Bridge/Cattle Crossing etc.) at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
8	1006119, 1006120, 1006123 to 1006127	Construction of Pipe Culvert/Water Pass Structure at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
9	1006151 to 1006156	Construction of uPVC buried pipeline (1200 meter each) for 1-cusec electric operated LLP Scheme at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
10	1006158, 1006159, 1006161 to 1006163	Construction of uPVC buried pipeline (1500 meter each) for 2-cusec electric operated LLP Scheme at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
11	1006175, 1006176, 1006178, 1006179, 1006180, 1006181	Construction of uPVC buried pipe for 5-cusec electric LLP scheme (315mm dia, 2200m each) at any upazila under Project Area	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
12	1006204, 1006207, 1006208, 1006210, 1006211	Extension of existing uPVC underground irrigation line (buried pipe) for LLP Scheme at any upazila under Project Area(600m each)	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
13	1006212	Conducting Survey and Submission Design of 1/1.5/2/5 Cusec Buried Pipe	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
14	1006213	Supply and installation of Fita pipe holder and shock absorber 300mm long Rubber hose pipe for 1/2/1.5/5 Cusec LLP Scheme	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
15	1006263 to 1006266	Procurement of 100 mm outer dia Lay Flat cotton hose pipe including necessary accessories (100m each)	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024
16	1006267	Supply and installation of 1.5-cusec solar powered LLP with solar panel and necessary accessories	29-Aug-2024 17-Sep-2024

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will participate in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

BADC = 44 (7x3)

২৮.০৮.২৪

Md. Nurul Islam
Project Director
Chattogram and Cox's Bazar District Irrigation Development Through Surface Water Utilization
BADC, 26/Ka, FIDC Road, Kalurghat, Chattogram

GD-291

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
বসুন্ধরা এফ- ব্লকে ১৫০০ বর্গফুটের শতভাগ রেডি ফ্ল্যাট।
ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৭
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮

TUITION WANTED
15 years of experience Maths teacher wants to teach O-A Level (Cambridge, Edexcel) Q/P solve, mock test. Guarantee A.
B.Sc (Hons), M.Sc (Math), DU.
DIPAK BARMAN
01777846252, 01712018889

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
বসুন্ধরা ডি- ব্লকে সেমি- ফেয়ারফেস ২০৫০ বর্গফুটের নির্মানাধীন ফ্ল্যাট।
ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬

Restaurant setup For Sale
Restaurant with complete setup is for sale at Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka. Interested buyer pls contact:
01719110617/ 01968544305

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
লালমাটিয়া বি-ব্লক-এ ১৬০০ বর্গফুটের শতভাগ রেডি ব্র্যান্ড নিউ ফ্ল্যাট।
ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮

নালন্দা উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়
ছায়ানটের সংস্কৃতি- সমন্বিত সাধারণ শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম

ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি— শিক্ষাবর্ষ ২০২৫

নালন্দায় প্রাক-প্রাথমিক* থেকে নবম শ্রেণি পর্যন্ত ভর্তি চলছে
* প্রাক-প্রাথমিক: অঙ্কুর (৩-৪ বছর), কিশলয় (৪-৫ বছর), মঞ্জরী (৫-৬ বছর)
প্রথম শ্রেণি: (৬-৭ বছর), দ্বিতীয় থেকে নবম: শ্রেণি অনুযায়ী বয়স
বিস্তারিত তথ্য ও ভর্তির আবেদনপত্র: www.nalonda.org

ফেসবুক পেইজ www.facebook.com/nalonda.org
যোগাযোগ: ০১৭৯৫ ৭৬০ ৩৭৬
ছায়ানট সংস্কৃতি- ভবন, বাড়ি ৭২, সড়ক ১৫এ, ধানমন্ডি আ/এ, ঢাকা।

Sonali Bank PLC
Common Services Division, Head Office, Dhaka
e-Tender Notice

S.L	Tender ID No. & Ref. No.	Contract Package No.	Name of items	Tender publishing date & closing date
01.	1010042 Calendar/ 2025	Calendar/ 2025	Printing and Supplying of 7,00,000 (Seven Lac) Wall Calendars & 20,000 (Twenty Thousand) Pieces of Envelopes.	01.09.2024, 11.00am 23.09.2024, 03.00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit the e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

Sd/-
Md. Ferdous Serniabat
Deputy General Manager
Ph: 02-223384642

GD-289

বাংলাদেশ টেক্সটাইল মিলস্ করপোরেশন
বিটিএমসি ভবন
৭-৯, কাওরান বাজার বা/এ, ঢাকা-১২১৫।
সূত্রঃ ২৪.০৩.০০০০.১০১.১৫(৭).১০৬.২৪-৫৪ তারিখ:২৯.০৮.২০২৪ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

দরপত্র আহ্বান

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/ ডিভিশন	বস্ত্র ও পাট মন্ত্রণালয়।
২.	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ টেক্সটাইল মিলস্ করপোরেশন (বিটিএমসি)।
৩.	প্রকিউরিং এন্টিটির নাম	বাংলাদেশ টেক্সটাইল মিলস্ করপোরেশন (বিটিএমসি)।
৪.	কাজের বিবরণ	বিটিএমসি ভবনের ২টি নতুন লিফট পরিচালনা, রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ ও মাসিক সার্ভিসিং।
৫.	দরপত্র সূত্র ও তারিখ	২৪.০৩.০০০০.১০১.১৫(৭).১০৬.২৪-৫৪ তারিখঃ ২৯.০৮.২০২৪ খ্রিঃ।
৬.	প্রকিউরমেন্ট মেথড্	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র।
৭.	অর্থের উৎস	নিজস্ব অর্থায়নে।
৮.	দরপত্র সিডিউল মূল্য	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য)।
৯.	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির স্থান	হিসাব বিভাগ, বিটিএমসি, বিটিএমসি ভবন (৩য় তলা),৭-৯ কাওরান বাজার বা/এ, ঢাকা-১২১৫।
১০.	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৭.০৯.২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।
১১.	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	১৮.০৯.২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১২.	দরপত্র দলিল গ্রহণ ও খোলার স্থান	উপ-প্রধান প্রকৌশলী(বিদ্যুৎ) এর অফিস কক্ষ, বিটিএমসি ভবন (৩য় তলা), ৭-৯ কাওরান বাজার বা/এ, ঢাকা-১২১৫।
১৩.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১৮.০৯.২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২-৩০ ঘটিকা।
১৪.	দরদাতা প্রতিষ্ঠানের যোগ্যতা নিরুপক কাগজপত্রাদি	যোগ্যতার সমর্থনে ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনাক্তকরণ নম্বর(TIN), ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র, আর্থিক যোগ্যতার সমর্থনে ব্যাংকের প্রত্যয়ন পত্র। এছাড়া সরকারী/ আধা-সরকারী/ স্বায়ত্বশাসিত সংস্থায়/ প্রতিষ্ঠানে অনুরূপ লিফট পরিচালনা, রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ, সার্ভিসিং ও ট্রাবল স্যুটিং কাজকরণে কমপক্ষে ০৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা। বিস্তারিত শর্ত সিডিউল মোতাবেক।
১৫.	দরপত্র জামানত	৫০,০০০/- (পঞ্চাশ হাজার) টাকা পে-অর্ডার আকারে 'বাংলাদেশ টেক্সটাইল মিলস্ করপোরেশন' এর অনুকূলে জমা দিতে হবে। জামানত ছাড়া দরপত্র গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
১৬.	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন অথবা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	

(সাব্বির আহমেদ)
উপ-প্রধান প্রকৌশলী(বিদ্যুৎ)

বাংলাদেশ সেনাবাহিনী
বান্দরবান সেনানিবাস, বান্দরবান
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং ০১/২০২৪-২০২৫

১। এমইএস/সরকারী ১ম শ্রেণীর তালিকাভুক্ত ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীদের নিকট হতে নিম্নে বর্ণিত কাজের অনুকূলে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র/কোটেশন আহবান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

ক্রমিক	কাজের বিবরণ	কাজের সময়সীমা
১।	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরের অপারেশন কন্টিনজেন্সী খাতে উপ-বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ দ্বারা আভিযানিক ও নিরাপত্তা সক্ষমতা বৃদ্ধি লক্ষ্যে ০৪টি সিসিটিভি ক্যামেরা, ০৬টি হ্যান্ড মেটাল ডিটেক্টর, ০৩টি ভেহিকেল মিরর, ০৪টি রিফ্লেক্টর ও ০২টি এক্সপ্লোসিভ ডিটেক্টর ক্রয় এবং ০২টি অগ্নি নির্বাপক সরঞ্জামাদি স্থাপন ও দ্রব্যসামগ্রী সরবরাহের নিমিত্তে ব্যয় নির্বাহ বাবদ	২৮ দিন (২১ অক্টোবর ২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে কাজ সমাপ্ত করতে হবে)

২। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়ঃ ২১ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ (১৬০০ ঘটিকা)।
৩। দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়ঃ ২৪ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ (১৩০০ ঘটিকা)।
৪। দরপত্র বক্স খোলার তারিখ ও সময়ঃ ২৪ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ (১৬০০ ঘটিকা) ঠিকাদারগণের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
৫। নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর দপ্তরে দরপত্র পাওয়া যাবে এবং গৃহীত হবে। প্রতিটি সিডিউল এর মূল্য ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার মাত্র) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য)।
৬। **শর্তাবলী**। দরপত্র ক্রয়কালে ঠিকাদারদের নিজস্ব চিঠি/মুলপ্যাডে আবেদনপূর্বক নিম্নলিখিত কাগজপত্রের মূলকপি দেখিয়ে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের নিকট হতে দরপত্র ক্রয় করতে পারবে এবং দরপত্র দাখিলের সময় ঐ সমস্ত কাগজপত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি দাখিল করতে হবেঃ
ক। হালনাগাদ লাইসেন্স নবায়নের সনদপত্র, হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র এবং ১০ ডিজিট ভ্যাট সনদপত্র।
খ। দরপত্র তফসিলে প্রত্যেক পাতায় সীলমোহর স্বাক্ষর করতে হবে এবং খামের উপর কাজের নাম উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
গ। যে কোন অথবা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে।

অধিনায়ক
৫ ই বেংগল
বান্দরবান সেনানিবাস
মোবাইলঃ ০১৭৬৯২৯২১৫৬

১৫ আগস্ট ২০২৪

আইএসপিআর/সেনা/২০২৪/৪৫৩
২৯/০৮/২৪

GD- 290

Street vendor Al Amin travels to Dhaka from Narsingdi's Baburhat area to sell gamcha (towels made of cotton fabric) on the roads every day. He sells 50-60 gamcha per day at Tk 50-Tk 150 each. The photo was taken recently near the Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

Gonoforum pledges full support to interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonoforum will set aside internal differences and provide full cooperation to the interim government to address the current situation in the country, said the party's founder and Emeritus President Dr Kamal Hossain at a press conference yesterday.

"The leaders and activists of Gonoforum will work alongside students and the public to rebuild the country and support the interim government," he said.

The press conference, held at the National Press Club in Dhaka, marked the 31st founding anniversary of Gonoforum.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

DMCH plans to get rid of brokers in 100 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) authorities have taken a 100-day programme to improve the quality of health services, said its director yesterday.

Speaking to the reporters at a press conference, he announced various plans, including renovation of cabins, increasing ICU beds and prevention of brokers within 100 days.

The press conference was held at the hospital.

Director Brig Gen Md Asaduzzaman said anti-corruption activities will be strengthened in the next 100 days. Initiatives will be taken to ensure behavioural change to improve the relationship between doctors, nurses and healthcare workers with patients.

Besides, initiatives will be taken to strengthen healthcare-related research activities, health education activities. Reception booths or information centres will also be set up.

To ensure free healthcare, there are plans to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Tipu Munshi remanded for four days in murder case

UNB, *Dhaka*

A Dhaka court yesterday placed former commerce minister Tipu Munshi on a four-day remand in connection with the murder of Sumon Shikder, 31, who was killed in the capital's Badda area during the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Ali Haider passed the order after police produced Tipu before the court, requesting a 10-day remand.

Sumon Shikder was

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Sundarbans to reopen for fishers, tourists from Sept 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

The Sundarbans will reopen to tourists and various permitted businesses from September 1, following a three-month closure.

From that day, fishermen and tourists will be able to enter the world's largest mangrove forest after obtaining a permit from the Department of Forest.

The restriction, which was in effect from June 1 to August 31, aimed to protect the wildlife of the Sundarbans during the breeding season of animals and fish, Mihir Kumar, conservator of forests in the Khulna region, told The Daily Star.

Hundreds of fishermen are preparing their boats and nets to fish in the rivers and canals. Tour operators have also begun taking bookings after completing renovations on their boats.

Shivpada Biswas, a fisherman from Khalsibunia village in Khulna's Batiaghata, said he has been fishing in the Sundarbans for the last 30 years and has already obtained his permit.

Nazmul Azam David, general secretary of the Tour Operators Association of Sundarbans, expressed concern that bookings for tours have yet to pick up.

ARSON ATTACK ON GAZI TYRES FACTORY

No victims found in basement: fire service

Building too risky for rescue operation, says Buet delegation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Narayanganj*

Fire Service and Civil Defence personnel yesterday entered the basement of Gazi Tyres factory in Rupganj of Narayanganj, which came under arson attack on Sunday, but found no victims there.

The firefighters also noticed that small fires were still burning at some places inside the building.

Meanwhile, a delegation from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology inspected the building yesterday and said it would be "very risky" to carry out rescue operations on its upper floors.

Miscreants looted and set fire to the factory building, owned by former Awami League minister Golam Dastagir Gazi, on Sunday night, hours after Gazi's arrest.

Following the incident, many families gathered in front of the building claiming that their loved ones were trapped inside the factory.

However, even four days after the incident, the fire service has yet to start rescue operations inside the building.

Anwarul Haque, assistant director of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, yesterday said, "The probe committee and a team of experts, including a delegation from Buet, determined that the upper floors of the building were structurally too risky to allow for safe entry. However, the fire service conducted thorough searches in the basement area, but no dead bodies were found there."

He also said the drone footage showed no evidence of bodies as well.

"The rods are exposed on every floor, the columns have expanded, and the beams are bent. We cannot conduct search and recovery work in the building under the circumstances," he added.

Abdul Mannan, deputy assistant director of fire service in Narayanganj, said they have yet to decide how to conduct a rescue operation in the building.

Earlier yesterday morning, following an invitation from Narayanganj deputy commissioner Mohammad Mahmudul Hoque, Prof Raquib Ahsan of Buet's civil engineering department, inspected the building's surroundings and consulted with fire service personnel and others to determine whether it would be possible to enter the building for search and rescue operations

Talking to journalists later, Prof Raquib said it would be "very risky" to carry out rescue operations there.

"I observed the building's exterior and, with help of the fire service's ladder, viewed as much as possible inside. I also

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Police Telecommunication Organization
Police Telecom Bhabon, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
telecom.police.gov.bd

Invitation for Local Tenders

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affair's (Public Security Division)			
2	Agency	Bangladesh Police			
3	Procuring Entity Name	SP (Training), Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka			
4	Invitation for	Tender	Goods	Multi Lot	
5	Invitation Ref No & Date	44.01.0000.057.15.007.24/4467 /Betar, Date 29-08-2024			
		KEY INFORMATION			
6	Procurement Method	NCT (National)	Open (Framework)		
FUNDING INFORMATION					
7	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB			
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
8	Tender Package No.	GD1-GD2-GD3/3231301/2024-2025			
9	Tender Package Name	Training Materials, Goods & Foods			
10	Tender Publication Date	30-08-2024			
11	Tender Last Selling Date	17-09-2024			
		Date	**Time**		
12	Tender Closing Date and Time	18-09-2024	11.00 AM		
13	Tender Opening Date and Time	18-09-2024	11.30 AM		
14	Name & Address of the office's	**Address**			
	Selling Tender Document (Principal)	ASP (Procurement), Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217			
	Selling Tender Document (Others)	DC (Logistic & Procurement), DMP, Dhaka.			
NO CONDITIONS APPLY FOR SALE, PURCHASE OR DISTRIBUTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS					
15	*Receiving Tender Document & Opening Tender Document*	Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217			
16	Pre-Tender Meeting (Optional)	**Date**	**Time**	**Place**	
		12-09-2024	11.30 A.M	Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
17	Eligibility of Tenderer	1) Up to date trade license 2) Current income tax certificate, 3) VAT registration 4) Bank Statement and 5) Other requirements described in the standard tender document.			
18	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Purchase of Training Materials, Goods & Foods for Police Telecom Training.			
19	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	TK-1500/- (One Thousand Five Hundred) Taka only.			
	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Completion Time in Weeks / Months
20	Lot-1	Supply of Training Supporting Materials for Trainees and Official.	Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka.	15,000/- (Fifteen Thousand) Taka only	3 Months
	Lot-2	সকল প্রশিক্ষণার্থীদের স্ন্যাক্স সরবরাহ।		30,000/- (Thirty Thousand) Taka only	
	Lot-3	সকল প্রশিক্ষণার্থীদের সকাল, দুপুর, রাত, উদ্বোধনী ও সমাপনী খাবার সরবরাহ।		75,000/- (Seventy Five Thousand) Taka only	
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS					
21	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Asma Begum Rita			
22	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	SP (Training), Bangladesh Police			
23	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217.			
24	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone:02-226663810, Mobile:01320-020042			
25	Special Instructions				
	a) No tender will be received after the deadline of submission time & date.				
	b) The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject any/all tenders or annul the tender process without assigning any reason.				
	c) The Procuring Entity also reserves the right to omit, increase or decrease the quantity of any item(s) from mentioned in tender.				
	d) If not possible to receive/open the tender on the schedule date for any unavoidable reason, the same will be received/opened on the next working date at the same time & same venue.				
	e) The Procurement will be performed according to the Public Procurement Act-2006 and Public Procurement Rules 2008.				

(Asma Begum Rita)
BP-7506119740
Superintendent of Police(Training)
Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
Phone: 02-226663810

GD-292

বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
প্রশাসন শাখা, গাজীপুর-১৭০১

কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি
Email: ddadmnbari@gmail.com
Phone : 49270010

Invitation for Tenders
Tender No-09

01.	Ministry	:	Ministry of Agriculture	
02.	Agency	:	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI)	
03.	Procurement Entity Name	:	Director General	
04.	Procuring Entity Code	:	N/A	
05.	Procuring Entity District	:	Gazipur	
06.	Invitation for	:	Supplying of Manpower by Outsourcing Method	
07.	Invitation Ref. No.	:	12.21.0000.005.99.002.24.590	
08.	Date	:	28-08-2024	
KEY INFORMATION				
09.	Procurement Method	:	Open Tendering Method (OTM)	
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10.	Budget and Source of Fund	:	Government of Bangladesh (GoB)	
11.	Development Partner (if applicable)	:	N/A	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
12.	Project/ Program Code (if applicable)	:	N/A	
13.	Project/ Program Name (if applicable)	:	"মেহেরপুর সদরে বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউটের আঞ্চলিক কৃষি গবেষণা কেন্দ্র স্থাপন ও দেশের মধ্য পশ্চিমাঞ্চলের পরিবেশ-প্রতিবেশ উপযোগী গবেষণা কার্যক্রম জোড়দারকরণ"	
14.	Tender Package No.	:	PSN-09	
15.	Tender Package Name	:	Supplying of Manpower by outsourcing method	
16.	Tender Publication	:	01.09.2024	
17.	Tender Last Selling Date & Schedule Selling Date	:	15.09.2024 at 12.00PM & From 01.09.2024 to 15.09.2024	
18.	Tender Closing date & Time	:	17.09.2024 at 11.00 AM	
19.	Tender Opening date & Time	:	17.09.2024 at 2.00 PM	
20.	Brief Description of Tender:			
Identification of Package	Tender Security (Tk.)	Tender document Price (Tk.)	Location	Comments
PSN-09	2,00,000/- (Two Lakh) Taka Only	1,000/- (One Thousand) Taka Only	"Meherpur" Project Area	The conditions described in the tender document will be applicable
21.	Name and address of Office (s)			
	-Selling Tender Document (Principal)	:	Office of the Deputy Director (Accounts & Finance), BARI, Gazipur.	
	-Selling Tender Document (Others)	:	Planning & Evaluation Wing, BARI, Gazipur.	
	-Receiving Tender Document	:	Office of the Deputy Director (Admin), BARI, Gazipur.	
	-Opening Tender Document	:	Office of the Deputy Director (Admin), BARI, Gazipur.	
22.	Tender Purchase Rules	:	Tender documents can be procured through a written application along with the Deputy Director, Administration Section, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, Joydebpur, Gazipur on the company's own Letter Head Pad. Individual tenders/applications will not be accepted except for the mentioned organization/company. An updated trade license (Business type must be related to outsourcing) must be submitted with the application for purchase of tender documents.	
23.	Tender Security Types	:	The tender along with the tender should be sent in the form of Pay-order/bank draft from any scheduled bank along with the security deposit to the Director General, BARI, Gazipur.	
24.	Eligibility of Tenderer	:	i) Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the contract under the applicable law. ii) Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant Professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh. iii) Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and registered of Bangladesh. iv) The actual manpower supplier will be able to participate in the tender through outsourcing with relevant work qualifications and experience.	
25.	Papers to be submitted along with the tender	:	A) Trade license (Business type related to outsourcing) including renewal of current financial year. B) Certificate of VAT registration. C) Photocopy of renewed income tax payment certificate of current financial year with TIN number. D) Valid certificate of related work experience (Minimum 02 years) should be submitted. E) Also, other documents mentioned in the tender documents.	
26.	Brief Description of Services	:	(i) Research Fellow (Scientific Officer) 02 (two) Person, (ii) Facilitator (Scientific Assistant) 04 (four) person, (iii) Computing (Office Assistant cum-Computer Typist) 01 (one) person, (iv) Tractor Driver 01 (one) person, (v) Lab Attendant 04 (four) person, (vi) Office Assistant 02 (Two) person and (vii) Security Guard 04 (Four) person.	
27.	Brief Description of Related Services	:	N/A	
28.	Designation of official inviting tender	:	Deputy Director (Admin)	
29.	Address of official inviting tender	:	Administration Section, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, Gazipur.	
30.	Contact details of official inviting tender	:	Email: ddadmnbari@gmail.com	
31.	The tenders will be conducted in accordance with the open tender procedure of Public Procurement Rules-2008. However, in the case of recruitment of manpower the outsourcing method of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the circular issued from time to time by the government will be applicable.			
32.	BARI Authority reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without any noticed.			
33.	Due to unavoidable reasons if it is not possible to accept the tender on the date and time mentioned in this notice, The tender will be accepted and opened at the same time and place on the next working day.			

Deputy Director (Administration)
For Director General
BARI, Joydebpur, Gazipur.
Phone No-49270010

GD-293

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Let's help flood victims reclaim their lives: APU BISWAS

> **Apu Biswas has already extended her support to flood victims through a representative at TSC. She commended the initiative led by the students at TSC, stating, "The way everyone is coming together to help the flood victims is truly praiseworthy. My admiration for them has grown immensely. Their unity and dedication during this national crisis are inspiring."**

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

PHOTO: **SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED**

PHOTO: **COLLECTED**

Apu Biswas, the renowned Dhallywood star, has appeared in numerous films over the course of her career. With several hits to her name, she remains a prominent figure in the industry. In February of this year, her latest film, ***Chaya Brikkho***, was released.

The actress is looking forward to the release of her upcoming films. Although she was scheduled to originally film more projects this August, they have been postponed for the time being. Speaking on the matter, Apu shared with The Daily Star, "I, myself, am not focused on filming at the moment; my thoughts are with the flood victims. My heart aches for them."

She further expressed, "The news of the floods is everywhere, in the headlines on television and newspapers – seeing the faces of those suffering brings tears to my eyes."

"The elderly, in particular, seem to be bearing the burden more heavily. And when I see the faces of the children, I can't help but think of my child in their place. I feel compelled to do something for those enduring this suffering," Apu further remarked.

Apu Biswas has already extended her support to flood victims through a representative at TSC. She commended the initiative led by the students at TSC, stating, "The way everyone is coming together to help the flood victims is truly praiseworthy. My admiration for them has grown immensely. Their unity and dedication during this national crisis are inspiring."

The Dhallywood star mentioned, "I sent a representative with all the cash I could spare. I believe it's essential for everyone to step up during times like these."

Apu then reflected upon past catastrophes and said, "The most heartwarming thing is that whenever our country faces a crisis or a natural disaster, people come together to help. This time, however, has been exceptional—surpassing all previous efforts, the students at TSC have mobilised with renewed vigour. Their dedication during this calamity sets a powerful example for us all."

Although Apu Biswas couldn't personally visit the flood-affected areas, she ensured that relief supplies were sent through a delegation. "I wanted to be there, but with a young impressionable child at home, I couldn't make the trip myself. Instead, I sent aid through my representatives."

The actress firmly believes that nothing is more noble than serving humanity. "All the love we have is best expressed through helping others. I believe that we are here for one another. The most important work we can do is support each other, especially during times of crisis," she conveyed.

Apu Biswas, who commands a large fan base, acknowledged the role her supporters have played in her success. "Everything I am today, all the popularity I've gained, is entirely for my audience. Thanks to them," she noted. "Their love made me who I am. I urge them to help the flood victims in any way they can during this difficult time."

When asked about her expectations from the recently formed interim government, Apu Biswas expressed optimism. "I believe the new government will bring positive changes. I hope they work to eliminate discrimination because none of us want to see inequality in our society."

Lastly, the Dhallywood star appealed to everyone, stating, "Let's put aside our differences and come together to support the flood victims. Right now, this is our most urgent need. Let's help the people affected by the floods reclaim their lives, restore their smiles, and ease their sorrows."

Interim government to reshuffle Bangladesh Film Censor Board

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is set to reshuffle the Bangladesh Film Censor Board after Sheikh Hasina's government resigned on August 5.

The interim government aims to overhaul several institutions, starting with removing controversial board members and forming a new committee before resuming film screenings.

The last film approved was ***Madhyobitto*** on July 28, and no Bengali films have been reviewed since then. Ministry insiders suggest that directives for restructuring will be issued within a week.

Former board members like Kazi Hayat and Abdul Jalil expect the changes but haven't received official notifications yet. The only pending submission is ***Bhoyal*** by Biplob Haider, awaiting review.

Kaaktaal returns with 'Borshonabeg Concert'

Kaaktaal is set to host their postponed ***Borshonabeg Concert*** today at the National Library Auditorium, Dhaka. Initially scheduled for July 17, the concert was delayed due to political unrest. The event will feature the band's monsoon-themed songs alongside other tracks.

Rhythm Revolution organised the concert and intends to raise funds to support those affected by the flood. Lead vocalist Asif Iqbal said, "All of us want to celebrate the monsoon's beauty but more importantly we wish to aid the flood-affected communities going through unfair turmoil."

NEWS

History beckons Tigers

FROM PAGE 12

Since their inaugural Test in 2000, Bangladesh went 1-0 up in a series involving two or more Tests only seven times.

Although they won series against teams like Zimbabwe (twice in 2005 and 2014) and West Indies (twice in 2009 and 2018), Bangladesh miserably failed to hold the lead or extend the margin in the three other instances against top-ranked opponents -- against Australia in 2017 and twice against New Zealand in 2022 and 2023.

Apart from that, Bangladesh won their one-off Test series against Afghanistan and Ireland previously.

"The morale of the players is very, very good, and for obvious reasons," Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha said during a press conference on Thursday.

"Beating Pakistan in Pakistan is not an easy task. They are a very strong team. Still, we expect a good fight in the second game as well," the head coach added, mentioning that the Tigers might ring in some changes for the second game, keeping in mind the wicket and overcast condition.

Weather in Rawalpindi has deteriorated in the last few days as there has been persistent rain, forcing both teams to cancel a few practice sessions including the final one on Thursday.

Rain could also play spoilsport as the weather forecast suggests little to heavy rain on four of the five days, including today's opening day.

"We might have a few changes, depending on the condition tomorrow [Friday] when we look at the pitch. Today [Thursday], we didn't get to look at the pitch as it was covered and definitely the weather is slightly different from the last game," Hathurusingha added.

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan will once again be in the spotlight due to some recent off-field developments surrounding the cricketer, who has seen his teammates rally around him following a murder case filed against the former Awami League lawmaker.

However, Bangladesh team management will hope to get the best out of their talismanic all-rounder to notch their maiden Test series win against Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Pakistan will be desperate to bounce back in the series with a victory and get their home record on the right track after failing to win any of their last nine Tests -- they failed to register any victory on home soil since their 2-0 series win over South Africa in 2021.

After going with an all-pace attack in the first Test, the hosts named leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed and left-arm pacer Mir Hamza in their 12-member squad for the game, dropping premier pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi who has been allowed to spend time with his new-born son and family.

Salman, Anisul put on remand

FROM PAGE 12

mother Masuma.

At another hearing on the same case, former commerce minister Tipu Munshi was placed on a four-day remand.

In another case, a Dhaka court placed Major General (sacked) Ziaul Ahsan on a five-day fresh remand.

He is accused in a case filed with Adabor Police Station over the murder of a garment worker named Rubel.

Ziaul, the former director general of National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre, was placed on 18 days of remand in three other murder cases.

Former lawmaker Sadek Khan was placed on a five-day fresh remand in another case filed with Adabor Police Station over the killing of Jakir Hossain, 29.

On August 25, he was placed on a four-day remand in a case filed with Mohammadpur Police Station for the killing of truck driver Sujan.

Hasina faces 6 more cases

FROM PAGE 12

Hasina and 37 others were sued over the death of Jakir Hossain Rana on August 5 during the Anti-discrimination Student Movement.

His father Jamal Uddin yesterday lodged the case at Sreepur Police Station. In the case statement, he mentioned that some police and BGB personnel at the behest of Hasina and several other accused opened fire, leaving his son killed.

Manju Mia, father of slain Rahmat Mia, filed another murder case at the same police station accusing Hasina and 60 others. He alleged that some police and BGB members on the instructions of Hasina and several other accused fired bullets, killing his son on August 5.

Another murder case was filed at Basan Police Station against former PM Hasina and 154 others.

Pornima Begum, wife of Nazrul Islam, 32, who was killed on July 20 during the quota reform protest, lodged the case on Tuesday.

In Dhaka, Hasina and 87 others were sued over the death of Nadimul Hasan Elem, 25, in Dhaka's Sutrapur on July 19 during a protest.

His mother Kismot Ara yesterday filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Tariqul Islam.

After recording the complainant's statement, the magistrate asked the officer-in-charge of Sutrapur Police Station to register the complaint as a first information report (FIR).

In Brahmanbaria, a murder case was filed against Hasina and 57 others over the killing of Zahirul Islam, 35, during a clash on March 27, 2021, between police and demonstrators protesting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh.

His elder brother Babul Miah on Wednesday night lodged the case at Brahmanbaria Sadar Police Station, said Mohammad Mozaffar Hossain, OC of the station.

According to the case statement, several former ministers and other accused ordered the law enforcers to use firearms against the protesters, which led to the death of Zahirul.

Over 1,000 killed

FROM PAGE 12

treatment at the police hospital, many with injuries to the leg and head, but they were recovering well. An injured student coordinator was also receiving treatment at the hospital.

Nurjahan spoke to injured police officers in the hospital's surgery department and enquired about their conditions.

The health adviser also highlighted the government's efforts to provide specialised care for those blinded during the uprising. Many victims lost one or both eyes, she said

The adviser said the government sent a list of patients with eye injuries to the Sheba Foundation, a US-based organisation. It agreed to send doctors to Bangladesh as soon as possible, she said.

The facilities where the victims will be treated include the Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital, the National Institute of Ophthalmology & Hospital (NIOH), and the Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex, according to the adviser.

She said many people sustained severe leg injuries, with some requiring amputations.

"We are in talks with various donor agencies, including the World Bank, to bring in a team of doctors from abroad for advanced treatment," the adviser said.

Exim Bank freed from the grip of Mazumder

FROM PAGE 1

the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit's order to freeze his bank accounts and his family members.

He, however, remains the chairman of the private bank owners' forum Bangladesh Association of Banks since 2009, a position he leveraged to extract benefits from the previous Awami League regime of 15 years.

Mazumder, also the chairman of garment exporter Nassa Group, exerted his influence to change critical policies for the banking sector such that it favoured his businesses. He also took loans bypassing rules and regulations, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

For instance, at the 654th board meeting of Janata Bank in 2021, a Tk 261 crore interest waiver facility was approved for two concerns of Mazumder's Nassa Group: Nassa Taipei Spinners and Nassa Spinners.

The central bank initially rejected the facility as Janata approved the waiver violating banking norms but later walked back on the decision.

To ensure his access to the power centre, he would collect funds from banks and personally hand the cheque over to the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, according to the managing directors of banks who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The new board was constituted as per section 45 of the Bank Companies Act, 1991 to protect the interests of depositors and ensure good governance, said the BB letter to the Exim Bank managing director.

As of last year, Exim Bank's total outstanding loans stood at Tk 46,937.63 crore and defaulted loans of Tk 1,629.46 crore, as per data from the central bank. However, bank insiders said the actual volume of bad loans is much higher than that.

Md. Nazrul Islam Swapan, Md. Nurul Amin and Anjan Kumar Saha were retained on the new board. Swapan, who is a sponsor-director, holds 3.54 percent shares of the bank, while Saha holds 2 percent shares. Amin, also a sponsor-director, holds 2 percent shares.

Two new independent directors -- SM Rezaul Karim, executive director of the central bank, and Khandaker Mamun, a chartered accountant -- were added to the new board.

The previous government had decided to merge another crisis-hit Padma Bank with Exim Bank, a move that faced widespread criticism from different corners and was eventually put on hold.

Earlier, the BB reconstituted the boards of National Bank, Islami Bank Bangladesh, Social Islami Bank, Global Islami Bank, Union Bank and United Commercial Bank.

The central bank plans to reconstitute the board of more ailing banks next week.

1,369 pro-AL bots

FROM PAGE 12

election be held under the current government."

But why would anyone make such comments so long after the election, and that too, on a completely unrelated, non-political post?

Researchers found that a network of 1,369 fake Facebook accounts was responsible for over 21,000 comments across various Facebook pages. These comments, often posted repeatedly on unrelated posts, praised the AL and criticised the BNP, especially leading up to and following the 12th parliamentary election on January 7 this year.

The bot network mainly targeted posts containing specific political keywords but occasionally made errors, leading to comments on irrelevant topics.

"However, they sometimes made errors, particularly with terms that, when written in Bangla script, coincidentally contained the letters corresponding to 'EC' [Election Commission]. For instance, in the case of bdnews24.com, an article about color printers mentioned 'Machine Identification Code (MIC)'. The bots mistakenly identified the 'IC' in 'MIC' as 'EC' when transliterated into Bangla, leading them to flood the post with hundreds of comments. The study revealed several such instances of these bot blunders," the dismislab report said.

The investigation also revealed that most of the bot profiles shared common traits, such as restricted privacy settings, stolen profile pictures, and minimal friend counts -- features consistent with political bots.

This discovery sheds light on the growing issue of Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior (CIB) on social media platforms, raising concerns about the manipulation of public discourse in Bangladesh.

Court issues

FROM PAGE 2

ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir moved the petition on behalf of the ACC.

In the application, Jahangir said the former ministers and lawmakers, who have graft allegations against their names, were trying to flee the country. So, a travel ban is needed to prevent them from leaving the country.

The ACC informed the court that an investigation is underway into the allegations that they all amassed huge amounts of money through illegal means during their tenure.

The judge sent a copy of the order to the special superintendent of police (Immigration) of the Special Branch for the next course of action.

Telegram boss free but charged and held in France

AFP, *Paris*

Telegram chief Pavel Durov was out on bail yesterday after four days of detention in France. However, he has been banned from leaving the country as he faces a possible trial related to illegal content carried on his messaging app.

Russian-born Durov, dressed in black and wearing dark glasses, walked briskly out of the Paris court house late Wednesday into a waiting car after being charged but allowed to go free under judicial supervision.

Durov, 39, was charged on several counts of failing to curb extremist and illegal content on the popular messaging app which now has over 900 million followers but has become increasingly controversial.

His lawyer David-Olivier Kaminski said it was "absurd" to suggest Durov could be implicated in any crime committed on the app.

Durov was arrested at Le Bourget airport outside Paris late Saturday and questioned in subsequent days by investigators.

The charges concern alleged crimes involving an organised group, including "complicity in the administration of an online platform to enable an illicit transaction".

This charge alone could see him jailed for up to 10 years and fined 500,000 euros if convicted.

Israeli soldiers take position during an army operation in Tulkarm in the north of the occupied West Bank yesterday. Israel on Wednesday launched a large-scale operation in the occupied West Bank where the military said it killed Palestinian fighters, as the nearly 11-month-old war on Gaza showed no signs of abating.

PHOTO: AFP

Constructive talks held with China: US

AFP, *Beijing*

US President Joe Biden is looking forward to talks with Xi Jinping in the "coming weeks", top White House aide Jake Sullivan told the Chinese leader yesterday as they met for rare talks in Beijing.

Sullivan, the first US national security advisor to visit China since 2016, met Xi as he wrapped up three days of talks in Beijing which also saw him sit down with Foreign Minister Wang Yi and other high-ranking officials.

His visit came as China was embroiled in security rows with US allies Japan and the Philippines.

Sullivan told Xi during a meeting yesterday in Beijing's ornate Great Hall of the People that Biden "looks forward to engaging with you again in the coming weeks".

"President Biden is committed to responsibly managing this consequential relationship to ensure that competition does not veer into conflict or confrontation, and to work together where our interests align," he said.

Chinese state media said Xi told Sullivan that in spite of "great changes", China and the US could still enjoy good ties.

"China's commitment to the goal of stable, healthy, and sustainable development of China-US relations hasn't changed," Xi said.

"We hope that the US will work with China to meet each other halfway," he added, according to CCTV.

Sullivan told reporters at the US embassy that the talks with Chinese officials had lasted for 14 hours, describing the discussions as "constructive, candid, substantive".

The Ukraine war came up during the talks, but Sullivan said that both sides had not reached "any particular plan".

"I can't say that we did make progress on that issue," he said.

The talks did not touch on the upcoming US election, but Sullivan said that Vice President Kamala Harris wanted to maintain "open lines of communication" with China.

On Wednesday, Sullivan and top diplomat Wang had discussed plans for their leaders to talk in the coming weeks.

They also clashed over China's increasingly assertive approach in disputed maritime regions.

The officials agreed to hold a call between the two sides' theatre commanders "in the near future", a readout from the White House said.

Sullivan also raised the importance of "freedom of navigation" in the South China Sea, where China and the Philippines have clashed in recent months, and "stability" in the Taiwan Strait, Washington said.

'S Korea's climate goals not enough'

AFP, *Seoul*

South Korea's Constitutional Court yesterday uled that much of the country's climate goals were unconstitutional, handing a landmark victory to young environmental activists, who wept for joy on the court steps.

The first such case in Asia, brought by children and teenagers who named an embryo as a lead plaintiff, claimed that South Korea's legally binding climate commitments were insufficient and unmet, violating their constitutionally guaranteed human rights.

The court ruled that the government's limited climate targets violate the constitution as they do "not sufficiently protect the basic rights of the people," the legal representatives of the plaintiffs said after the hearing.

In 2021, South Korea made a legally binding commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 290 million tons by 2030 -- and to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. To meet this goal, the country needs to reduce emissions by 5.4 percent every year from 2023 -- a target they have so far failed to meet. As a result of the ruling, Seoul will now have to revise its climate goals, said a lawyer for the plaintiffs

Gujarat floods toll rises to 28

AFP, *Ahmedabad*

Intense monsoon rains and floods in India's Gujarat state killed at least 28 people in the past three days, some drowning and others hit by falling trees, government officials said.

The weather department warned more heavy rain is expected yesterday in the western coastal state.

Rivers have burst their banks and more than 30,000 people fled their homes.

The state government said late Wednesday that 13 people had died from drowning and the rest from houses or trees collapsing on them.

The Indian Express newspaper said 35 people had died so far across the state.

Some 1,856 people were rescued by disaster and army officials deployed for relief operations.

Flood raises spectre of diseases

FROM PAGE 1

village, said, "Over the last three days, I've developed burning rashes on my hands and feet. I've tried applying some generic ointment I bought from a local shop, but to no avail."

According to the Lakshmipur Civil Surgeon's Office, 58 patients were hospitalised with diarrhoea across the districts in 24 hours till yesterday.

Our correspondents found similar situations in many places when they visited Noakhali, Lakshmipur, Feni, and Cumilla.

In Feni, many were suffering from diarrhoea and skin diseases in Chhagalnaiya upazila.

As many areas in the upazila were still submerged, the stranded people could not reach health facilities.

Hosne-Ara-Begum, a resident of Gopal union, who took his 14-year-old grandson to a temporary health camp at Chhagalnaiya Pilot High School, said there were rashes all over his hands.

"Rashed never had skin diseases. Prolonged exposure to floodwaters gave him the rashes."

From the same union, twelve-year-old Saima, who also got rashes, could not move to the temporary health camp like Hosne Ara did as her village was still submerged and she had no access to transport facility.

Feni Civil Surgeon Shihab Rana said, "We treated 603 patients with waterborne diseases across the district in the 24 hours till Wednesday."

In Cumilla, Wahedunnesa, 70, a resident of Isapura who has been in the shelter centre at Bhorasa High School in Burichang since August 23, said she has been suffering from diarrhoea and cold for the last four days.

It's difficult for her to use the toilet, which everyone at the shelter shares.

There were sufficient stocks of oral saline and water purifying tablets at the shelter, according to its in-charge, Monirul Islam, reports our Cumilla correspondent.

According to the Cumilla Civil Surgeon's Office, 81 patients were hospitalised with diarrhoea across the districts in 24 hours till yesterday. A total of 502 patients were treated for waterborne diseases since August 23.

In addition, 130 patients in Noakhali and 58 in Lakshmipur were treated for diarrhoea in the districts over the last 24 hours.

52 LIVES LOST SO FAR

At least 52 people were killed in flash floods that began on the night of August 22, triggered by heavy rains and an onrush of water from upstream.

Around 10,72,579 families remain stranded in 11 districts, said a press release from the Chief Adviser office, citing the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

Of the deceased, 14 died in Cumilla, 17 in Feni, six in Chattogram, three in Cox's Bazar, eight in Noakhali, and one each in Brahmanbaria, Lakshmipur, Khagrachhari, and Moulvibazar.

Additionally, 54,80,463 people from 492 unions under 68 upazilas in Feni, Cumilla, Chattogram, Khagrachhari, Noakhali, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Brahmanbaria, Sylhet, Lakshmipur, and Cox's Bazar have been affected by the floods.

Govt to take reform ideas from parties

FROM PAGE 1

for whitening black money and bringing down the cost of performing hajj to a reasonable level.

DRAFTS APPROVED

The advisory council approved in principle the draft of the "Father of the Nation's Family-Members' Security (Repeal) Ordinance, 2024" as it decided to repeal the "Father of the Nation's Family-Members' Security Act, 2009".

Once the ordinance is gazetted, Bangabandhu's family members will not get special security.

The home ministry's Public Security Division placed the draft of the ordinance before the advisory council after it was vetted by the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division.

"The context [of repealing the ordinance] is that this [interim] government is an outcome of the Anti-discrimination Movement. The security agencies do not feel that this special security system is needed. Besides, it was considered as a discriminatory law. The law will be repealed on this ground," Rizwana said.

The Father of the Nation's Family-Members Security Act was enacted during the rule of the Awami League in 2009.

In 2015, a gazette was issued in line with the act granting lifelong state security and free utility services to Bangabandhu's family members.

The advisory council also gave the final approval to the draft of the "Special Security Force (Amendment) Ordinance, 2024" to ensure the security of the chief adviser.

HAJJ PACKAGE

Rizwana said the government is working on bringing down the cost of hajj packages to a reasonable level as there is a syndicate behind the rise in the cost.

Replying to a query, the adviser said, "It is not possible to say how much the cost can be reduced or how much the cost will be. However, our initial assessment indicated that the cost can be cut."

OTHER DECISIONS

Talking about some other agendas of the advisory council meeting, Rizwana said many export-oriented industries incurred losses due to the ongoing floods. The government has taken some measures to provide assistance to the workers in this sector, she said.

The environment adviser said the government has already started taking necessary steps to keep the prices of essentials within the affordability of the people.

She said the interim government will inform the media about the activities carried out by the ministries during the first month in office.

Replying to a question about whether actions should be taken against those officials who are still holding important posts after being appointed by the previous Awami League government, Rizwana said good officials are needed to run a government.

"There is no need to take immediate decisions regarding the efficient officials. If there is any specific allegation of corruption against any official, the authorities concerned will take action.

"How would we proceed with our regular works if we adopted the policy of not retaining any officials who were holding good posts in the administration of the previous government?"

The adviser said the government will give a reception to the Bangladesh under-20 football team for becoming the champions for the first time in the SAFF under-20 Men's Championship.

The advisory council also congratulated the national cricket team, the Bangladesh Cricket Board and the other people concerned on the team's win against Pakistan in the first Test match in Rawalpindi on August 25.

BSEC freezes

FROM PAGE 1

Former state minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak, his wife Arifa Jesmin Konika, Former MP Mohiuddin Maharaj, his wife Umme Kulsum, and his son Sammam Junaid Efti. former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, his spouse Rukhmila Zaman Chowdhury, his daughter Zeba Zaman Chowdhury, his relative Zara Zaman, his sister Roxana Zaman Chowdhury and his brother Anisuzzaman Chowdhury had their accounts frozen as well.

The BSEC said the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit decided to investigate the bank accounts of these individuals under the Money Laundering Act of 2012.

These individuals have investments in several stocks and may commit irregularities in the market, hence the BSEC has decided to freeze their BO accounts, it added.

BAPEX
বাংলাদেশ পেট্রোলিয়াম এক্সপ্লোরেশন এন্ড প্রোডাকশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (বাপেক্স)
BANGLADESH PETROLEUM EXPLORATION & PRODUCTION COMPANY LIMITED (BAPEX)
(A Company of Petrobangla)
BAPEX Bhaban (Level-4), 4 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh, web: www.bapex.com.bd

Invitation for International Tender

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division
2.	Agency	Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla)
3.	Company Name	i) Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Co. Ltd. (BAPEX) ii) Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (BGFCL)
4.	Procuring Entity Name	i) Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Co. Ltd. (BAPEX) ii) Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (BGFCL)
5.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
6.	Invitation Tender No.	**BAPEX/ADMIN/INT/TEN-1259/2024, Date: 27.08.2024**
7.	Invitation for	Procurement of Drilling Works Including Construction of Rig Foundation, Third Party Engineering Works & Supply of Materials for 2 Deep & HPHT (Srikail Deep-1 and Mubarakpur Deep-1) Exploratory Drilling Wells Under BAPEX and 2 Deep & HPHT (Titas-31 Deep and Bakhrabad-11 Deep) Exploratory Drilling Wells Under BGFCL on Turn-key basis.
Key Information		
8.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (ICT), One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method
Funding Information		
9.	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB & Own Fund
Particular Information		
10.	Indenting Division/Project Name	'3 Exploratory Wells (Srikail Deep-1, Mubarakpur Deep-1 and Fenchuganj South-1) Drilling Project, BAPEX' and 'Drilling of 2 Deep Exploratory Wells at Titas & Bakhrabad Fields Project, BGFCL'.
11.	Last Selling Date of Tender	**03.11.2024**
12.	Date of selling of Tender Document	Tender document will be available from to **05.09.2024** to **03.11.2024** from 10.00 to 14.30 (BST) on all working days.
13.	Place of Tender Selling	i) Accounts & Finance Division, BAPEX, 4 Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka. ii) BGFCL's Liaison Office, Petrocentre (14th Floor), 3 Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka. iii) Accounts Department, Titas Gas T&D Co. Ltd, 105 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka.
14.	Tender Closing Date & Time	**04.11.2024 at 11.00 Hrs. (BST)**
15.	Tender Opening Date & Time	**04.11.2024 at 11.30 Hrs. (BST)**
16.	Place of Tender Receiving & Opening	Receiving: Foreign Purchase Dept., BAPEX Bhaban, Level-4, 4 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka
Information for Tenderer		
17.	Eligibility of Tenderer	i) Minimum general experience of the Prime Tenderer in the Drilling works and all associated third party engineering works in the oil and gas industry as a Prime Contractor or Subcontractor or Management Contractor shall be at least 15 (fifteen) years. ii) The minimum specific experience as a Prime Contractor or Subcontractor or Management Contractor Drilling works and all associated third party engineering works in the oil and gas industry of at least two (02) contracts of similar to the proposed works successfully completed within the last 10 (ten) years with a value of at least USD 60,000,000.00 (United States Dollar Sixty million only). iii) The Tenderer must have 15 years of experience in drilling of oil/gas wells out of which 5 years must be outside the home country and at least 15 (fifteen) wells (vertical/deviated), Tenderer must have experience in drilling of at least 03 (three) wells depth of 6000-meter-deep & HPHT oil/gas wells including having experience of encounter minimum 12000 psi formation pressure and 350 deg F formation temperature. iv) The Tenderer must be a valid member of International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) and/or International Well Control Forum (IWCF). v) The Tenderer must have at least 2(two) own drilling rigs having minimum capacity of 2500 HP or higher that require and mentioned in Section-7 (Employer's requirement) for this operation.
18.	Brief Description of Service	i) Procurement of Drilling works including construction of rig foundation, third party engineering works & supply of materials for drilling and completion of 2 (Srikail Deep-1 and Mubarakpur Deep-1) deep & HPHT exploratory wells under BAPEX and 2 (Titas-31 Deep and Bakhrabad-11 Deep) deep & HPHT exploratory wells under BGFCL on Turn-key Basis. ii) Out of which 2 vertical deep & HPHT wells will be drilled at Srikail and Mubarakpur locations depth of around 6000 (±100)mTVDSS and another 2 deep & HPHT (one vertical and one deviated) wells will be drilled at Titas and Bakhrabad Gas Field, depth of around 5600(±100)mTVDSS and 4526 (±100) mMD (4360mTVDSS) respectively. Contractor will construct rig foundation at all well locations to be drilled according to design and layout of their rig. Contractor will provide drilling works, all third party engineering works and supply of materials for 4 deep & HPHT wells under BAPEX and BGFCL.
19.	Price of Tender Document	BDT 10,000.00 or US$ 95.00 (Non-refundable)
20.	Procuring Entity Details	i) General Manager, Administration Division, BAPEX Phone: +880-255011774 Email: purchase.bapex@gmail.com, purchase@bapex.com.bd ii) General Manager, Planning & Development Division, BGFCL, Phone: +880-1730317973 Email: gmpd@bgfcl.org.bd, bgfcldeepdrilling@gmail.com
21.	Address of the Official Inviting Tender	BAPEX Bhaban, Level-5, 4 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka
22.	Special instruction	i) Tender must remain valid for 180 days from the date of closing of the tender. ii) The tender security must remain valid for 208 days from the date of closing of the tender. iii) Amount of tender security: USD 2,000,000.00 or BDT 23,60,00,000.00 in the form of Bank Guarantee/Pay Order issued by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh or from any reputable foreign bank duly endorsed by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh located in Dhaka with full obligation and liabilities. iv) If tender opening day happens to fall on any holiday or any unavoidable Circumstance tenders shall be opened at the same hours on the first subsequent working day. v) This notice will also be available in www.bapex.com.bd, www.bgfcl.org.bd, www.petrobangla.org.bd, & www.cptu.gov.bd
23.	This tender will be conducted as per the PPR, 2008 & PPA, 2006.	
24.	The Company reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders at any stage without assigning any reasons whatsoever.	

General Manager (Administration)

GD- 288

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Post-flood recovery will be challenging

Flood leaves victims with a whole new set of problems

As floodwaters slowly begin to recede, a grim reality is emerging across the 73 upazilas of 11 districts that have been affected over the last 10 days or so. The flood has left behind a trail of destruction—broken homes, crumbling roads, collapsed bridges, toppled electric poles, public facilities lying in ruins. The scars of the disaster are evident everywhere. Many have returned to their homes, or what's left of them, while others, whose villages are still under water, remain in the shelters. An uncertain future awaits them all. The thought of rebuilding their lives from the ground up can be daunting, yet this is what they must prepare for.

According to an estimate, at least 52 people have died in the flood. The human toll, tragic as it is, is just one component of the widespread devastation caused by it as survivors now must focus on the painful process of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction, with little help guaranteed. Many have lost their homes, livestock, and other belongings, and will need financial and institutional support to get back on their feet. A big part of the recovery also involves regaining livelihoods, especially for farmers, fishers, and other small earners. The government and private donors must ensure steady provision of not just food and clothes but also cash support, at least until some recovery is achieved. Another focus area is their health needs. Many in flood-affected areas are suffering from waterborne diseases including diarrhoea, skin infections, cold-fever, etc. So, ensuring adequate medical care is vital.

Unfortunately, this is proving to be difficult because of the flooding of many health facilities, including the 250-bed Feni General Hospital, that left them severely compromised. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief has reportedly deployed 619 medical teams across 11 districts. But ensuring the full resumption of local health complexes is crucial for uninterrupted care. There are many other areas of rebuilding and reconstruction that the government also needs to focus on urgently. While we are yet to know the full extent of the damage caused by the flood, initial estimates are quite alarming: 6,542 kilometres of roads damaged, and 1,066 bridges and culverts ruined. Highways in affected regions are in no better shape. Many utility structures have been destroyed. There has been widespread littering, with piles of garbage seen in many areas.

All these things will require prompt and proper interventions. We are told that rescue and relief activities have been hampered because of coordination problems, exacerbated by the ongoing administrative chaos caused by transfer and other issues. The absence of upazila chairmen and other public representatives is also causing problems and will likely continue to do so for some more time. This is all the more reason why the government must double down on ongoing efforts, ensuring full cooperation of all relevant state agencies and officials, so that flood-affected communities have an easier go of it going forward. It must repair and resume all public facilities without delay, and must help the affected in every way it can.

Councillor crisis needs to be resolved

Residents must not be denied essential services any longer

Service disruptions across various wards of Dhaka North City and Dhaka South City—primarily due to the absence of their councillors—are causing immense suffering for the residents. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, 66 out of 75 ward councillors in Dhaka South are not attending their offices, while 11 out of 54 councillors in Dhaka North are similarly absent. This has led to a breakdown of services and many attendant complications. The uncertainty surrounding absent or absconding councillors will continue unless the authorities take decisive actions.

The ward councillor offices in Dhaka provide 14 types of services. Key among them are birth and death registration as well as issuance of various certificates such as citizenship, character, inheritance (warish), income, marriage or family membership, eligibility for elderly and disability allowances, etc. A councillor's office also handles attestations and no-objection certificates (where applicable), and signs off as a verifier for national identity cards and voter lists. Additionally, the councillor is responsible for overseeing mosquito control and sanitation works and the distribution of TCB products. The fact that these vital services are being hampered at this critical time for the nation is extremely disconcerting.

Some of the councillor offices came under attack around the time of the fall of the Awami League government, which not only damaged these offices and their equipment but also destroyed important documents, many likely belonging to citizens. The complexities this may cause for people seeking services in the future remain unclear. Many people are already showing up at the ward offices daily for various services, only to return home dejected. Unless this issue is immediately addressed, people will continue to be denied essential services, leading to a huge backlog of pending paperwork and potentially more problems in the future.

Under the circumstances, the authorities need to urgently determine why the councillors are absent and ensure resumption of services. As local government experts have suggested, councillors can be given a week's time to return: those who do can be assigned multiple wards at once, while those who do not can be subjected to legal consequences. Additionally, alternative arrangements can be made, such as having the office of the regional executive officer provide some of the services. However, none of these solutions are permanent. Therefore, the government should consider a process for replacing absent ward councillors.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

US troops withdrew from Afghanistan
On this day in 2021, the last US troops left Afghanistan, some seven years after the war in that country had officially ended.

The interim government must not fail

KAS Murshid
is an economist and former director-general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

KAS MURSHID

We now have another opportunity to get things right and the challenge is to manage aspirations and expectations. We want everything—safe roads, cheap and quality health services, good schools, inexpensive electricity, low inflation, zero corruption, professional police services, an accountable administration and judiciary, rule of law, social justice, jobs, etc. The list is endless. And we want all this right away! Our impulse for instant gratification runs strong as we righteously scream for the resignation, arrest, incarceration, or even "*phashi*" of anyone and for anything, expecting the government to immediately deliver.

INTERIM GOVERMENT

VISUAL: **ALIZA RAHMAN**

Unfortunately, there are no quick fixes. The challenges facing us are complex and will require time and effort. Time, however, is not unlimited. For one thing, the current mood of victory and jubilation will soon give way to recrimination, infighting, and impatience. As these intensify, our poor advisers will find themselves beleaguered, and only the toughest will keep going while others will decide to leave. It would be naive to think that all the major stakeholders will keep their peace and hold their tongues for very long. The chaos has not subsided yet; we are ruled by emotion, instinct, and plain disregard for rules, norms, and values—these have been the worst casualty of a long period of abject disregard for the rule of law. In the meantime, vultures are circling the skies and have begun to sweep down upon media houses, banks, and vantage positions from which economic rents can be extracted.

Same old wine?

Initial signs show that the playbook of governance has not shifted very much. Just as top BNP leaders were once accused of setting buses on fire, so now we see top AL leaders being accused of killings occurring even in the remotest of districts. The horrific scenes we see at our court premises are no different, even though we have a neutral, non-political government in place. Nobody is talking about judiciary reforms before calling for the annulment of constitutional amendments. This is a problem for a new Bangladesh.

> **Just as top BNP leaders were once accused of setting buses on fire, so now we see top AL leaders being accused of killings occurring even in the remotest of districts. The horrific scenes we see at our court premises are no different, even though we have a neutral, non-political government in place.**

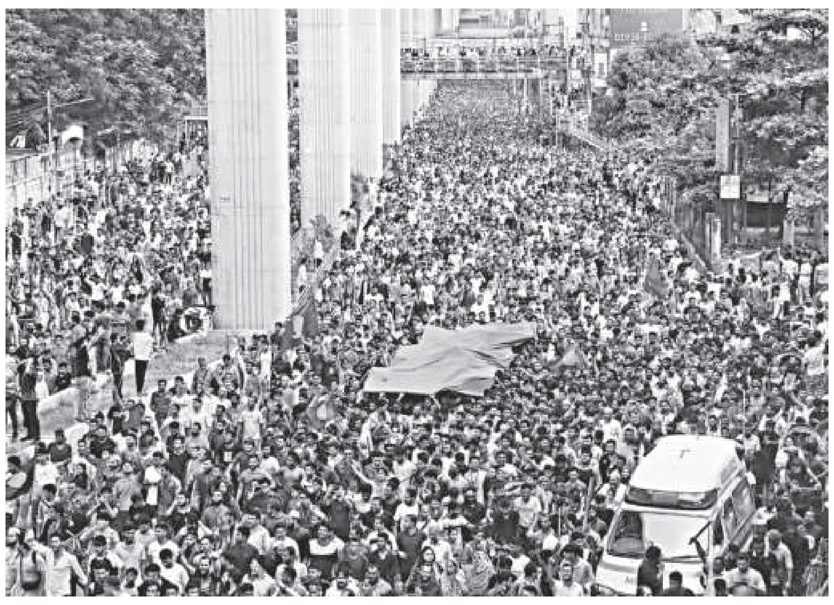


PHOTO: **AMRAN HOSSAIN**

This is our last chance to usher democracy into Bangladesh.

What is the interim government to do? It must be pragmatic and realistic. It must carefully assess what reforms it can deliver and what must await a democratically elected government. It should, however, lay out a concrete plan of action indicating its priority areas. We have discussed reforms for many years, even decades so an action plan ought not to pose any serious challenges.

At the very outset, the new government should send out strong powerful signals that indicate its broad commitment to democratic practice, judicial reforms, rule of law, and intolerance to corruption. Perhaps the most important signal it should send out is our belief in an inclusive and just socio-economic system under an overall liberal democratic-secular framework. These signals remain weak.

Priorities

The first question is how do we prioritise our interim goals? Should we establish a maximal set of goals or a minimal set of critical goals? Or perhaps strike a note somewhere between the two?

The second, and far more important question is, how do we implement reforms, especially institutional ones? We have almost zero experience here, and so must rediscover the wheel. We could learn from the experience of other countries, such as Singapore, that made the transition. Their experience is more recent. They too were a British colony like us and have inherited similar systems of governance, and more importantly, they have been able to modify and build upon those systems to create superb outcomes. However, following another South Asian country in this regard is not advisable.

We should simply use our common sense and be ready to make mistakes, learn from mistakes, and then move forward. This will require setting up a task force for each department or institution to draw up plans after careful study and discussion. Consultants from, say the Singapore government and international agencies, can aid the task forces, which will operate within a specific time frame. We need to restructure, get rid of obsolete positions, put in place new positions, clearly identify qualifications and experience for recruitment and promotion, have a proper system for staff evaluation, re-examine the system of salaries and incentives, and place special emphasis on building a strong HR department, a strong and reliable system of financial accounts, and a dependable audit mechanism. Third-party monitoring of HR and finance would be crucial. While some of these mechanisms exist, they should be reformatted and revamped. Anyone who has worked in government will know how intractable these quite basic governance prerequisites are likely to be.

We need to start the reform journey by initially picking one sector to pilot out ideas and approaches and throw sufficient resources at the project to prevent failures. If we can fix one institution, we can scale up quickly. The most difficult sector nor the least difficult one should be chosen. An "average" sort of sector will do fine. The set of priority reforms must reflect and inform our overarching goal: to bring in a vibrant democracy with all the necessary components required for its success.

For instance, a free, credible, and independent media is crucial to fight the war against unscrupulous social media, fake news, and false narratives while a powerful and independent election commission is needed for credible elections. The key question is whether some form of interim arrangement will need to continue. If so, how will such an arrangement be constituted?

We all understand that fundamental reforms must be carried out in public administration, the judiciary, the police, NBR, state-owned banks and industries, and within political parties. The interim government may not have sufficient time to see all these through. They may want to set out a road map, begin the process earnestly, and ensure that all political parties commit themselves to the reforms publicly and through their manifestoes. They can start by implementing the appropriate legal frameworks after due changes, modifications, and refinements.

For democracy to work, a sector that should be addressed head-on is the reform of political parties and the need to abide by a code of conduct. All of us have ideas about what such a code might involve, and the current government should be well-positioned to come up with one, obviously after discussion with stakeholders.

Some policy reforms as opposed to institutional reforms are significant low-hanging fruits, which only require a few signatures to change. The separation of the executive from the judiciary should be top on the list. Reforms to the Bangladesh Bank charter to ensure its autonomy should also be relatively easy. Various crony-friendly rules in the banking and financial sectors could be changed. In addition, the autonomy of various institutions in the public sector including the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies could be re-established and returned to its status quo ante. Subtle benefits given to crony capitalists in the guise of tax forgiveness, subsidies, and duty waivers should be weeded out too. Our duties and taxes must be realigned to promote diversified exports and employment.

> **We do not want to witness another mass upheaval, another bout of violence to settle scores or another political crisis—all because of the greed and arrogance of our rulers and their cronies, and their desire to rule forever. Nor do we want to witness the beginning of another set of authoritarian rulers and despots.**

Conspiracy

The student-led uprising was undoubtedly native. However, various analysts including Jeffrey D Sachs have spoken of possible US involvement and infiltration of the movement. Such a serious allegation will require a thorough investigation.

We should not have any qualms about forging a better relationship with the West. This relationship, however, would only be meaningful if it goes well beyond the usual Western rhetoric urging democracy, good governance, labour rights, and so on designed to expand its own empire. We have had enough of that sort of advice. We have strong developmental aspirations to follow in the footsteps of the Asian Tigers. We need access to Western markets, transfer of technology, and assistance in capacity building in science, engineering, technology, and AI. We should have at least one world-class institute of technology within the next five years as well as massive investments in infrastructure. Help us with these and you will have our friendship and access to a potentially huge market of 170 million people.

End note

This is our last chance to usher democracy into Bangladesh. Too many lives have been lost in its pursuit since 1947 when we became free from colonial rule. It was thwarted time and again by hostile forces within and without. We cannot afford to waste this chance again. We do not want to witness another mass upheaval, another bout of violence to settle scores or another political crisis—all because of the greed and arrogance of our rulers and their cronies, and their desire to rule forever. Nor do we want to witness the beginning of another set of authoritarian rulers and despots.

We are lucky to have Professor Yunus to lead the charge. I think he is the only person in the country who can unite us and find a way for us to resolve our differences so that we can emerge as a strong democratic country with a vibrant economy. Let us show the world that we can be a Muslim-majority state with a strong democracy, continue our great economic journey inclusively and develop our own model of a just society. Professor Yunus enjoys tremendous international goodwill, which Bangladesh needs at this critical juncture.

Our enemies are waiting for us to fail. We cannot afford to oblige them. My sombre warning to all is: failure now would leave the door open to foreign intervention and subsequent loss of sovereignty and independence.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE VICTIMS OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

How could we have descended to such depravity?

Extrajudicial killings and disappearances should never reappear

THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam
is the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

MAHFUZ ANAM

We congratulate Prof Yunus's government for joining the UN treaty on enforced disappearances. We also welcome the formation, last Tuesday, of an inquiry commission to investigate extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances and to report within 45 days. Headed by a retired high court judge, the commission will investigate the activities of the police, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Special Branch (SB), National Security Intelligence (NSI) and the military's Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI). Instead of working for the protection of the state, government, or society, these intelligence agencies became extensions of the government's policy of quelling dissent, obliterating the opposition and controlling the independent media.

This is one of the most urgent, important and pro-people initiative that the interim government could have taken, and we congratulate the relevant adviser or advisors for this initiative. We, from the media and this particular newspaper, wish the commission resounding success. We need not only to do justice to the victims but also ensure that it does not reoccur.

It is the latter task that engages us more. The practice of using security agencies to extend ruling party domination and especially to destroy the opposition is, sadly, not something that was started by Awami League. Although it can be said to have reached its zenith with the widespread practice of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killing under Sheikh Hasina's rule, it began with the entry of the armed forces into direct politics when Bangabandhu was assassinated. We know for a fact that when BNP was being organised in the late seventies, several security agencies were used to cajole, convince and compel politicians and civil society members to join it. This was followed by Gen Ershad's nearly decade-long rule, during which he also used them to form his party and control the opposition. We all expected that this notorious practice would cease with the restoration of democracy and representative government in 1991.

Regrettably, this practice continued under the elected governments of both BNP and AL, reaching its most ignominious apex in the attempted assassination of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 21, 2004, in which security agencies were clearly and elaborately involved. A total of 23 people, including the head of AL's women wing, were killed.

Thus, over the last three decades—since 1991, when we expected transparent, people-centred politics to replace behind-the-scenes manipulation—the involvement of security agencies increased in proportion to the political leadership of the day losing public trust. Sheikh Hasina's 15-year rule stands as a lesson in how a political party of AL's legacy, reach and organisation became increasingly dependent on security agencies. This dependency included allowing them into the inner workings of party operations, such as vetting candidates for nearly all tiers of the party, to the extent that aspiring leaders at the union and district levels sought the blessings of security agencies to achieve their ambitions.

ILLUSTRATION: **BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY**

Many factors contributed to Sheikh Hasina's downfall, but perhaps the most heart-wrenching was, especially after 2010, the practice of picking people up from their homes and streets and then making them disappear for months or years without the slightest need to inform anyone—including their families—about their fate. Sometimes, their dead bodies would appear in the most unlikely places. Sometimes, they would return home but remain silent for fear of further repercussions. But most often, they would just disappear for weeks, months, or years, never to return.

Just imagine the agony of their loved ones. Death, however cruel, draws the curtain on a tragedy. But disappearances represent a continuous suffering mixed with hope that one day the family will open the door and find their loved one—father, husband, son, friend—miraculously returned. Each knock on the door became both a flicker of hope and a sense of deep disappointment. Imagine this going on for years.

One of the fundamental responsibilities of a modern state is to ensure the safety of life and property—we are leaving aside the question of liberty for the moment. This assurance was not provided in Bangladesh under Sheikh Hasina's regime, especially since 2010. According to Odhikar, a human rights organisation that maintained a well verified record of disappearances—despite facing significant challenges, including jailing of its chief, who is now an adviser in Prof Yunus's cabinet—there were a total of 708 victims of enforced disappearances between 2009 and June 2024. Of these 708 victims, 57 percent returned alive, 13 percent were found dead and nothing has been known about the remaining 30 percent. The practice of "picking up" victims from homes or streets was carried as follows: 31 percent by Rab, 30 percent by the Detective Branch (DB), 22 percent by DGFI (mostly accompanied by Rab) and 14 percent by the police.

According to a report by Zyma Islam, published on August 30, 2022, at least 522 individuals became victims of enforced disappearances between 2009 and 2018. Most survivors who returned home never spoke about their experiences for fear of reliving their hellish ordeals. However, a few who did speak confirmed our worst fears. One said, "They attached two crocodile clips to my two ear lobes and when switched on, sent electric shock damaging my eardrums during interrogation." Another said his hands were cuffed behind his back throughout his detention, which varied from two months to two and a half years. According to the detainees, the cells were 2.5 feet wide, 4 feet long and 5 feet high—too small to lie down or stand up. It was always half-sitting or half-lying. Such cruelty resembles medieval torture. Despite being underground, dark and without windows, the detainees were blindfolded throughout their captivity, even for basic needs and showers.

The stories of "Aynaghar" (House of Mirrors) represent another level of torture and cruelty that we have recently been exposed to. These constitute gross violations of human rights and reveal the existence of secret prisons that are completely unmonitored and devoid of legal oversight. They were run totally arbitrarily and at the whims of their officers. A retired army officer and a Supreme Court lawyer were kept in such secret prisons for eight years and would likely have remained there if not for the fall of the regime. Mikel Changma, a leader from the Chattogram Hill Tracts area, did not see sunlight for five years (2019-2024) of his confinement.

While the inquiry commission on disappearances is expected to reveal its report within 45 days, immediate steps should be taken to allow families and rights activists to visit all 23 prisons that the DGFI has committed to opening to the public. All those who have been cruelly and illegally detained must be returned to their families immediately.

We must never fall into such depths of cruelty and inhumanity again. Enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings are a shame on our dreams from the Liberations War and must be eradicated forever. Too much power and arbitrariness have been allowed to security agencies in the name of fighting extremism. We hope the commission will lay down a clear legal framework so that nobody is made to suffer as we saw in the last 15 years.

Many factors contributed to Sheikh Hasina's downfall, but perhaps the most heart-wrenching was, especially after 2010, the practice of picking people up from their homes and streets and then making them disappear for months or years without the slightest need to inform anyone—including their families—about their fate. Sometimes, their dead bodies would appear in the most unlikely places. Sometimes, they would return home but remain silent for fear of further repercussions. But most often, they would just disappear for weeks, months, or years, never to return.

'We want you to die. We won't have to kill you then.'

M Maroof Zaman
is a former Bangladesh ambassador to Vietnam.

M MAROOF ZAMAN

On December 4, 2017, around 6:45pm, I left my home and took my car to go to the airport to receive my younger daughter. As I started driving, I saw two motorcycles following me. I was aware that I was being monitored for the past year. I used to write a lot in the international media about the unequal agreements signed between India and Bangladesh, about the failures of the government and the injustices done by them.

I also wrote against enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings but never did I imagine that I would be a victim one day.

From the time and turns the microbus took to reach my place of confinement, I could guess that I was taken to some place in the cantonment. First, they took me to a torture cell, beat me up severely, and hurled abuses at me. I told them to stop but they didn't. Then someone asked me, "Are you Maroof Zaman?" I replied, "Yes." He then asked, "Are you 'Banglar Bir'?" I said, "Yes, that's the name I use in the websites." They then beat me up again and took me to another small room.

I was kept there for four and a half months. Every three to four days, they used to come and torture me. They used to bring printouts of my writings and abuse me for what I wrote. They even called me a traitor. I protested by saying, "No, I am not a traitor. I wrote nothing against the state, I wrote to protect the interests of the country, I wrote against the injustices done by the government."

There were different levels of torture, namely grade one, grade two, and grade three. I was subjected to grade two level torture. Grade three torture means severe physical torture. While some young people may survive it, it is difficult for someone my age to survive such tortures. They told me that since I would not survive third-degree torture, they would instead give me injections, which would have severe impacts. They also used a high-powered light bulb and harsh noises to prevent me from sleeping.

On January 29, 2018, I heard a bullet shot and then someone was brought to my next room. Later, I heard someone saying: "He is no more." Another person was tortured through waterboarding. I didn't know what happened to him later.

Sometimes, I heard people saying, "*Guard Shabdhan*." This is a phrase used in the army by the guards to salute an officer. One day, I asked them to change my water bottles, as they were extremely dirty. A young man came with two water bottles, with the word "Shena" written on them. Also, on the first day of my abduction, when they handcuffed me, I could see that it was made of stainless steel, which is used by the security forces. I became certain that I was confined within the cantonment.

They hit me so much on my face that my teeth were broken. There was puss and blood coming out from my swollen gums. I asked them to take me to a doctor and get an X-ray done, but they rejected my appeal. I still have no sense in my gums and the nerves in one of my arms are severely damaged from the excessive beatings. I told them, "I will die if you don't give me treatment." They replied, "Die, we want you to die. We won't have to kill you then. You will die from your illness."

'Let my blood bring peace to the sacred soil of Bengal.'

Mikel Changma is leader,
CHT-based United People's Democratic Front (UPDF).

MIKEL CHANGMA

I knew I was abducted on the basis of a politically motivated case. Those who abducted me knew my name and were in plainclothes. I was told that I was against the treaty (Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, 1997). They claimed it was a crime to oppose it. They said, "It means you are against the state. The government runs the state, and the government is the state."

I said they could kill me if they considered asking for workers' rights and the rights of my people a crime. I said, "*Amar rokte Banglar pobitro mati snigdho hok*" (Let my blood bring peace to the sacred soil of Bengal). I even said if they killed me, my ideals would live on. When I said these, they hit me in the stomach with an object, and eventually took me to a facility.

The facilities are constructed so that a sliver of light enters through an angle only in a few rooms so you can see nothing. No sound from outside can be heard. Towards the end, I fell very ill. In the beginning, I lost a significant amount of weight as I was unable to eat. I was handcuffed, blindfolded tightly, and not allowed to sleep during my time there. I suffered in this manner for a year. Medical examinations had to be conducted on me because I had fallen severely ill. My sodium level and blood pressure had dropped drastically.

One day, I was fastened onto a chair that was capable of rotating at a high speed. I was asked, "Where are your weapons?"

In this way, five years passed there. No information reached me during that time, and speaking to others was not allowed. I did hear the sound of other people talking and felt the presence of other inmates, but I never got to know what happened to them.

On the day of my release, I was asked if I had any personal belongings. At that point, I did not know I was going to be freed. I thought I was going to be killed. I was being taken somewhere in a car while another car was following us and I saw weapons.

I was in the car for several hours, when suddenly a left turn was taken. The man to my right told me not to scream or make a fuss. He asked if I knew my family's number. Then he said, "We're going to release you. Wherever we drop you, you will stay there, for 30 minutes. If you get up before that time, we'll shoot you. Once 30 minutes pass, you will untie yourself, and you will run."

I said nothing. When I opened my blindfold, I saw the light of the world for the first time in years. I saw in a newspaper that the nation was awaiting a new government; I learnt that Sheikh Hasina's government had fallen.

My family was in immense pain. They believed I had passed away, and my funeral was held. I learnt my father who was alive at the time of my capture, was no more.

If it had not been for the student's uprising, the heaviness of the pain for many in a similar situation would not have been relieved. Sheikh Hasina and her accomplices committed heinous acts to create an atmosphere of immense fear. She along with every person who assisted her should be tried. I want them to be punished lawfully so that such heinous acts and such horrifying breaches of human rights, never occur.

I was handcuffed, blindfolded tightly, and not allowed to sleep during my time there. I suffered in this manner for a year. Medical examinations had to be conducted on me because I had fallen severely ill. My sodium level and blood pressure had dropped drastically.

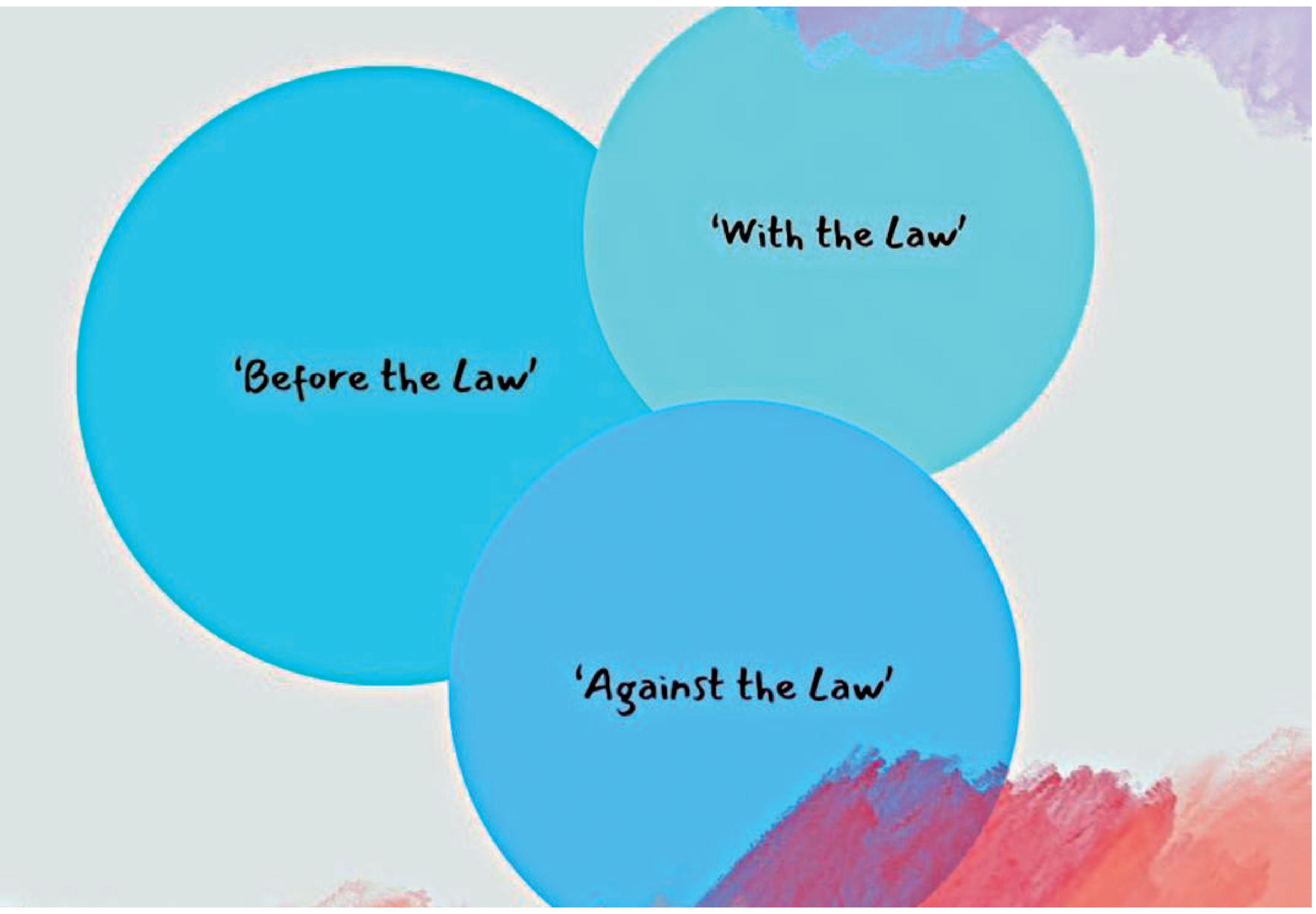
These are abridged excerpts from interviews taken for The Daily Star.

LAW AND SOCIETY

People's understanding of 'Law' during the uprise: A sociolegal analysis

This much is clear - law has very much become part of the everyday conversations. This surge in people's interest in law makes it an apt time for dismantling the colonial legal structures. We need to decolonise our laws to repair the damages done by the previous regime and decolonise our minds to become a truly non-discriminatory, inclusive society. This is something I hope the interim government would consider.

ARPEETA SHAMS MIZAN



The July uprising marks a significant event for our national history not only as a moment of political introspection, but also in terms of appreciating people's perception and understanding of law as a lived experience. The events offer a rich case study of observing people's perception and understanding of law – popularly termed as legal consciousness in sociolegal studies. Observing the popular use of law during the protests can help us understand how law in books differs from law in context, law in society, law in everyday reality (Chua and Engel, 2019).

In this piece, I will discuss three aspects of legal consciousness manifested in the uprising: 1. That the chaos of revolution exposed law as both an anti-people force and a useful instrument for demanding justice, 2. That use of legal language in popular discourse made people agents of producing alternative legalities to counter state-sponsored narratives of law, and 3. That people's attitude throughout the process reflects the colonial violence heavily embedded in people's psyche.

Ewick and Silbey's groundbreaking research (1998) presented three types of legal consciousness: 'before the law'; 'with the law' and 'against the law'. All the three manifest in this movement. 'Before the law' consciousness characterises law's objective to attain justice. The student protest initially started on grounds of equality and fairness in public service opportunities. As the government remained dismissive of students' demands, the movement presented itself as a fight for anti-discrimination, referring to constitutional promises. As the government remained dismissive of students' concerns and became tone-deaf to the gross human rights violations by law enforcement agencies, law appeared as a brute power, exercised unpredictably and resisted by citizens. The cracks appearing in state power put people in 'against the law' legal consciousness.

As the state crackdown caused an overwhelming public outcry, social media flooded with posts condemning the all-out state violence using a sharp legal tone. Until the July uprising, law and legal terminologies did not broadly feature in the daily language people use. Understandably, most of the protesters and netizens were not legal professionals, therefore their use of legal terms is not always theoretically sound, but once you move beyond a doctrinal lens, it provides you with a rich example of legal consciousness. Words like discrimination, citizens, legitimacy, human rights, war crimes, genocide, justice dominated digital discourse. Not just the educated urban bourgeoise, but also the mass people (including those who live hand to mouth) were coopting the legal terms to use Facebook updates, posts, tweets, photo captions into legal strategies. This is a ripe example of 'with the law' legal consciousness, where individuals use law as a tool to their advantage.

People can and do rely on legal authority even when they know little or nothing about formal law (Sarat and Kearns, Law in the Domains of Culture: 1995). Many people while demanding an immediate government step down were not sure what would happen next. Nonetheless, in demanding so, people became agents of alternative legalities and actively created rules that confronted state law. These legalities manifested through disobeying state order of curfew, violating the 2012 Anti-Graffiti Act by claiming back freedom of expression. Once the interim government was formed, academics have examined the validity through doctrinal analysis. However, the legitimacy of the interim government can also be explained using a sociolegal approach which considers law as a subclass of legitimate social order.

The above discussion shows that sociolegal framework of legal consciosuness provides a useful analytical framework to understand what factors influenced people's behaviour and demand for an alternative order during the uprising. Throughout various phases of the movement, divergent ideas of law appeared for people to make sense of their reality. Everyone appreciated law from their subjective lived experience. For the state law enforcement agency, law meant their right to self-defence even if that took excessive use of force. For the protesters law was reclaiming the power of the republic that belonged to the people. For those shot down, perhaps law meant a misplaced trust in the state that the police and fellow citizens would not harm them. For the family members of the killed, law is most likely a false promise made by the state. How these conflicting perceptions reconcile in the coming days is much dependent on the ensuing chaos that is continuing.

I want to wrap up the discussion by touching upon the colonial influences on people's mindset. Given the state's repressive use of law, a wide public mistrust existed against domestic legal mechanisms. In attempting to remedy that mistrust, pockets of individuals appealed to international media and influencers, and some groups of diasporas made petitions to their local counsellors, MPs, senators, and preparing to bring charges against Sheikh Hasina before international judicial bodies like the ICC. While lack of trust in domestic legal mechanism is understandable, these groups' preference for Western/Global North intervention exposes the latent colonial mindset that continues to treat the West as 'saviours' (Mutua 2001). Understanding this mindset is crucial for meaningful change. Cosmetic changes in police uniforms and logos are being considered as a change towards a clean slate. But such superficial reform cannot rectify Bangladesh's suppressive legal culture which is now continuing in the guise of vengeance, mob justice, moral policing of dissenters (e.g. trifling the attacks on minorities while focusing more on Indian media's overexaggerations/suppressing indigenous people's rallies in the CHTs). These actions are 'othering' citizens and continuing the colonial violence.

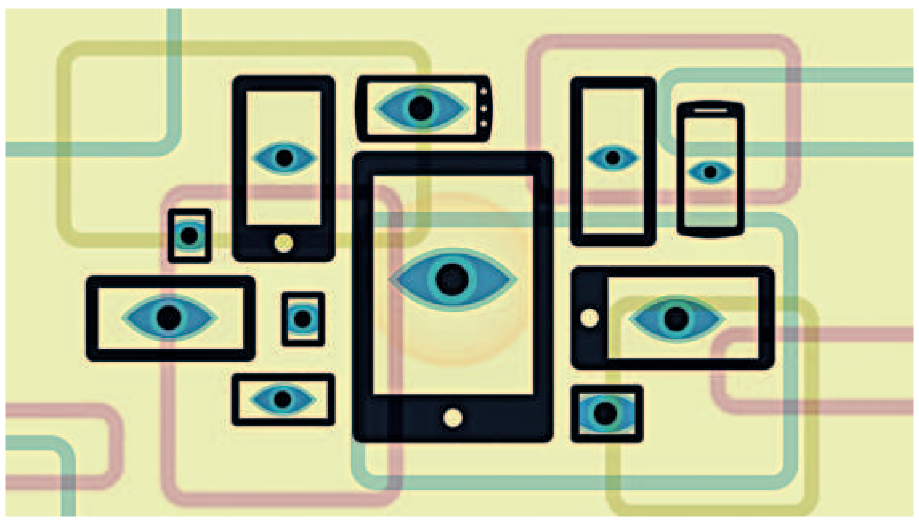
This much is clear - law has very much become part of the everyday conversations. This surge in people's interest in law makes it an apt time for dismantling the colonial legal structures. We need to decolonise our laws to repair the damages done by the previous regime and decolonise our minds to become a truly non-discriminatory, inclusive society. This is something I hope the interim government would consider.

The writer is Assistant Professor of Law, University of Dhaka and PhD candidate at the University of Bristol Law School.

RIGHTS WATCH

Privacy concerns over phone searches

FARHAT LAMIA MOURI



During the quota reform movement in July and early August, reports emerged of police conducting unjustified phone searches and making arrests. In addition to targeting protesters, students and pedestrians were also subjected to such searches and interrogations at numerous checkpoints. Authorities invariably defended these actions as necessary for maintaining national security and public order. However, such measures, lacking appropriate legal justification, raise serious concerns about invasions of right to privacy and potential abuses of power. Indeed, when the law enforcers resort to such searches, it trickles down to the private actors (e.g., various political activists) as well, creating a false sense of authority and justification in doing what is prohibited to quell the opposition.

Despite the need of upholding public order, fundamental human rights cannot be encroached upon. It is crucial to respect the right to privacy as guaranteed by national as well as national laws in order to shield people from capricious and invasive acts of the state.

The right to privacy is a universally recognised fundamental human right. Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) asserts, "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks." Similarly, Article 17(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) states, "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honor or reputation."

In Bangladesh, the right to privacy is constitutionally protected under Article 43 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, which guarantees that every citizen has the right to the privacy of their correspondence and other means of communication. Furthermore, the otherwise infamous Cyber Security Act (CSA) 2023 allows a police officer of at least the rank of inspector to seize computers, networks, and data if there is suspicion of a crime under the CSA. The Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006 (ICTA), and the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Act, 2001 (BTRA), provide additional legal frameworks for data and communication inspections. The Bangladesh Police Act of 1861 and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) provide law enforcement with certain powers to maintain public order and investigate crimes. However, these laws require that searches and seizures be conducted based on reasonable suspicion and often necessitate a warrant issued by a competent authority.

In the case of *Mrs. Nilufar Hossain* v Bangladesh *(2024)* it was opined that, "... to have fundamental right to privacy, for example, is not just to have a claim against the State that it refrains from interfering with one's privacy interest, say through searches and seizures, but also an entitlement to positive state action directed towards the protection of one's privacy interests against the interference of third parties, namely through the law of defamation, data security legislation and so forth."

The Supreme Court of Bangladesh has also affirmed the right to privacy in various rulings. For instance, in *State and Others* v *Oli and Others (2019),* the Court held that the right to privacy extends to private communications over the phone, and phone companies must ensure the security and confidentiality of citizens' communications. In *Aynunnahar Siddiqua and Others* v *Government of Bangladesh and others (2016),* the Court further noted that the right to privacy is fundamental to the freedom of dissent and cautioned against unjust interference under the guise of surveillance.

Despite the need of upholding public order, fundamental human rights cannot be encroached upon. It is crucial to respect the right to privacy as guaranteed by national as well as national laws in order to shield people from capricious and invasive acts of the state.

The writer is LLM candidate, University of Dhaka.

Star
DHAKA FRIDAY AUGUST 30, 2024, BHADRA 15, 1431 BS
SPORT

What to WATCH
T SPORTS
Pakistan vs Bangladesh
Second Test, Day 1
Live from 11:00 am
SONY SPORTS 5
England vs Sri Lanka
Second Test, Day 2
Live from 4:00 pm
SONY SPORTS 2
US Open
Live from 9:00 pm

Pakistan target ‘ruthless’ bowling

AGENCIES

Head coach Jason Gillespie has emphasised the need for Pakistan to “play positive” and be “ruthless” in their bowling against Bangladesh as they aim to win the second and final Test in Rawalpindi, starting today, and square the series.

“We want to go out there and play positive cricket... and with our bowling, we want to be ruthless... ,” said Gillespie, the former Australia pacer, acknowledging the challenge ahead after the hosts conceded a stunning 10-wicket defeat in the series opener at the same venue.

Bangladesh spinners Mehedi Hasan Miraz (4-21) and Shakib Al Hasan (3-44) wreaked havoc in the second innings, leaving Pakistan to regret their decision of not including a frontline spinner in the first Test.

Pakistan have thus recalled leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed, who has 38 wickets in six Tests to his credit, coming in for star pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi -- rested to spend time with his newborn son and family.

“We’re just looking at what our best combination is for this game,” said Gillespie, who is overseeing his first series with Pakistan.

All-rounder Shakib Al Hasan leads the charge as Bangladesh players had an upbeat training session on Wednesday at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium where they will face hosts Pakistan in the second of the two-Test series, starting today, hoping to seal a first-ever series victory over Pakistan. [Bottom] The hosts, meanwhile, will be eager to carry their determination from the practice session into the game and bounce back following a 10-wicket thrashing in the first game. PHOTO: **AFP**

Keeping complacency at bay biggest challenge for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh seemingly caught Pakistan off guard last week in the first Test with their brilliant all-round showing to register their maiden Test win over the Asian giants and now stand with a chance to clinch their first-ever Test series win against the hosts.

When the Tigers step into the field today in Rawalpindi for the series-deciding second Test, they will undoubtedly come across a wounded Pakistan team which will be out to prove a point.

But before worrying about the opposition, the team will have to fight the feeling of complacency that could creep into their psyche after the history-making win in the opening Test and rob them off the chance to make further history, something that has happened in Test series against Australia and New Zealand.

Bangladesh don’t possess a healthy record in the longest-format despite being in the scene since 2000. They have won only eight Test series and drawn 10 out of the 73 they have competed in before the ongoing series against Pakistan.

Bangladesh have won the first match of a series involving two or more Tests only seven times and although they managed to win four of those, two each against Zimbabwe and the West Indies, they have finish at the losing end in the other three occasions, once against Australia and twice against New Zealand.

In 2017, Bangladesh created history when they beat Australia for the first time in a Test by 20 runs in a thrilling contest in a tailor-made wicket at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur but they ended the series on a losing note in Chattogram, conceding a seven-wicket defeat.

Against New Zealand, Bangladesh went 1-0 up in Mount Maunganui in 2022 and in Sylhet in 2023, but lost the following Tests in Christchurch and Mirpur respectively.

After squandering three golden opportunities to seal a Test series win against a top side, Bangladesh once against find themselves in a position of strength heading into the final Test, with a chance to make history.

To do so, the Tigers have to guard themselves from complacency, handle the pressure of expectations while remaining on the offense.

“We always go with an offensive strategy, of course,” Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha told reporters during a press conference yesterday.

“We focus on our strengths and limitations. Then on top of that, you look at the pitch and the overcast condition as well. So, we take all these into account when we think about strategy,” he added.

In the opening Test, Bangladesh posted 565 in the first innings after the hosts declared on 448-6. Openers Shadman Islam and Zakir Hassan showed the way with a cautious but effective partnership that allowed the tourists to go into the third day with all 10 wickets intact.

Similarly, when the team needed the bowlers to raise their hands, they did it quite brilliantly, more so during the final day of the game when they bowled out Pakistan inside 56 overs in the second innings to set up a 30-run target, which the openers chased down without a hitch, securing the team’s biggest ever win in Tests in terms of wickets in hand.

Since gaining Test status in 2000, Bangladesh have only won two of their 32 overseas series with wins in the West Indies (2009) and Zimbabwe (2021), drawing three and losing 27.

“I think the important thing is you have a partnership early on like the 12 overs our openers batted [on Day 2]. It gave us a lot of confidence and control of the game on the third day morning. Then Mominul [Haque] and Shadman [Islam] put up 90 odd and then Mushfiqur [Rahim], Liton [Das] and [Mehedi Hasan] Miraz capitalised on that platform,” Hathurusingha recounted the first Test win.

“We talked about spending time in the middle and getting their fast bowlers to come and bowl in the second, third spells. So, I think that mindset changed and the approach was different, our game plan was slightly different because of the condition. I think that helped a lot to put up a good show with the bat,” Hathurusingha concluded.

Two U-20 players get first national team call-ups

SPORTS REPORTER

Two players from the SAFF U-20 Championship winning team -- defender Shakil Ahad Topu and forward Mirajul Islam -- got maiden call-ups to the national team for the upcoming two FIFA friendlies against Bhutan next month.

A total of four players from the SAFF U-20 team were included in the 23-member squad announced by head coach Javier Cabrera yesterday. SAFF U-20 midfielder Chandon Roy and forward Rabbi Hossain Rahul, who had previously earned national team call-ups, also made the squad this time.

Six players -- Tariq Kazi, Rimon Hossain, Rafiq Islam, Syed Kirmani, Sushanto Tripura, and Mehedi Hasan Srabon -- from the squad that faced Australia in the World Cup Qualifiers in June were left out.

Bangladesh will leave for Bhutan today with the matches scheduled for September 5 and 8, respectively.

Bangladesh squad: Mitul Marma, Sujon Hossain, Pappu Hossain, Topu Barman, Bishwanath Ghosh, Saad Uddin, Mehdi Hasan, Rahmat Mia, Isa Faisal, Shakil Hossain, Shakil Ahad Topu, Sohel Rana, Md Ridoy, Jamal Bhuiyan, Md Sohel Rana, Mirajul, Chandon, Mojibur Rahman Jony, Rakib Hossain, Shiekh Morsalin, Faisal Ahmed Fahim, Shahriar Emon and Rahul.

BCB to appoint new audit firm

SPORTS REPORTER

An independent audit firm will be appointed from amongst top four audit firms to look into Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)’s finances, board president Faruque Ahmed informed following yesterday’s board meeting.

Moreover, the tender process for the Sheikh Hasina International Stadium, which was to be built in Purbachal, has been cancelled.

“The stadium’s tender process’s last date was yesterday [Wednesday] and we have cancelled it following everyone’s approval,” Faruque told reporters.

The board meeting was supposed to shed light on the new standing committees under Faruque, but the standing committees have not yet been decided. Faruque revealed that chairman of women’s wing Shafiul Islam Nadel has tendered his resignation.

The newly appointed BCB president said that he was hopeful of holding the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) at the right time. However, he will first be focusing on organising the teams that will participate.

Faruque further informed that he will be looking at the 2023 World Cup investigation report, which had not been made public under previous BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon.

Meanwhile, ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan and head coach Chandika Hathurusingha have been in the spotlight for separate reasons. Faruque said that a decision on Hathurusingha will have to wait until the Pakistan series ends.

Questions had been raised over whether Shakib will be allowed to travel and stay outside the country and yet continue to play. Faruque confirmed that Shakib will continue staying outside since he has been handed NOC to play in county cricket, but a decision on the matter will be made after the India series.

‘The players have incredible love for the country’

Maruful Haque is undoubtedly one of the country’s top coaches, with his domestic achievements underscoring his credentials. The 54-year-old added another accolade by guiding Bangladesh’s youth football team to their maiden SAFF U-20 Championship title. Upon returning to Dhaka from Nepal, Maruful spoke to **The Daily Star’s Anisur Rahman** about his journey to winning the championship. The excerpts of the interview are as follows:

The Daily Star (DS): How challenging was it to prepare for the tournament in just 15 days, also considering the players were out of action for two months?

Maruful Haque (MH): This was one of the toughest challenges of my career. I had to conduct two training cycles while also ensuring the players got enough rest. In 12 to 13 sessions, moderate fitness was prioritised alongside the application of emergency fitness components, mainly aerobic training. Tactically, I didn’t focus on all aspects -- knowing the individual quality of the players, strength and playing style of other teams in the SAFF region -- but chose five effective tactics and applied them across the four matches. However, the players had maintained a level of basic fitness, which helped prepare them.

DS: How did you motivate them for the final against hosts and two-time champions Nepal, who had never lost to Bangladesh in previous four encounters?

MH: From the second day of training, I injected self-belief in the players that they could become champions. When a coach understands the pattern of the players’ mentality, then he can easily guide the whole squad. I noticed an incredible love for the country, which I hadn’t seen in other teams before. I tapped into this by showing them motivational images, relating to the [July-August’s historic] student movement and the trophy unveiling.

DS: How do you see this squad, including forwards Mirajul Islam and Rabby Hossain Rahul, progressing to the senior team?

MH: It’s too early to predict, but I believe most of this group have the potential to make it to the senior team. Ultimately, it depends on how each player develops, as 80 percent of players in our country fail due to their own actions, and the rest due to external factors like injuries, family issues, or clubs.

DS: You previously guided the senior national team through a month-long of training, and worked with U-23 team likewise, but didn’t succeed. From your end, what made things click this time?

MH: The senior level was highly competitive, with the country’s top players. Back then, we were behind teams like India, Afghanistan, and Maldives -- who had players like Ali Ashfaq. In South Asia’s age-group tournaments, all teams are fairly equal, though India are slightly ahead. However, I’ve also developed myself, gained more experience, and updated my approach to fit the situation.

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

Bangladesh players celebrate with the SAFF U-20 Championship trophy upon arriving at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka yesterday, returning home to a heroes’ welcome following their maiden triumph in the regional youth competition by beating hosts Nepal 4-1 in the final in Lalitpur on Wednesday.

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Over 1,000 killed during mass uprising, 400 blinded

Says health adviser

STAR REPORT

Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum yesterday said more than 1,000 people were killed and over 400 blinded during the student-led mass uprising.

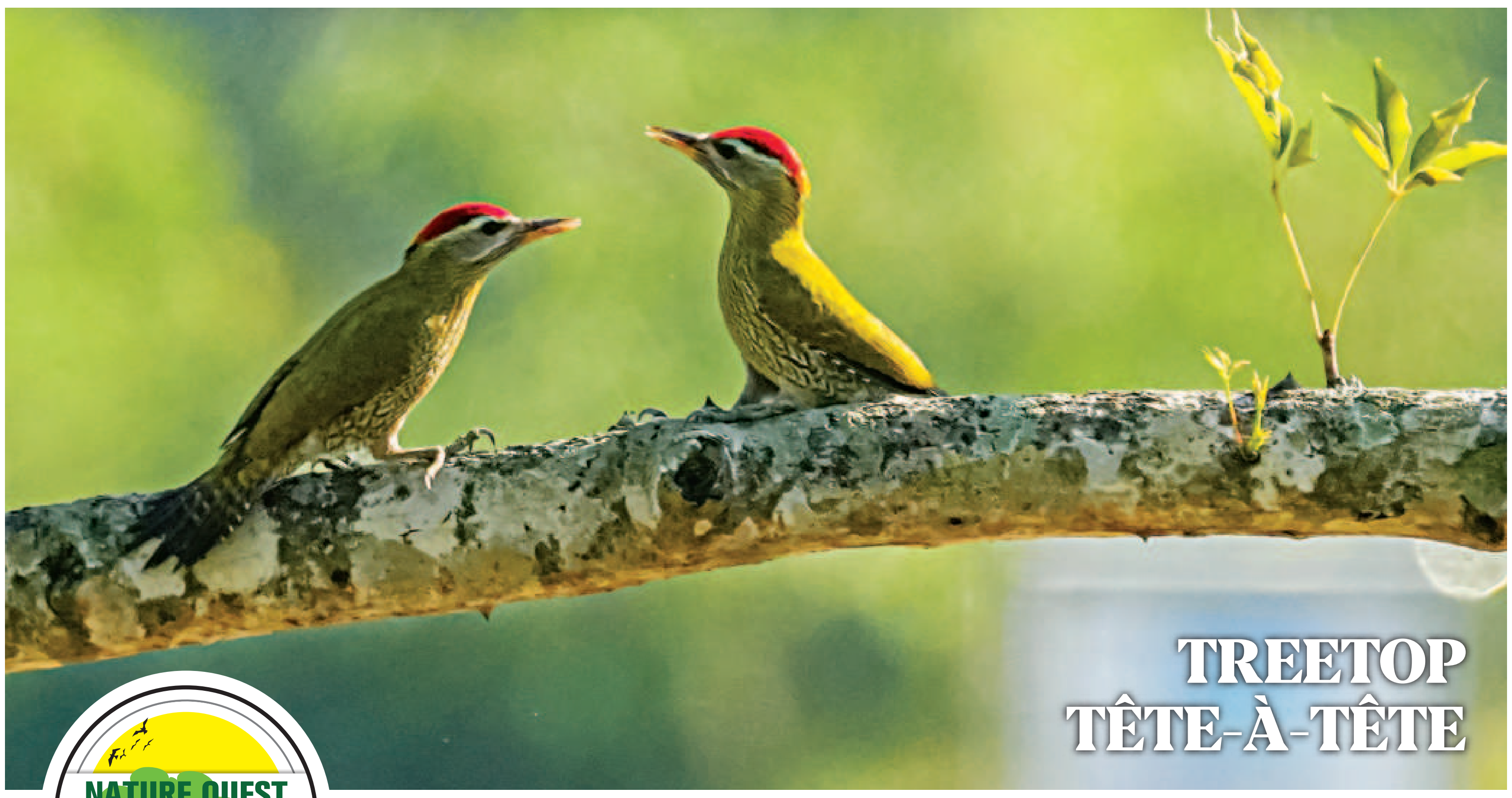
The adviser spoke about protest casualties while briefing reporters after visiting the Central Police Hospital in Rajarbagh.

The Human Rights Support Society on August 21 said it had received information on the deaths of 819 people during the protests from the victims' families, hospitals, witnesses, and national dailies.

According to a primary report of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights published on August 16, as many as 650 people were killed in Bangladesh during the student-led protests between July 16 and August 11.

Adviser Nurjahan said numerous injured policemen were undergoing

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



NATURE QUEST

Two streak-throated woodpeckers perched on a tree in Chattogram's Karnaphuli, having a little chat. These birds occur mainly in the drier woodlands, from lowlands to mountain foothills, across the Indian subcontinent. The males, like those in the photograph, have red crowns on their heads while the females have black ones. They eat mostly insects, particularly ants and termites. Sometimes, however, they opt for nectar and seeds from flowers. Due to their vast range, they are in the "Least Concern" category of the IUCN Red List. PHOTO: NOBLE CHAKMA

History beckons Tigers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will be looking to seal their first-ever Test series victory over Pakistan when they take on the hosts in the series-deciding second match at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium today.

The Tigers find themselves in a favourable position in the two-match series after they clinched a comprehensive 10-wicket win over the hosts -- their maiden Test win against Pakistan in 14 attempts -- in the opening Test at the same venue last week.

As it stands, Bangladesh can't lose the series -- a situation not so unfamiliar to the Tigers. However, in the previous instances when they had the chance of sealing a series, the Tigers went on to lose the decider and ended up sharing the spoils with their opponents.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Two AL men shot dead in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Two men were shot dead by unknown gunmen in the Kuyaish area under Hathazari upazila of Chattogram last night. The armed assailants, riding a motorcycle, fled the scene quickly after the incident, said sources.

The deceased were identified as Awami League activists Masud Kaisar, 32, and Md Anis, 38, said Chattogram's acting Superintendent of Police (SP) Wasim Firoj.

Wasim said the duo was heading to Hathazari from Baizid Bostami's Nur Mosque around 9:25pm.

At one point, the two on the bike fired at them near Ever Care Hospital in Kuyaish area, leaving Anis dead on the spot, he said.

"Injured Masud died in Mojuripara area of Hathazari while he was trying to flee from the spot after the attack," the SP added.

However, the reason behind the incident could not be known immediately.

Police sources said the two were supporters of former Hathazari upazila chairman Yunus Goni Chowdhury.

UNPAID DUTIES

Ctg Customs demands Tk 246cr from S Alam

Asks S Alam Refined Sugar Industry to explain bond misuse

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

The Chattogram Customs Bond Commissionerate has sought Tk 246.26 crore in unpaid duties from the S Alam Refined Sugar Industry against the import of 60,500 tonnes of sugar.

The S Alam Group concern had released the raw sugar under bond (home consumption) facility without paying any customs duty on the condition that the customs duty will be paid when the goods are shifted from the company's bonded warehouse, The Daily Star has learnt from customs bond officials.

According to the law, oil and sugar refining companies have been permitted to release their imported raw materials without incurring import duty under the bond facility since January 2019.

However, in February, S Alam Refined Sugar Industry began selling the commodity in the local market without paying the duty.

"As per the law, no good can be marketed without paying customs duty -- the company sold 60,500 tonnes of sugar but did not pay any duty," Md Mizanur Rahman, joint commissioner of Customs Bond Commissionerate, Chattogram told The Daily Star.

Subsequently, on August 22, Bond Commissioner Mohammad Lutfor Rahman issued a show-cause letter demanding Tk 246.26 crore in revenue.

The Bond Commissionerate will initiate legal proceedings to recover the dodged revenue if the company fails to provide a satisfactory response or pays the duty within 15 days.

Meanwhile, the revenue authority is planning to review all import and sales data from 2019 to determine if the company has engaged in any additional irregularities related to the import of products utilising the bond facility, said a top official of the National Board of Revenue.

On August 20, the Chattogram Customs, Excise and VAT Commissionerate, another wing of the NBR, formed four audit teams to investigate the business operations and transactions of 18 companies within the S Alam Group.

The teams have been directed to review all types of financial transactions and purchase-sale records of the last five years starting from 2019.

A detailed report will be prepared and submitted by the teams within the next 30 days, with the assistance of 20 customs officials.

Subrata Kumar Bhowmick, executive director of S Alam Group, and Mohammad Akhter Hossain, general manager (corporate), could not be reached for comment.

Salman, Anisul put on remand for third time

Court places them on fresh 5-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed former law minister Anisul Huq and Sheikh Hasina's private industry affairs adviser Salman F Rahman on a fresh five-day remand in a murder case.

With this, Anisul and Salman have been placed on 25 days of remand in three phases.

At the hearing around 7:00am, the magistrate asked Anisul and Salman if they had anything to say.

"We were in favour of the quota reform protests. I don't know anything about the incident [the case is about]. I want justice," Anisul was quoted as saying by a police officer present at the court.

He also told the court that he was innocent.

The hearing was on the case filed over the murder of Suman Sikdar, 31, at the capital's Badda during a demonstration on July 19.

Hasina is also among the 182 people accused in the case filed by Suman's

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Israeli West Bank raids enter second day

Death toll rises to at least 14; Islamic Jihad commander killed; UN demands immediate halt to violence

AGENCIES

The death toll climbed yesterday as Israel pressed a large-scale military operation in the occupied West Bank for a second day, despite UN concerns it is "fuelling an already explosive situation".

The operation was launched as violence raged on in the other main Palestinian territory, the Gaza Strip, which has been devastated by Israeli offensive on the territory.

Israel began coordinated raids in the northern West Bank cities of Jenin, Tubas and Tulkarem early on Wednesday, in what the military called a "counter-terrorism" operation.

Columns of Israeli armoured vehicles backed by troops and warplanes were sent in before soldiers encircled refugee camps in Tubas and Tulkarem, as well as Jenin, and exchanged fire with Palestinian militants.

The army said it killed five militants in Tulkarem yesterday, bringing to 14 the overall death toll since the launch of the West Bank operation.

"Following exchanges of fire, the forces eliminated five terrorists who had hidden inside a mosque" in Tulkarem, the military said.

Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad confirmed the death of Muhammad Jabber, also known as Abu Shujaa, its commander in the Nur Shams refugee camp in Tulkarem.

The violence has caused significant destruction, especially in Tulkarem, whose governor described the raids as "unprecedented" and a "dangerous signal".

AFPTV footage showed bulldozers ripping up the asphalt from streets in the city. Widespread damage was reported to infrastructure, including to water and sewage networks.

The Palestinian health ministry said 12 Palestinians were killed on the first day of the operation.

- » Immediate Gaza truce demanded for polio vaccination
- » EU top diplomat seeks sanctions on Israeli ministers
- » Gaza death toll rises to 40,602

Hasina faces 6 more cases

Several ex-ministers, top cops also sued

STAR REPORT

Six more cases have been filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her several cabinet members.

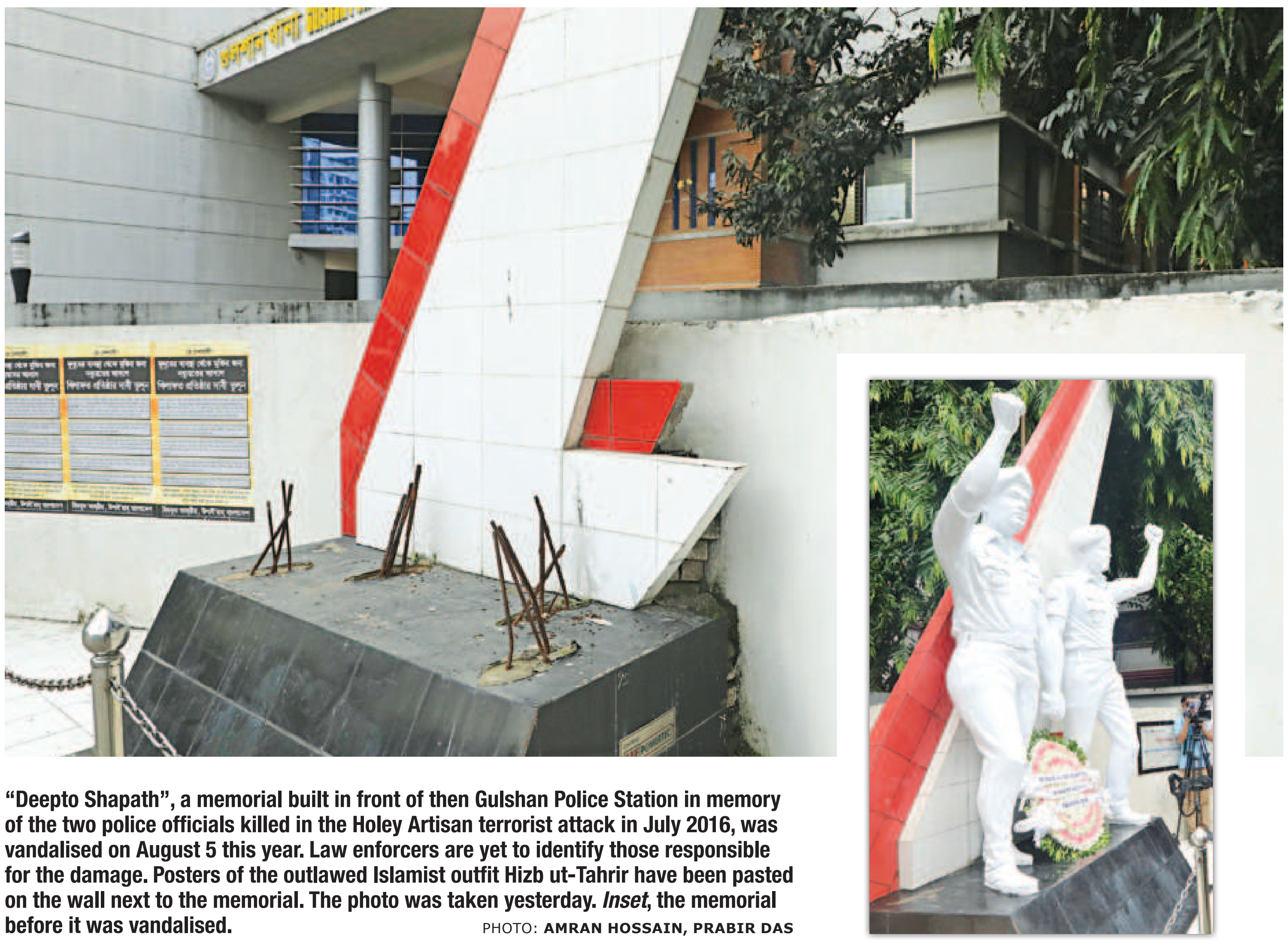
Three of them were lodged in Gazipur while one each was filed in Dhaka and Brahmanbaria. Besides, another complaint was filed yesterday with the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal against Hasina and 51 others.

Several former ministers, including Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and Asaduzzaman Khan, top police officers and two dozen senior journalists were among the accused.

Hasina is now facing at least 81 cases -- 68 on murder charges, eight over allegations of crimes against humanity and genocide, three on charges of abduction, and two on other charges.

In Gazipur's Sreepur,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



"Deepto Shapath", a memorial built in front of then Gulshan Police Station in memory of the two police officials killed in the Holey Artisan terrorist attack in July 2016, was vandalised on August 5 this year. Law enforcers are yet to identify those responsible for the damage. Posters of the outlawed Islamist outfit Hizb ut-Tahrir have been pasted on the wall next to the memorial. The photo was taken yesterday. *Inset*, the memorial before it was vandalised. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, PRABIR DAS

1,369 pro-AL bots commenting on Facebook

Dismislab finds they're talking about polls months after its conclusion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a recent investigation, dismislab uncovered a coordinated bot network on Facebook that used fake accounts to sway public opinion in Awami League's favour and to discredit the opposition, particularly the BNP.

The investigation began with a seemingly unrelated article on bdnews24.com, where a political comment under the post sparked curiosity.

On June 21 this year, an article titled "Is There an Invisible Code on Every Page Printed by a Color Printer?" appeared on the website and Facebook page of bdnews24.com.

The technical nature of the story might have eluded the interest of political enthusiasts, but it caught the eye of a researcher from dismislab -- not for the article itself, but for a comment under the Facebook post.

"This election will be transparent. People will be able to vote freely in the upcoming election. The BNP is scared to participate because they can't rig the vote this time."

The dismislab report said, "The researcher was taken aback by the subsequent comments. Even months after the election, users were still making remarks critical of the opposition party and its leaders, expressing hopes for a successful and fair election, and insisting that the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

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Where are our loved ones?

Families of the victims of enforced disappearances speak freely for first time, demand probe and justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ayesha Ali has been praying every day for over 10 years to see her son.

As several people emerged from secret detention centres known as Aynaghar after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government early this month, Ayesha started hoping that her son Abdul Quader, who was 23 when he disappeared in December 2013, would knock on the door any moment.

"I touch his clothes everyday and I tell myself that he will come back. I keep looking out of the window, expecting to see him on the street," she said, breaking down in tears at a human chain at Central Shaheed Minar.

"Everyone says the country is now independent. Is the country not independent for my son?"

Other participants at the event then embraced Ayesha and tried to soothe her.

Quader, a student of finance at Jagannath University, was picked up by men claiming to be Rab members from the capital's Bashundhara area, family members said. He was a supporter of the BNP.

Many other family members of the victims of enforced disappearance were at the event, marking the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances.

Mayer Daak, a platform for the families, has been commemorating this day since 2013.

Speaking about her brother Mazharul Russel who has been missing since 2013, another participant named Nusrat Jahan also broke down.

"I want to touch my brother's hands. He used to take me to the school on his bicycle. I have nightmares of him being locked in a dark room alone. 'Find me,' he says to me," Nusrat said.

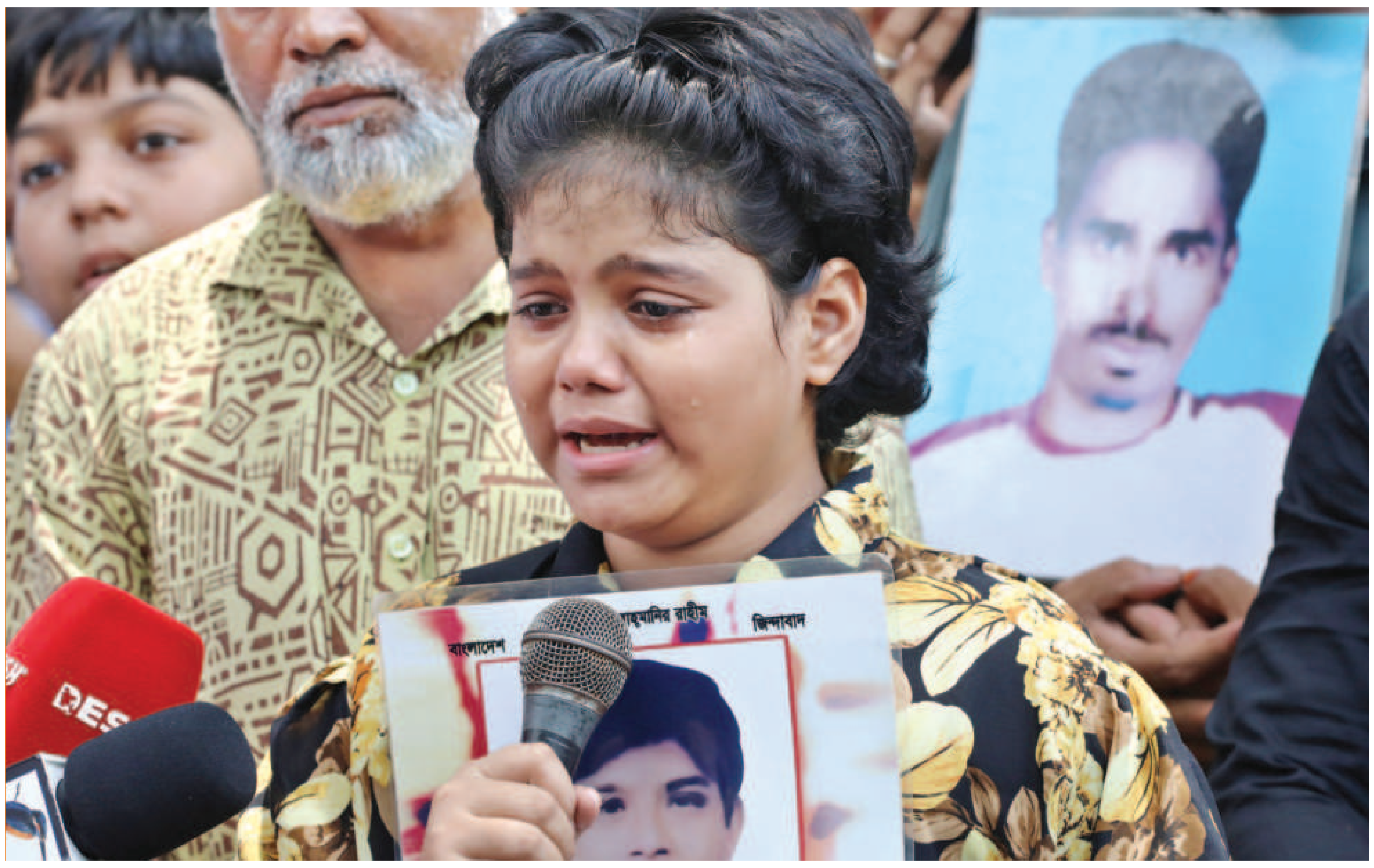
She then urged Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus to take steps to investigate the secret prisons.

She said there must be Aynaghar at the facilities of law enforcers where "my brother and others are probably detained".

"We want to know whether our loved ones are alive or dead," she added.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

FAKHRUL CALLS FOR UN-LED INVESTIGATION -- PAGE 12



Overcome with emotion, a distraught Sadika Sarkar Safa, 10, speaks about her missing father Mahfuzur Rahman Sohel at a human chain in the Central Shaheed Minar area yesterday. Mahfuzur, a Chhatra Dal leader, has been missing since December 2013 when he was picked up by some plainclothes men in Dhaka. Mayer Daak, a platform of the families of the victims of enforced disappearances, organised the human chain marking the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

'I was forced to step down'

Ex-Islami Bank MD says he had to put signature on pad never used by the bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Mannan

Islami Bank's former managing director Abdul Mannan had not appeared or spoken publicly since S Alam Group took control of the bank in March 2017.

Breaking more than seven years of silence yesterday, he said the infamous conglomerate forced Mannan at gunpoint to resign from his post at the Shariah-based bank after he was taken hostage by members of a security agency.

"I was forced to resign on a pad that the Islami Bank has never used since its inception in 1983 till date," Mannan said at a discussion yesterday where he recalled a few memories of his forced removal at that time.

The Forum for Bangladesh Studies organised the virtual event on "Elimination of Occupancy in the Banking Sector: Will the Plight End?".

Commemorating the deaths in the recent student-led movement that ousted the Awami League regime on August 5, he said: "Now I think I have freedom of expression. Earlier, I did not have the courage to speak even while staying abroad."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

How UCB's Ronny acquired so much offshore assets

Ex-minister Javed, wife's bank accounts frozen, but his brother Anisuzzaman Ronny, wife Imrana remain unmarked

ZYMA ISLAM *and*
PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

As Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed's grip over United Commercial Bank (UCB) created a trail of disguised loans with abuse of political influence after he became a minister in 2019 back home, his brother Anisuzzaman Chowdhury Ronny's assets saw a meteoric rise in the UK.

Last year, The Daily Star reported that Javed, the former land minister, and his wife Rukhmila Zaman co-own over 260 properties in the UK while Bloomberg News had put the figures at over 350 properties worth about £200 million, or over Tk 3,143 crore.

This newspaper has now tracked five UK companies owned by Ronny and his wife Imrana Zaman Chowdhury together or individually with their business partners. The firms hold properties worth £22.31 million, or over Tk 350 crore, acquired after Javed's entry to now-deposed Hasina's cabinet.

The firms are Bitcom Real Estate Ltd, Ronny 42 Ltd, AA Mandarin Ltd, Gilbert Street Estates Ltd and Sovereign Financing Ltd.

These companies all have a common trajectory – starting with pennies and no real income before suddenly acquiring high-end properties in London. These are seemingly holding companies for stashing wealth from unknown sources in the British real estate market.

For example, Ronny and Imrana incorporated Bitcom Real Estate Ltd in May 2020 with just a £100 issued capital. A little over a year later on July 15, 2021, the company purchased a £1.6 million apartment in a skyscraper called

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Ronny, wife opened five UK firms since 2019

The firms acquired Tk 350cr London properties

They had no viable source of income

This happened after Javed became minister

Disguised loans from UCB increased in this period

RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

UN to dispatch fact-finding team to Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN Human Rights Office will dispatch a fact-finding team to Bangladesh in the coming weeks to conduct an impartial and independent investigation into the human rights violations committed between July 1 and August 15.

The decision came after Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus requested the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk for such a mission, said Spokesperson for the UN rights office Ravina Shamdasani at a press briefing in Geneva yesterday.

The fact-finding mission will investigate violations and abuses perpetrated during the mass protest, analyse root causes, and make recommendations to advance justice, accountability and way out for long-term reforms.

An advance team visited the country from August 22 to 29, meeting people including student leaders of the recent protests.

The team also met many advisers to the interim government, the chief justice, senior officers of the police and armed forces, lawyers, journalists and

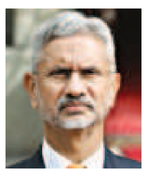
SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

The parents of a child diarrhoea patient walk on the Feni Sadar Hospital premises with their daughter, who is on a drip. As many as 199 diarrhoea patients were admitted to the hospital as of 10:00am yesterday. Since the facility was at capacity, many patients could not be provided with a bed. Diarrhoea cases are on the rise in Feni as floodwaters are receding. PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

India will deal with govt of the day

S Jaishankar says about Bangladesh

UNB, *Dhaka*



Referring to the recent changes in Bangladesh, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar yesterday said they would deal with the government of the day.

"It is natural that we will deal with the government of the day," he said.

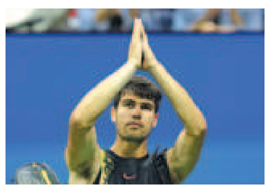
The minister said they have to recognise that there are political changes, and political changes can be disruptive.

"And clearly here, we have to look for mutuality of interest," Jaishankar said at the release of the book titled "Strategic Conundrums: Reshaping India's Foreign Policy", authored by Rajiv Sikri.

The Indian minister said everyone was aware that since Bangladesh's independence, the relationship between the two countries had its ups and downs.

US ready to turn page on Trump: Kamala Harris

P6



Alcaraz makes 'no excuse' after shock defeat

P11

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

14th Death Anniversary

Late Alhaj Giashuddin Ahmed

Today is the 14th death anniversary of Late Alhaj Giashuddin Ahmed. On this day of remembrance, we the family members, directors, officers and employees of Popular Jute Exchange Limited as well as other sister concerns fondly recall the memories of his industrious & benevolent life, and pray for the salvation and eternal peace for his departed soul.

POPULAR JUTE EXCHANGE LIMITED
1, Tolaram Road, Narayangonj, Bangladesh.

MY DHAKA

DHAKA'S OFFICE CANTEENS
where meals and memories are made

RBR

Our Dhanmondi office was a typical posh eighties two-storied house, with a manicured lawn and an annex building for the kitchen and other service quarters. When this beautiful home was rented to our office in the early nineties, our threadbare office canteen was situated at the far corner of the kitchen wing; serving only singaras and tea.

Our athletic teaboy used to carry a tray full of cups with steaming tea and hopped down the stairs as if he were an acrobat in the act. He loved showing off his skills, and we loved appreciating it.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

However scruffy and small office canteens are, they are lifesavers, especially in areas with fewer restaurant options, as opposed to downtown districts, where restaurateurs have set up eating houses that are famous for their specialty all over the town.

The office goers of this busy city chalk out their office lunch plans according to their preferences – options included home-cooked meals, restaurant food, or canteen food – or skipping it altogether. The subsided office canteens, serving anywhere from 100 to 500 people, in big and small offices, come to the rescue for most. Many canteens take a monthly fee for a mid-morning snack, lunch, and seasonal fruit; others have a pay-first option for an array of choices. Offices have canteens under their administration wing to monitor and maintain quality and hygiene while preparing the meals. They hire professional cooks and chefs for their canteens.

The tea room on each floor is fun to watch though, with a motley collection of mugs and cups with funny and interesting quotes on them, and of course, their favourite tea and coffee blends. The smell of brewing coffee or tea is stimulating. Fancy additions are a French press, but the majority go for office coffee machines and stick to their preferred order of double latte or double tea bag milk tea.

While canteens serve lunch and mid-afternoon snacks in most Dhaka offices, it is the newspaper canteens that work till midnight. Thus, their snack menu is as diverse as the front page. Let's begin with the ever so-delicious egg-paratha roll, the potato and vegetable croquette, puffed up aloo puri with tamarind chutney, fried chicken, and the absolute favourite "loodles" (noodles) with slit green chili as a substitute for veggies. Special lunches of ilish polao, beef tehari, steamed bhetki in tomato puree, and the vegetable labra are to die for.

Imagine this scrumptious meal for a subsidised bill.

However, you cannot afford outside food every day, it's detrimental not only to your health, but your wallet as well. But many office goers refuse to carry packed lunches; and having canteen food day in and day out can be taxing on your digestive health, especially when the leafy greens turn into an utter black, tasteless dread or when the fish smells, well fishy! And the beef is swimming in oil and some sort of black masala paste.

Then again, good and bad office canteens are still beloved. The long hours of hot political debates, the rantings about social attitude changes and personal woes over cups and cups of bad tea and fried food; lunches and tea breaks are the most favourite part of our working hours.

Needless to say, the canteens and tea rooms are owned by you. There is always a game on the television, and colleagues gather around it to cheer for their team. During football matches, even the canteen staffers put on their favourite jerseys and lay bets with the office people. There is a beautiful comradery. It is the only place in the office where you get to see people from all departments, hear their stories, share your meals, and sit with friends.

Hasina made accused in 3 more cases
Three ex-ministers also sued

STAR REPORT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has been sued over three deaths and the partial loss of vision of a victim during the student-led mass uprising.

Former road transport and bridges minister and Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader is AL chief Hasina's co-accused in two murder cases filed in Kishoreganj and Munshiganj yesterday over the three deaths.

Hasina is now facing at least 84 cases -- 70 on murder charges, eight on allegations of crimes against humanity and genocide, three for alleged abduction, and three on other charges.

In Kishoreganj, BNP activist Matiur Rahman filed the case over the killings of two fellow party workers on August 4, said Sadar Model Police Station OC Md Golam Mostafa.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

'MURDER ATTEMPT'
Bashundhara Group chairman, MD sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A case has been filed against Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan and Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir on charges of attempted murder in Bogura during the student-led mass uprising.

The principal accused of the case is Abdul Kahar Akand, a former additional DIG of police who had investigated several high-profile cases such as the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman murder case and the 2004 grenade attack case.

Akand had received the Awami League's nomination to contest in the last general election from Kishoreganj-2 but lost.

The other accused include the then MP Mohiddin Ahmed, Shibganj Upazila UNO, the local

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

How UCB's Ronny acquired so much offshore assets

FROM PAGE 1

Westmark Tower in Central London, documents show.

Despite being a company specialising in "the buying and selling of real estate," Bitcom never purchased any other property as of 2024, with its tangible assets now valued at £1.8 million, company registration documents show.

The couple incorporated another UK firm, Ronny 42 Ltd, in August 2019. A hundred pounds was all the company was worth until it bought a £9.1 million property in the luxurious 17 Park Crescent in central London on October 1, 2020. Like Bitcom, Ronny 42 Ltd has not purchased any other property.

Similarly, AA Mandarin Ltd was formed with only £100 and had no income, but by July 2023, the company acquired a £2.8 million apartment on the sixth floor of the 5-star London hotel Mandarin Oriental Mayfair, lease documents show.

In addition to a string of homes in the UK, Ronny and Imrana list one property in Dubai's luxurious Palm Jumeirah, the upmarket fan-shaped artificial island off the Persian Gulf. The property address mentioned in lease documents leads straight to a flat in Dubai The Palm, which is described on its website as "one of the most exquisite hotels on The Palm, Dubai".

Neither the Ronny-Imrana couple nor ex-minister Javed appear to have any other viable businesses in the UK that could have been used to generate income. There is also no record that they took permission from Bangladesh Bank to move money abroad, which is mandatory. So, how did they acquire so much wealth in the UK?

British company registration documents state that Ronny and Imrana hold golden passports of Antigua and Barbuda, a Caribbean tax haven for the world's wealthy. It offers the golden passports for a $230,000 donation to the National Development Fund or the purchase of real estate worth at least $300,000.

In a 2020 interview with Edgeprop Singapore, finance broker Masood Rashid described how one of his clients bought a property with a mortgage and used the steep interest earnings of the offshore cash deposit to pay the mortgage, and "still make a profit". He did not give any name.

"It's called arbitrage," Rashid, co-founder of Opes Financial Partners, explained and added that his specialisation is in "politically exposed person". The broker had arranged a £12 million property in London for Javed, The Daily Star was able to track via property documents and an announcement on LinkedIn by the broker.

Asked how he got the financing for his properties in the UK and how he was paying the multiple mortgages, Ronny said he obtained the mortgages as a UK citizen through "proper due diligence" in line with the country's law.

"I have been doing various business in the UK since 2001. I am able to service mortgages from these businesses," he said in a written response.

He also said his father, late Awami League leader Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu who once took over the UCB bank at gunpoint, had businesses in the UK since 1965. "As one of his successors, I have inherited some of them. From where I was able to put down the down payment," Ronny said.

MILKING UCB

Javed entered the British real estate sector a year after the Awami League returned to power in 2009, and his wealth accumulation there shot up after he became a member of Sheikh Hasina's 2019-2024 cabinet, company documents show.

He raised the number of his companies fourfold to eight in just three years. Ronny followed in his brother's footsteps, opening his first company in the UK in 2019 and expanding his and his wife's business to five firms.

This meteoric rise in offshore wealth came at a time when the political clout of Javed, and by association Ronny's, consolidated back home. It was apparent on the board of UCB, where the family and their representatives had 10 out of 14 director's posts until mid-2024 and eight until the restructuring of the board by the central bank last Tuesday.

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) had earlier frozen the accounts of Javed and his wife Rukhmila after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, but Ronny and Imrana have remained untouched.

Rukhmila was the chairperson of UCB's board of directors. After the BFIU had frozen both her assets and accounts, Javed's sister Roxana Zaman Chaudhury was made the chairperson. Their siblings Ronny, Asifuzzaman Chowdhury, and Afroza Zaman were directors. Four other directors were their employees, either from Javed and Ronny's main family business, Aramit Group, or Ronny's business, Navana Pharmaceuticals, or companies opened by their children and business partners.

Highly placed sources inside UCB said that Javed used to sit in on the bank's board meetings although he was not a part of the bank in any way since he became a minister. With a board more like a family get-together, disguised and related party loans got easy approval.

After the BFIU's measure, 36 employees of UCB in a letter to the central bank accused Javed and Ronny of benefiting from disguised loans.

For example, Aramit's Protocol Officer Mohammed Forman Ullah Chowdhury, whose starting salary in 2017 was Tk 20,000, received a Tk 25 crore loan as the proprietor of Chattogram-based M/S Vision Trading in March 2020.

Mohammed Adnan Imam, a UK real estate businessman and director of NRBC Bank, secured UCB capital facilities worth at least Tk 1,516 crore for six companies owned by or directly connected to him, one nested in another, paper trail shows.

Of these companies, Adnan's AWR Developments (BD) Ltd and AWR Real Estate Ltd were given Tk 617 crore by the bank, Genex Infosys Tk 426 crore, Bangla-UK Agro Products Ltd Tk 302 crore, Fulpur Agro City Tk 51 crore, and TSN Trade & Infrastructure Development Ltd Tk 120 crore, bank documents show.

Asked whether these were related party loans, Ronny said these were not related as they were public limited companies.

Sovereign Financing Ltd, one of the five companies owned by Ronny or his wife in the UK, was co-founded by Adnan in 2022. The company is completely dormant now.

Contacted, Adnan denied having any active business relationship with Ronny and receiving the related party loans.

However, Gilbert Street Estates Ltd, one of Ronny's five firms in the UK, is co-owned by Adnan's wives. The real estate company worth £10.52 million, or over Tk 165 crore, has a property on Gilbert Street in Mayfair, London, according to lease documents. One of Adnan's real estate companies and all of Ronny's UK companies are housed in that property, the documents show.

Sharif Abdullah, a former UCB vice-president who left the bank in October 2023, described how he was made to disburse large loans to companies not worth their salt, and how the funds were likely siphoned off.

"As a banker, we have to find out the actual beneficial owner of the account. For example, if a police officer's homemaker mother-in-law opens an account with Tk 10 crore with no supporting documents, it is pretty certain that the beneficial owner of the account is the police officer. It is as simple as that," said Sharif. "The siphoning of funds from loans was primarily executed through working capital facilities, such as time loans and overdrafts, rather than term loans."

Sharif said he was compelled to approve Tk 450 crore "unethical loans" benefiting Javed and Ronny for an agro farm which had a total valuation of Tk 7 crore at best. He also admitted to disbursing Tk 100 crore loans to a construction firm with fake work orders.

He said he had visited a steel company with the capital machinery so worn out that they could be sold only as scrap. "Yet the capital machinery was valued at Tk 400 crore. Another company was seeking to acquire that firm, and we asked for Tk 300 crore on their behalf – we got Tk 250 crore. My refusal to approve this loan led to severe threats and intimidation," alleged Sharif, who now lives in Australia. "I faced unbelievably high pressure from the management to provide these clients with loans they are not fit for."

POLITICAL INFLUENCE

The sheer abuse of political privilege to bend the rules was clear as the day to regular employees of UCB. At least two sets of photos posted by his followers showed Javed holding political meetings inside the bank despite not being a part of it. The latest photos were from July 15, 2024.

Bank insiders identified the conference room where the meeting was held in a room right beside the boardroom at their Gulshan office.

"Normal employees are not allowed inside that space," said an employee of the bank, requesting anonymity.

Ronny used to drive around in a car with a flag stand, according to multiple photos, indicating his willingness to abuse the political privilege afforded to his brother.

The Daily Star confirmed that it was Ronny's car – a Bentley Flying Spur Hybrid.

A flag stand is only allowed for the senior most members of the government and the state, including the president, the prime minister, the Speaker and deputy Speaker, the chief justice, the chief whip, cabinet ministers and the leader of the official opposition. A member of the general public, even if he or she is a business magnate, is not allowed to use a flag stand.

Asked if he used a flag stand in his car, Ronny said: "As my brother was a land minister, once in a while we used to travel together, for which I had to keep the stand."

Where are our loved ones?

FROM PAGE 1

Twenty-two family members spoke at the human chain. Rights activists, politicians and lawyers expressed solidarity and demanded justice. Many held photographs of their missing loved ones.

Rina Alam, whose husband Noor Alam has been missing for more than nine years, said, "I want my husband back. If he is dead, I want to know for sure. I appeal to the chief adviser to do something to bring him back.

"Please tell us something; we can't go on waiting like this. Return my husband so that my children can call him baba."

Mikel Changma, a leader of a regional group based in the hill tracts, who was released this month from detention after over five years, said, "I urge all writers, poets, intellectuals, and students to support our struggle.

"If we cannot ensure the punishment of Hasina and those involved [in running secret prisons] right now, this system will continue to exist," he added.

Supreme Court Lawyer Sara Hossain said, "Our higher courts remained silent on this issue. We have seen no intervention from the courts about this matter."

Sadika Sarkar Safa, aged less than 11, was holding a photo of her father Mahfuzur Rahman Sohel who went missing 10 years ago.

"I want my father back. This is my only request to the new government," she said.

Maruf Zaman, a former diplomat, who was in detention for over a year, described the harrowing details of the conditions at DGFI Joint Interrogation Cell.

"Hundreds of people have used fish bones to cut their hands and write their names and phone numbers with blood inside the rooms. There are hundreds of names inside each cell. Where are they?" he asked.

Mayer Daak coordinator Sanjida Islam Tulee demanded that the detained persons be released and information about them be made public.

Mayer Daak organised a photo exhibition and discussion at the National Museum yesterday evening.

Environment Adviser Rizwana Hasan said the interim government was genuinely willing to find every disappeared individual.

"We are not part of the government responsible for these enforced disappearances. We want to stand beside the families that endured grief and ensure that the perpetrators behind face justice," she said.

Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua said the previous government's actions made it evident that it was behind these disappearances.

The previous administration repeatedly gave the excuse that there was no law to try those involved in enforced disappearance.

"We need a specific law. The president has the authority to pass laws through ordinances, which can later be approved by the elected government.... A special tribunal could define how this law should be formulated. Alternatively, the government could amend sections 363 and 364 of the CrPC to facilitate investigations into these cases," he said.

"Since Bangladesh is now a signatory [to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance], the National Human Rights Commission can now independently investigate these cases. In addition, our commission [on enforced disappearance] can also investigate. Reports from both commissions can be sent to the International Criminal Court, because these are instances of crimes against humanity."

Fisheries ministry Adviser Farida Akhter spoke.

'I was forced to step down'

FROM PAGE 1

In his short speech, he said the day he was taken hostage and forced to resign at gunpoint, many top officials of Bangladesh Bank (BB) had stayed in their offices until late at night to accept his resignation.

After taking control of the board by removal of Mannan and other top executives, the Chattogram-based conglomerate, owned by Mohammad Saiful Alam, and its associated companies took loans of Tk 74,900 crore from the bank, which is 47 percent of Islami Bank's total outstanding loans as of March this year, according to the documents of the bank.

'RETURN OWNERSHIP TO DEPOSITORS'

Addressing the event, economists and experts urged the interim government and the BB to take immediate steps to bring the ownership of the banks back to the depositors to save the financial sector from further deterioration.

Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, professor of development studies at the University of Dhaka, said depositors are the real owners of banks, but sadly the top executives of banks are considered the owners.

"Unfortunately, there are no banking laws in the country that recognise depositors as owners," he said.

Titumir said the interest of depositors and small and medium enterprises, who are the backbone of the economy, must be reflected in the upcoming reforms in the banking sector for sustainable development.

He said there is no actual data on the exact amount of bad loans because no forensic audit was conducted.

Mamun Rashid, chairman of Financial Excellence Ltd, said the BB has calculated the bad loans amounting to Tk 1.82 lakh crore, but it has given an estimate of Tk 3.77 lakh crore as soured loans to the International Monetary Fund.

The amount is about 20 percent of the total disbursed loans of the banks.

The exact amount is likely to be much higher, he added.

About the money laundered out of Bangladesh, Mamun said there was information that "large sums were borrowed from banks in the morning, and the money sent abroad through hundi in the afternoon".

S Alam took over six banks, he said. But the banking rules state that more than 10 percent of a bank's shares cannot be given to any person or entity. It was irresponsible on the part of the central bank.

S Alam's ownership share in Islami Bank is about Tk 1,800 crore. As a single beneficiary, S Alam Group withdrew about Tk 50,000 crore from the bank when the bank had deposits of Tk 160,000 crore.

"Now the question from all quarters is, how did S Alam come into picture? Islami Bank's managing director and board members were taken to a five-star hotel where they were forced to resign and a new managing director was appointed overnight at supersonic speed. This was the S Alam method of becoming the owner of one bank after another."

Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), said corruption in banking and other sectors is rooted in the petty politics of the country.

"To get out of this situation, reforms are needed in the political culture first," he added.

Mizanur Rahman, economist, columnist and an adjunct professor of Manarat International University, also spoke at the event moderated by journalist Monir Haider.

FLOOD AFTERMATH

Relief that has yet to arrive

Without govt assistance, flood victims in remote Laxmipur villages endure days of starvation

SAJJAD HOSSAIN, *back from Laxmipur*

Nearly 5,000 flood-affected residents in Kolakopa village of Laxmipur have been completely cut off by water in the ongoing flood.

Despite this, even as water levels begin to recede, government assistance and relief have yet to reach the village.

Since the fall of the AL regime, the local chairman and members have all gone into hiding.

Lambakhali Government Primary School is the sole government-designated disaster shelter in the area.

Around 200 people have sought refuge there, but not a single government aid package has arrived. Instead, the little food they have received has come from volunteers, mostly student organisations and members of political parties.

Belal Hossain, a farmer from Char Badam village who has taken shelter here, yesterday said he last ate at 8:00pm on Thursday.

He has been without food ever since till we last spoke to him yesterday evening.

This has been the case for him and his family for the past 11 days.

"It's not just me; my wife, my two sons aged 2 and 5, and my 8-year-old daughter are all hungry," he said.

In the last month, Belal and others at the shelter have only received khichuri once. On three occasions, they were given puffed rice and biscuits as relief.

"I have no money. We need food. Who should I tell this to? There's no one to listen to our suffering," Belal said.

All the people in the shelter we talked to share the same hardship, they are waiting for aid that has yet to arrive.

Their desperation is growing with each passing day.

Dilruba Begum, tearfully expressing her frustration, said, "No one has provided us with proper food. No one has even helped us with cash assistance."

She added, "It's been over 12 hours since we haven't eaten anything."

Shefali Akhter, 60, echoed her.

The situation is particularly dire for mothers like Fahima, who broke down in tears, saying, "Even if I go without food, it's not a problem, but my three young children are crying in hunger. How can I comfort them with just words?"

Some, understandably so, reacted angrily when we approached them for comments.

Parvin Akhter said, "Give us food. We don't want blabbering from you."

This dire situation is not limited to Kolakopa alone. Villages like Purba Swarasita, Char Badam, Poragacha,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Displaced, thousands seek rehabilitation in Moulvibazar

MINTU DESHWARA

Whenever a flood takes place, the full extent of its damage cannot be mostly understood until the water recedes.

As such, now that the floodwater has completely receded in Moulvibazar, the aftermath of the flood has started to take shape.

In the Tillagaon union of Kulaura upazila in the district, hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced from their homes and are now enduring severe living conditions.

A visit to the flood-affected Mirerpara and Hajipur villages in the union on Thursday revealed the extent of their distress.

In both villages, flood victims expressed deep concern as paddy and vegetable seedlings have been submerged.

In Mierpara village, 30 houses have been completely destroyed, while 25 have been partially damaged. The residents of those houses were forced to leave and take shelter elsewhere, mostly in neighbouring houses.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Over 2m children at risk

Says Unicef

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over two million children in eastern Bangladesh are at risk as floods sweep through homes, schools and villages, Unicef said yesterday.

These floods, the worst in eastern Bangladesh in 34 years, have affected 5.6 million people, said a press release of the UN agency.

Unicef said millions of children and families are stranded without food and emergency relief supplies. The government personnel and volunteers are conducting rescue operations, although access remains difficult in some areas.

"The devastating floods in the eastern parts of Bangladesh are a tragic reminder of the relentless impact of extreme weather events and the climate crisis on children. Far too many children have lost loved ones, their homes, schools, and now are completely destitute," said Emma Brigham, Deputy Representative of Unicef Bangladesh.

"Unicef is on the frontlines providing water purification tablets, oral rehydration salts and other essential supplies, but more funds are needed to reach these children and prevent an even more devastating impact on their futures."

Mentioning its efforts in the flood since its onset, the UN agency said having joined an initial assessment mission with the local government adviser AF Hassan Ariff, Unicef with its partners has reached over 3,38,000 people, including 1,30,000 children, with life-saving supplies such as 3.6 million water purification tablets, 25,000 jerry-cans to store water and over 2,50,000 oral rehydration salt sachets.

"But much more is needed," the release reads.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

From homes to hopes, everything washed away

Feni flood-hit people stare at a bleak future

SIFAYET ULLAH

His house collapsed in a flash in the floodwater. Mohammed Shahjahan, a 55-year-old, lost everything in his residence and took shelter in a relative's house.

"Everything turned upside down in a few hours. Now, I have no house, no furniture," said Shahjahan while cleaning his damaged house on Thursday from Champaknagar village of Feni.

The teary-eyed man, father of the two children, said he doesn't know how he will reconstruct the house as he spent savings of a lifetime to treat himself in 2022.

"I was an expatriate and forced to return from Saudi Arabia due to spinal disease in 2022. Now I don't know what I will do," he said.

Grocery shop owner Sayedul Hoque was moving account books of his shop that were damaged by floodwater.

Sayedul said he fed his five-member family by running the grocery store. But most of the goods in his shop were destroyed due to the flood.

"I don't understand how to collect the dues," he said from Shuvopur union under Chhagalnaiya upazila.

Like them, thousands of flood victims in the district are staring at an uncertain future as the devastating flood has destroyed their houses, crops, and livelihoods.

According to the Feni district administration, at least 10.5 lakh people have been affected in the district due to recent floods under six upazilas. 1.5 lakh people have been forced to take shelter.

The flood began in the border district on August 20. The situation worsened gradually and affected Parshuram, Fulgazi, and Chhagalnaiya upazilas in the first phase.

Later, floodwater spread to Feni Sadar, Sonagazi, and Dagonbhuiyan, creating a severe crisis across the district.

During a visit to different upazilas of the districts on Wednesday and Thursday, this correspondent found that victims were trying to move things from their submerged residences.

59-year-old farmer Abdul Malek was nurturing his damaged paddy on a road near his residence at Fazilpur union under Sadar upazila on Thursday.

"I stored 800 kg of paddy at home as future food. But everything was destroyed in the flood water," he said.

"With the help of relief, I will be able to pass the time of disaster. But how to gather food for my family in the future? the farmer said.

Hasina Begum, a housewife from Chanua union under Sadar upazila, said she could recover only steel-made furniture from his house.

"Wooden chairs, tables, and carpets were damaged by water. I threw away a lot and have to buy new things to survive," she said.

Next polls most challenging in history: Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman termed the next national election one of the most challenging in the nation's history.

He made the remarks yesterday during a virtual discussion with BNP leaders and activists from the Rajshahi division.

Speaking as chief guest on the second day of a series of meetings with grassroots leaders, Tarique said, "BNP has always relied on public support for election results. The way BNP has maintained the trust of the people for the past 17 years, enduring immense oppression and persecution, must be continued."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Withdraw murder charges against journalists

DUJ urges interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Union of Journalists yesterday raised concerns over the recent implication of journalists in murder cases across various districts, including Dhaka, following recent political shifts.

In a statement, the DUJ called on the interim government, particularly Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and relevant ministry advisers, to exempt journalists from these accusations.

DUJ President Sohel Haider Chowdhury and General Secretary Akhter Hossain voiced their apprehension and formally requested government intervention.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Due to heavy dust, the air in the Gabtoli area of the capital turns into a murky haze. Although pedestrians cover their faces with their hands, it is not of much help to save themselves from the pollution. It can also be risky to cross the road in such a manner, with vehicles rushing towards them. The photo was taken yesterday.

PADMA BRIDGE

Project cost reduced by Tk 1,835cr

Says adviser

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Shariatpur*

Road Transport and Bridges Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan said last night that the construction cost of the Padma Bridge has been reduced "due to the adoption of a contractionary policy."

"We are pleased to announce that the last estimated cost of the Padma Bridge project was Tk 32,605.52 crore. Now, with the adoption of the contractionary policy, the final cost stands at

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Rita Khan
(1943 – 2022)

In loving memory
Sharbi, Nobel, Adeeb, Shirley, Mariha, Tahseen, Sara, Fardeen, Saania and Tahzeeb

Palestinian envoy sends relief aid to flood victims

STAR REPORT

Palestinian Ambassador to Bangladesh, Yousef SY Ramadan, has provided relief aid packages for flood victims in Bangladesh.

The aid, which includes essential supplies, also features Palestinian flags as part of the packages.

The relief goods are being distributed through As Sunnah Foundation.

Around three million people have been affected by the flood in many districts including Feni, Cumilla, Noakhali, Chattogram, Habiganj and Moulvibazar.

In Feni, Parshuram, Fulgazi, and Chhagalnaiya upazilas have been badly affected.

Over 2m

FROM PAGE 3

People and children urgently require cash assistance, safe drinking water, hygiene kits, emergency latrines, sanitary pads, oral rehydration salts and emergency life-saving medicines. Primary healthcare services to treat sick newborns and children and help pregnant women to give birth must be restored immediately, it added.

The recent floods come close on the heels of the floods in north Bangladesh and Cyclone Remal in May. Jointly, the three emergencies have impacted over 13 million people across Bangladesh, including 5 million children, according to the press release.

In response to these three emergencies, Unicef urgently requires up to $35.3 million for critical, life-saving, and multi-sectoral interventions for children, as well as pregnant and lactating women, it said.

Fire completely doused, families

FROM PAGE 5

An expert team from Buet, in collaboration with the Public Works Department, visited the site earlier this week and declared it too dangerous for rescue operations.

Professor Raquib Ahsan, who led the team, noted that the fire had severely damaged the upper floors, which collapsed onto the lower levels, causing visible cracks in the building's columns.

Rashida Begum, the mother of a missing worker, Md Aman, 21, criticised the authorities: "Why are we not even given their remains? Over a hundred people are missing. Is this the first fire in Bangladesh?"

Jakir Hossain, who has been searching for his younger brother Manir Hossain, 28, found a pair of shoes he identified as his brother's but no body. He returned to his family with ashes and the shoes, holding a symbolic funeral for Manir.

The building continues to emit smoke and the smell of burning tyres and chemicals.

Withdraw murder charges

FROM PAGE 3

The statement highlighted that since the political transition on August 5, triggered by the anti-discrimination student movement, a number of journalists have been implicated in murder cases.

Over 50 journalists, including leaders from various journalist unions and press clubs, have faced accusations in different districts, including Dhaka. DUJ criticised the ongoing murder charges as detrimental to the profession and public trust.

While the DUJ acknowledged that legal action could be justified if specific allegations against a journalist are proven, they denounced the practice of implicating journalists based on their support for the previous government.

The leaders also condemned the harassment and mistreatment of journalists during their arrests and court appearances, calling for the immediate identification and prosecution of those responsible for such abuses.

The statement expressed alarm over the widespread filing of murder charges, noting that it has created fear within the journalist community and among the public.

The DUJ warned that such actions could undermine efforts to build a fair and non-discriminatory state and society.

They urged for the prompt withdrawal of these charges against journalists and journalist leaders.

Project cost reduced by Tk 1,835cr

FROM PAGE 3

Tk 30,770.14 crore. This means Tk 1,835 crore has been saved," he said during a press conference at the service area 2 of the Padma Bridge's Jajira end.

He provided a breakdown of the savings, including Tk 530 crore from the main bridge, Tk 80 crore from river training, and Tk 178 crore from access roads and service areas. Additionally, Tk 500 crore was saved due to price contingencies, Tk 103 crore from land acquisition, Tk 200 crore from consultancy, and Tk 244 crore from other expenses, he added.

"After receiving instructions [from the chief adviser], I decided to cut costs across the ministries I oversee. This does not mean we will do less work; we will carry out the same projects at a lower cost so that we can implement more initiatives with the same budget," Fouzul said.

The Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project was completed on June 30 this year, approximately 17 years after its inception in August 2007.

The project underwent several revisions, with the cost rising to Tk 32,605 crore.

At one point, Shafiqul Islam, the then project director, had estimated that around Tk 1,600 crore might not be needed, predicting the final project cost to be around Tk 31,000 crore.

Relief that has yet

FROM PAGE 3

Azadnagar, Harun Bazar, and Hajiganj are also reeling from the flood's devastation, with no relief in sight.

More than three dozen flood-affected people confirmed that they have not received any government relief in the past week.

"We want to eat rice," said Kader Hossain.

"Some students came a few days ago with biscuits and puffed rice. I requested them to arrange for rice, but there's still no news from them."

'JOURNALIST, TAKE MY NAME'

"Journalist, please take my name," said Hafez Ahmed with a trembling voice.

The elderly man mistakenly believed that having his name recorded might somehow place him on a food distribution list.

"I have been starving for the last two days," he added.

Nazir Hossain and Malek Uddin, two other elderly villagers from Kelakopa, stood beside him, their eyes filled with the same forlorn hope.

"Write down my name and details," Malek Uddin said.

"I have no money to buy food. Please leave me some money," he added.

WHEN THE ROAD BECOMES HOME

In Kelakopa, over two hundred desperate people are now living on the road after floodwaters inundated their homes and farmland.

The 10-kilometre road is under threat, with large cracks and cave-ins appearing in several places. All the villages under Ramgoti Upazila have been forced to take refuge on the roads, with no other options left.

ACC to probe loan

FROM PAGE 3

Special Investigation Branch, ACC sources said.

The institutions under investigation include --Limited, West Coast Ship Building Industries Limited, Sahara Import Limited, Arnu Jute Mill Limited, Gazi Auto Bricks, SBI Trading Limited, Kings Trading, Dob Enterprise, SM Auto Bricks, Novo Auto Bricks, Atlas Food and Beverage Limited, Apollo Engineering and Construction Limited, Adib Dyeing, Anan Socks Limited, Weltex Limited, EFS International, Maa Trex, SPN Enterprise, Bangladesh Development Company Limited, Four Steel, Profusion Tex Limited, Brothers Enterprise, Nis Aero Trading Enterprise, Lux Int, Angel Agro, Ocean and Design Limited, Peninsula Shipping Limited, Basgruh Properties, Facers Cameo USA Knitwear Limited, SFG Shipping Line, S Resources Shipping Limited, Shifan Shipping Limited, Unique Protection Limited, Desh Pesticides Limited, S Suhi Shipping Line, Cameo USA Knitwear Limited, Techno Design and Development Limited, and Belayet Navigation.

According to the ACC, more such institutions may be investigated. A case will be filed based on the evidence found during the investigation.

However, the exact amount of money involved in the loan irregularities has not yet been determined.

The investigation team is led by Deputy Director Md Jahangir Alam, with Assistant Directors Minhaj Bin Islam and Md Anwar Hossain, and Assistant Directors Sabrina Jaman and Mahmuda Akter as members.

Displaced

FROM PAGE 3

Tariboon Begum, 45, of Mirerpara village, who has taken shelted at a neighbouring house, shared her plight

"After I lost my husband years ago, I have been working in households to look after my son. Now my 16-year-old son studies in a madrasa. We didn't have anything else apart from our little house, and now it has been destroyed by the flood," she lamented.

Day labourer Shadekul Islam of Hajipur village said, "My mud house was completely destroyed in the flood, and I am now left helpless. I don't need any relief; I need urgent rehabilitation."

He also has been forced to take shelter at a nearby house.

Junab Ali, a member of Ward 7 in Tilagaon union, said over 50 houses in the ward have been completely destroyed, with an additional 60-70 houses suffering significant damage.

Chairman Abdul Malik of Tilagaon Union Parishad urged wealthy individuals and the government to help rehabilitate the affected households.

"The flood has severely impacted hundreds of homes, agricultural lands, and fish farms, leaving many people destitute. The total damage assessment is underway," he said.

Upazila Project Implementation Officer Shimul Ali said, "Based on preliminary reports, 350 houses have been totally destroyed, with 2150 houses damaged partially. A comprehensive survey is being conducted through local representatives."

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mohiuddin said the process of listing the victims is ongoing.

Once completed, the list will be submitted to higher authorities for further assistance, he added.

He also said the government has provided adequate relief and the relief operations are ongoing.

I want

FROM PAGE 5

I posted a photo of my face, which went viral on social media," she said.

"I want protection. I've shared photos of my injuries on Facebook for my safety," she added.

Sub-Inspector Monirul Islam of Uttara West Police Station informed The Daily Star that Roni has not been arrested, as he is currently out on bail granted by the High Court.

Roni denied this allegation on Facebook live.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 31

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

I have nothing left

FROM PAGE 5

Determined to support his family, Zakir began working as a mechanic at the age of fifteen. Over the years, he earned a modest living repairing pipelines in Kanchpur.

On July 21, Zakir was having a meal at a local shop near Kanchpur Bridge on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

Students were protesting in the area, demanding reform in the quota system. Soon, a clash broke out between the protesters and law enforcers.

Suddenly, a bullet struck Zakir in the back. He fell to the ground, and despite his co-workers' efforts to get him to safety, he succumbed to his injuries.

Zakir's body was brought back to their village the same day. He was laid to rest in the family graveyard the following day.

Misili Begum, 65, is now beyond consolation.

"He was my everything... My son was just 22. His daily earnings were crucial for our survival. We did not have much; still, we saved whatever we could to have a place of our own," she said.

Misili remembered Zakir's warnings over the phone, urging her to stay indoors due to the escalating violence.

"Despite his own fears, my son continued to work, only to become a victim of the violence," said the grieving mother.

"All my hope is gone... I have nothing left to live for," she said.

I have lost my son

FROM PAGE 5

critically injured and rushed to Khwaja Eunus Ali Medical College Hospital.

Siam succumbed to his injuries that day. His body was laid to rest in his village graveyard.

Siam's father, Abdul Kuddus, reflected on his son's unfulfilled dreams with a heavy heart.

From a young age, Siam wanted to establish a madrasa in their village, where he could teach others, said Kuddus.

"Siam was a devout and dedicated young man," he shared. "He not only pursued his studies but also worked as a Muazzin, contributing to our community."

His mother, Laki Khatun, said, "My son had promised not to join the protest, but when his friends took part, he couldn't stay away."

In the midst of their grief, the family has chosen to forgo seeking legal action.

"I have lost my son. Nothing can bring him back," Kuddus said.

A pleasant surprise

FROM PAGE 5

executive director of HSIA, told The Daily Star, "We are trying our best to ensure passengers get their luggage smoothly."

He said with the constant coordination of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, which is providing ground handling facilities at the HSIA, the airport staffers are working throughout the day to improve the quality of baggage handling facilities.

"Passengers are getting 80 to 85 percent of their luggage within the stipulated time and for the rest of the luggage we are in a constant process to improve. It's a continuing process."

He said the first piece of luggage is now available at the belt within 18 minutes of the aircraft touching the boarding bridge and shutting down its engines and the last item is available within 60 minutes.

"We are trying our best so that passengers get the luggage and complete immigration formalities in the shortest possible time," he added.

Homecoming

FROM PAGE 5

As the procession marched towards a police station, clashes broke out, and police fired on the crowd.

Saiful was caught in the crossfire. A bullet struck him in the chest. He succumbed to his injuries at a local hospital.

The harrowing sight of her brother falling to the ground, wounded and helpless, left Rimu shattered. "I can't believe he's gone," she said, as she was in tears. "I saw him fall and knew instantly that we had lost him."

The grief was not confined to Rimu alone. Their mother, Khodeja Khatun, had been eagerly anticipating Saiful's return.

"I had hoped to see him come back healthy and happy," Khodeja lamented. "But instead, we had to bury him after two days."

"Saiful was our main source of income," she said. "Now, I don't know how we will manage the educational expenses for my daughters."

Family members and locals have called for a thorough investigation into his killing, demanding justice for the remittance fighter whose life was cut short by violence.

Next polls most

FROM PAGE 3

He further advised the party men to act responsibly, underscoring the importance of maintaining the trust of the people.

"No action should be taken that would undermine the people's trust," Tarique added.

Meanwhile, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday called for state compensation for the families of individuals who were abducted and killed during the previous Awami League government.

Speaking at a rally in front of the BNP's central office in Nayapaltan, Fakhrul highlighted the need for justice and reparation for the victims.

World Health Organization
Bangladesh

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The World Health Organization in Bangladesh invites proposals/bids from the interested Companies in Bangladesh for the following service:

1. **RFP/BAN/2024/030:** Provision of Newspaper Advertising Agent services for WHO Bangladesh under Long Term Agreement.

Deadline for the submission of RFP: **14:00hrs, 09 September 2024 (Dhaka time).**

Interested Companies can view and download the relevant RFP documents from: **https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/procurement-notice.**

Interested bidders are requested to submit their financial and technical proposals in two separate sealed envelopes as per the instructions provided in the RFP documents at the Reception of WHO Bangladesh, House-SW(I)1/A, Road-8, Gulshan-1, Dhaka.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)
Road Division, Bogura
Phone/Fax: 051-66304
✉ eebog@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.1000.405.16.100.24-411 Date: 28.08.2024

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).
e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Executive Engineer (RHD), Road Division, Bogura for the procurement of:

Tender ID & Package No.	Package description	Publishing date, closing date
Tender ID No. 1011237, Tender No. e-GP-01/ EE/BRD/OTM/2 024- 2025.	Construction of RCC U Drain/Cross Drain at Ch. 2+100 to 2+210 Km of Bogura City to Medical College Connecting Road (N-519) under Road Division, Bogura during the year 2024-2025.	27-Aug-2024, 16:45 09-Sep-2024, 14:00
Tender ID No. 1011238, Tender No. e-GP-02/ EE/BRD/OTM/2 024- 2025.	Repair & Seal Coat Works at 4th (P), 5th (P), 6th (P) & 7th (P) Km of Mahastangarh (Bogura-Rangpur National Highway)-Shibgonj-Amtoli Road (Z-5505) under Road Division, Bogura during the year 2024-2025.	27-Aug-2024, 16:50 09-Sep-2024, 14:05

e-Tender details can be downloaded are from as stated above on e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for pursue.
e-Tenders will be accepted only up to as above date and time. Accepted tender will be opened online immediately after as stated above date and time.

28/08/24
Md. Asaduzzaman
Identity No. 602153
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Bogura

GD-296

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Sadar, Noakhali.
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No: **46.02.7587.000.889.12.24.1025** **Dated: 29/08/2024**

Invitation for Tender (Works)
e-Tender Notice No: 02/2024-2025 (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal **(http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)**for the procurement of following works, details are given below.

Sl No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender Last Selling (Date &Time)	Tender Closing & Opening (Date &Time)	Tender ID No
01	e-Tender/NBIDGPS/ NOA/SAD/2023-24/W1-08354	Construction Khademul Islam GPS under NBIDGPS Project-1 at Noakhali Sadar Upazila, Noakhali.	15-Sep-2024 12:00	15-Sep-2024 15:00	1010508

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal **(http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)**is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches up to **12.00PM** on **15-Sep.-2024.** Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd), or egphelpdesk@lged.gov.bd.

27/08/24
(Abul Mansur Ahmed)
Upazila Engineer
Sadar, Noakhali.
Phone No: 02334433734.
ue.noakhali-s@lged.gov.bd

GD-298

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
বসুন্ধরা এফ ব্লক রানিয়া এভিনিউতে ১৮৫০ বর্গফুটের দক্ষিণমুখী নির্মানাধীন ফ্ল্যাট।
ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
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ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৭
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ম্যাজিক ব্রিকস হোল্ডিংস লিঃ।
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৮
০১৭০৪-১৭০০৭৬

GAZI TYRES FACTORY

Fire completely doused, families seek missing loved ones

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* **SOURAV HOSSAIN SIAM**

The massive fire at the Gazi Tyres factory in Rupganj, Narayanganj, was completely extinguished at 6:05pm yesterday, after five days.

Confirming the development, Abdul Mannan, deputy assistant director of the Narayanganj fire service, said all fire service personnel had returned to their stations by 8:00pm.

Army, police and BGB personnel have taken position in front of the facility.

Mannan said they had not yet found any bodies inside the facility.

Due to the building's hazardous condition, an extensive search operation remains risky and has not been conducted, he said.

However, drones were used to spot the possible presence of any bodies inside the six-storied building, he added.

On Monday, law enforcement officials, district administrators, and the factory owners will meet to discuss the next steps for retrieving any potential remains.

"The building needs to be partially dismantled to conduct a thorough search operation. This will take some time," said Mannan.

Around 100 families of the missing persons gathered outside the factory yesterday, protesting and demanding answers about their loved ones.

The families, who believe their relatives were trapped inside when the fire broke out, are calling for information on their status and, if deceased, the recovery of their remains.

Representatives from these families were taken inside the premises by fire service personnel to make them understand the risks involved in searching the severely damaged building.

Mohammad Rana, brother-in-law of Mamun, a worker who was reportedly trapped inside the factory, expressed frustration over the ongoing situation.

"Fire service should not have left without retrieving the bodies of those burnt inside. All bodies from inside the tower should be retrieved immediately," he said.

The factory, owned by former minister and lawmaker Golam Dastagir Gazi, was set ablaze on August 25 by arsonists. The fire destroyed much of the facility.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

PHOTO: TITU DAS

In a bid to help collect relief funds for the flood-affected people in the country, these young artists of Barishal have put their artworks on sale. The photo was taken on the Hospital Road in Barishal city yesterday.

A pleasant surprise at Dhaka airport

Inbound passengers say they are getting luggage quickly

RASHIDUL HASAN

For passengers with past experience of the Dhaka airport, the prospect of flying into Bangladesh's capital has not been a pleasant one, chiefly because of the seemingly interminable delays in getting their checked-in baggage.

But things appear to have changed as passengers are now getting their luggage very soon after landing at the Hazrat Shahalal International Airport.

"It's a dramatic change at the airport. Earlier, we had to wait for a long time to get luggage and also for completion of immigration formalities. But at present the scenario has changed. I have got my luggage immediately after reaching the luggage belt," said Md Kamal Hossain, who came from New York by a Qatar Airlines flight recently.

Different groups in Facebook lauded the recent positive change at the Dhaka airport over the past two weeks or so.

Abul Kasem, who recently came from Singapore, said the behaviour of immigration and other officials had changed. He also said he got his luggage within 20 minutes of landing.

Group Captain Kamrul Islam,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'I want protection'

Says Priya who was severely injured in attack by her husband in Dhaka

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

It was around 1:30pm on April 10 when Tasnim Sarah Priya, 27, a resident of Uttara in the capital, was saying her prayer at their rented house.

Suddenly, she was startled by a loud noise from another room, which quickly escalated into a horrifying attack.

"My husband burst into the room and started slashing my face with a knife. I tried to defend myself, but he kept attacking," Priya told The Daily Star.

Priya was initially treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and was later admitted to Health and Hope Hospital in the capital, where she spent 20 days recovering from her severe injuries.

After receiving treatment, she was living with her mother in Uttara.

On May 22, Priya filed a case against her husband, Mohammad Roni, and three of his associates under the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children Act and the Dowry Prohibition Act.

The brutal attack left Priya's face severely disfigured, and she now avoids mirrors altogether.

"I can't bear to look at my face. Every scar terrifies me. I haven't been able to sleep at night since the attack," she said, breaking down in tears.

Roni, a trader who owns twelve shops across various districts including Dhaka and Chattogram, married Priya in November 2022. They have one child.

However, their marriage quickly turned abusive, with Priya enduring repeated physical and emotional torment.

"In the last few months, my husband forbade me from using Facebook and even restricted me from leaving the house," Priya said.

Defying these restrictions, Priya sought a divorce, which further enraged Roni.

"When I mentioned divorce, he became furious and assaulted me multiple times. One day, he came to my mother's house and attacked my face," Priya said.

After filing the case, Priya revealed that her husband had threatened her, demanding she withdraw the charges.

"On Tuesday night, Roni came to my house, shouting that he would kill me. To save my life,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

More than just NUMBERS

A 32-year-old expatriate fatally shot in Dhaka. A 19-year-old student gunned down by police in Sirajganj. A man, aged 22, shot in Kanchpur. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.

Homecoming ends in heartbreak

Malaysia expatriate Saiful, 32, fatally shot in Uttara

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

The return of 32-year-old Saiful Islam Sekul was eagerly awaited in his village home of Baroikandi in Netrakona's Durgapur.

Saiful had travelled from Malaysia to Dhaka to reunite with his family. But his homecoming on August 3 would turn into a heartbreak for his loved ones, culminating in a tragedy that would forever alter their lives.

Saiful, the second eldest of four siblings, had been working in Malaysia for a year to provide for his family following the death of his father.

His efforts in sending remittances had been a lifeline for his eight-member family, ensuring their sustenance and well-being.

After landing in Dhaka, he stayed at a relative's house in Uttara.

On August 5, Saiful, accompanied by his younger sister Lima Akter Rimu, joined the student protests in the area.

The atmosphere was tense as thousands gathered to protest.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

I have lost my son. Nothing can bring him back

Says father of Siam, 19, who was shot in Sirajganj

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU,
Pabna

Nineteen-year-old Siam Hossain, a madrasa student, had his future mapped out.

He finished his "hafezi" degree and had plans to further advance his studies. Siam also balanced his academic ambitions with a commitment to his community. Working as a "Moyazzin" at a mosque in Betil village of Sirajganj district, he was a familiar figure in his local circle.

But on August 4, his aspirations were cut tragically short.

Siam joined a student protest in the Enayetpur market area. As the procession moved toward the local police station, tensions escalated, and the authorities opened fire on the demonstrators.

Among those caught in the crossfire was Siam, who was

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

I have nothing left to live for

Says mother of Zakir, 22, who was shot in Kanchpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

Two years ago, Zakir, a 22-year-old from Durgapur upazila in Netrakona, made a life-changing investment.

With the goal of building a home for himself and his mother, he purchased a 15-decimal plot of land for Tk 150,000. This was not merely an investment in property, but in a future he dreamt of -- a safe haven for his family.

Tragically, Zakir's aspirations were shattered by a single, devastating bullet.

Zakir's father had passed away when he was just five. His mother, Misili Begum, was left to raise him alone. To make ends meet, she migrated to the Natun Bazar area in the capital two decades ago, taking on menial jobs such as trash collection and housemaid work.

Her tireless efforts ensured Zakir had a chance at a better life.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

ACC to probe loan scam at BASIC Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has launched an investigation into allegations of irregularities and corruption concerning loans issued to 41 institutions by multiple branches of BASIC Bank.

A five-member investigation team has been reorganised for this purpose. It was formed recently and is being managed by the ACC's

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

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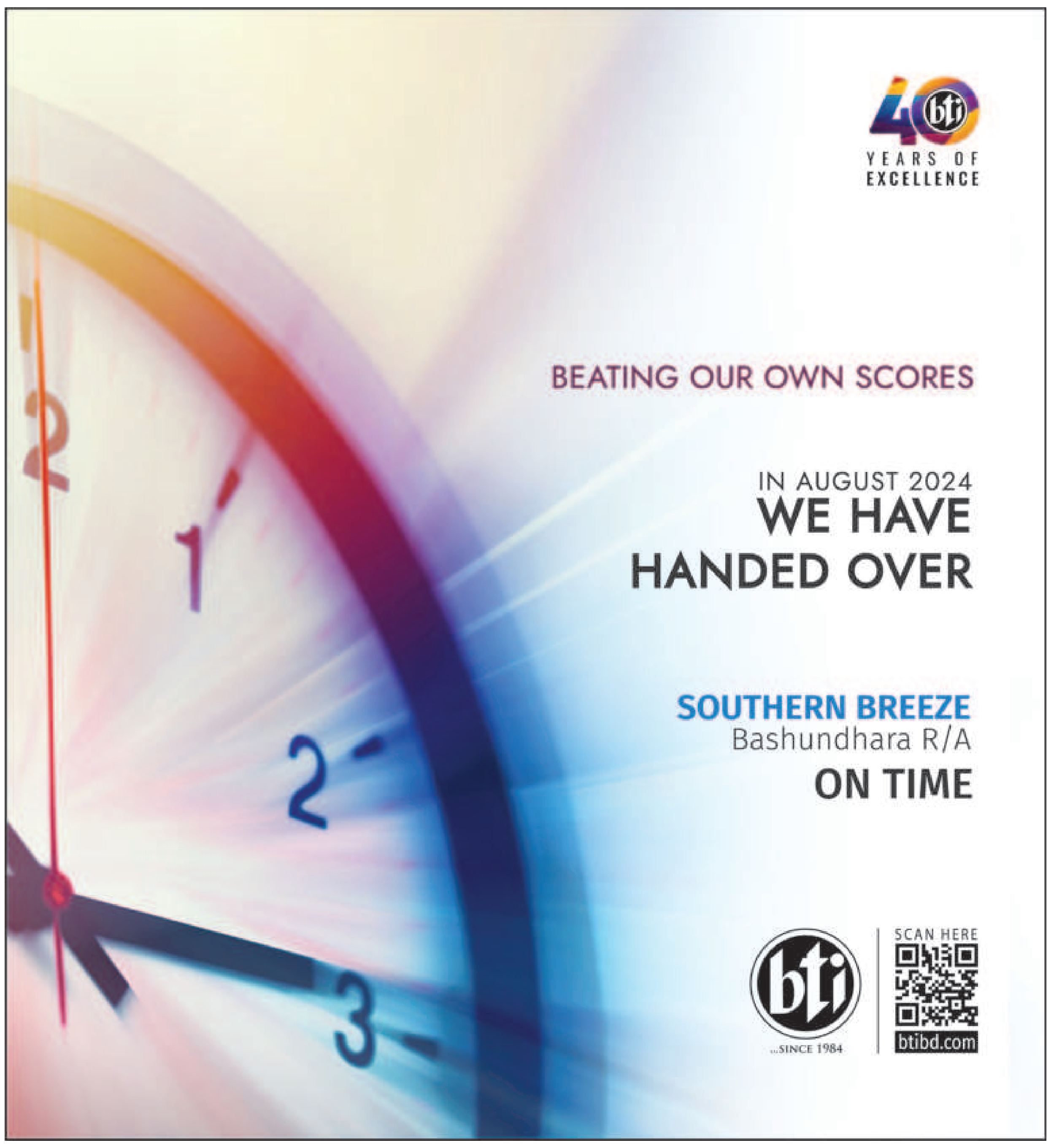

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Taliban refuses to cooperate with UN Afghan mission

AFP, *Kabul*

The Taliban government's morality ministry said it would not cooperate with the United Nations mission in Afghanistan, calling it "opposing side".

The announcement comes after the UN mission (UNAMA) warned that a new morality law -- requiring women to cover up completely and not raise their voices -- would damage prospects for engagement with the international community.

The Taliban Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (PVPV) said that "due to its continued propaganda, the PVPV will not provide any support or cooperation with UNAMA, which will be considered as an opposing side".

"We want international organisations, countries, and those individuals who criticised the mentioned law to respect the religious values of Muslims and refrain from such criticisms and statements that insult Islamic values and sanctities," the ministry said in a statement posted to social media Thursday.

Last week, the United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, was banned from entering the country after joining other UN experts in a statement urging the international community to "not normalise the de facto authorities or their appalling human rights violations".

The Taliban government's 35-article morality law was published in the official gazette on July 31.

It imposes wide-ranging rules on men's clothing and attending prayers as well as bans on keeping photos of living beings, homosexuality, animal fighting, playing music in public and non-Muslim holidays.

Activists of Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) hold placards as they march to mark the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, in Karachi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

US ready to turn page on Trump

Says Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris in first interview

AFP, *Savannah*

Kamala Harris declared Thursday that Americans are ready to turn the page on Donald Trump as she reached out to centrist voters in her first interview since her dramatic entry into November's presidential election.

The 59-year-old Democrat insisted on CNN that she would be tough on illegal immigration and support controversial oil and gas fracking.

"I am the best person to do this job," Harris said in a joint interview with her running mate Tim Walz while on the campaign trail in Georgia.

"I think people are ready to turn the page on that," she said. "People are ready for a new way forward."

The Democrat also said that she would name a Republican to her cabinet if she wins, in another sign that she is reaching out to wavering middle-of-the-road voters.

Trump branded the interview "BORING!!!" in a post on social media.

The Republican former president called Harris the "greatest flip-flopper" as he addressed a rally in the swing state of Michigan, before mocking her appearance in the interview.

"She didn't look like a leader to me," he said later.

Harris rejected criticism that she has shifted positions on politically sensitive issues including fracking, which she once opposed but now supports, and illegal migration over the Mexican border, where she has taken a harder line.

Addressing criticism that she had been too soft on immigration -- a core part of Trump's right-wing message -- Harris said that as president she would sign tough legislation.

Her comments appeared designed to court centrist voters worried by immigration and fuel costs. But in a nod to her left-leaning supporters, she insisted that she had not fundamentally shifted.

"My values have not changed," Harris said.

On another hot-button topic on the US political landscape, Harris urged a ceasefire in Gaza, but told CNN that she would not change President Joe Biden's policies for key US ally Israel, including deliveries of weaponry.

"No, we have to get a deal done," she said, adding that she was "unwavering" in her support for Israel but that "far too many innocent Palestinians have been killed."

Hasina made accused

FROM PAGE 2

Four former MPs – Rezwan Ahmed Taufiq, Afzal Hossain, Sohrab Uddin and Noor Mohammad – are among the 88 people named as accused in the case. Besides, 200-300 unknown individuals were made accused in the case, said the OC.

According to the case statement, a procession of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement and BNP leaders and activists was attacked in front of the district Awami League office on August 4.

Matiur alleged in the case that the AL leaders and activists attacked the participants of the procession with firearms, batons and sharp weapons.

During the attack, some BNP leaders and activists ran to save their lives and took shelter in the house of District AL Assistant General Secretary Syed Ashfaqul Islam Titu in Khormaptri area.

Later, AL activists confined them and set them on fire, killing two BNP activists – Zulkar Hossain, 38, and Anjana, 28, the case statement said.

It added that many others had been injured by bullets, sharp weapons and batons.

In Munshiganj, a case was filed over the death of a 22-year-old man during the student-led uprising on August 4.

Besides Hasina and Quader, Munshiganj District Awami League President Mohammad Mohiuddin, the unit's General Secretary Lutfur Rahman, and ex-Munshiganj MPs Faisal Biplab, Mrinal Kanti Das, and Sagufta Yasmin Emily were made accused in the murder case.

As many as 313 people, including Mohiuddin's younger brother Anis Uzzaman, former chairman of Sadar Upazila Parishad, Jubo League leader Jalal Uddin Rumi Rajon, and activists of AL and its student wing Chhatra League, were also named as accused in the case, while 200-300 people were made unidentified accused.

Shefali Begum, grandmother of victim Noor Mohammad Dipzal, filed the case at Munshiganj Sadar Police Station around 9:00am.

"No one has been arrested in this case yet," said Thander Khairul Hasan, additional superintendent of police at Munshiganj Sadar Circle.

North Islampur resident Dipzal was shot dead during the student-led movement in the Supermarket area of Munshiganj town a day before the Awami League's fall.

Two other residents of the North Islampur area – Riazul Faraji, 38, and Md Sajal, 30, were also shot dead at the same place on that day.

In Gazipur, Hasina and former Liberation War affairs minister AKM Mozammel Haque are among 57 people accused in a case over the loss of eyesight of 18-year-old college student Likhon.

Likhon's father Monir Hossain filed the case at Gazipur Sadar Police Station on Thursday night. The police station's OC Mostafizur Rahman confirmed the case to The Daily Star yesterday.

The other accused include former state minister for youth and sports Zahid Ahsan Russell, former Gazipur City Corporation mayor Jahangir Alam, Metropolitan Awami League Vice President Matiur Rahman and General Secretary Ataullah Mondal.

Another 300 unidentified people were also accused in the case.

India appears positive

FROM PAGE 12

The high commissioner also discussed other issues, including the safety of Hindus and minorities in Bangladesh. The envoy also informed the chief adviser that the flooding in eastern Bangladesh was caused due to excessive rain, said Jaiswal.

'HASINA'S DEPORTATION'

Responding to questions about former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's "deportation" to Bangladesh and if India has received any formal request from that country about sending her back, the spokesperson said, "This is in the domain of hypothesis, and it is not our habit to answer hypothetical questions."

Asked about India's stance on Hasina's status after her diplomatic passport was revoked and the fact that she could stay in India for 45 days out of which three to four weeks have already elapsed, Jaiswal refused to give any direct answer.

Jaiswal reiterated that Hasina came to India on August 5 on a "very short notice" and this sort of question about sending her back "lies in the realm of hypothetical issues."

Asked about the fate of India's bilateral development projects in Bangladesh, Jaiswal said the projects and cooperation with Bangladesh have been affected by the recent turmoil and some individuals involved in those projects had to return due to the law-and-order situation there.

"Once the situation there stabilises and normalcy is restored, we will engage with the interim government in Bangladesh and see how to take forward the [development] projects."

Jaiswal recalled the attack on the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre in Dhaka and said Bangladesh authorities had tried their best to control law and order. "We hope the turmoil will end, and development cooperation will resume."

He said right now India is issuing visas to Bangladeshis only in emergency cases like medical visas. However, he said issuance of visas in other categories would resume when the situation improves in Bangladesh.

MODI-BIDEN TALKS ON BANGLADESH

Jaiswal said the issue of Bangladesh was "substantially discussed" during the telephone conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden last week.

Asked about reports of differences between the read-outs issued by the two countries after the talks, he said some people misunderstood the readouts.

"Let me tell you these claims are uninformed, tendentious, and motivated ..."

"Firstly, the press releases issued after conversation between leaders are not like joint statements where everything is negotiated and mutually agreed upon. Secondly, such press releases are not meant to be comprehensive read-outs of such conversations. And finally, it is not unusual for two sides to emphasise different aspects of the same conversation in their respective read-outs."

The MEA spokesperson said, "The absence of an aspect of one press release or the other is not evidence of its absence in the conversation itself. I'm very much aware of the contents of the conversation between the prime minister and the president of the United States. And I can tell you that our press release is an accurate and faithful record of what transpired in the conversation and the subject of Bangladesh has been highlighted.

"It [the issue of Bangladesh] was substantially discussed by the two leaders," he added.

The read-out issued by the Indian Prime Minister's Office mentioned that the issue of Bangladesh and the minorities in that country did come up during the talks with the two leaders sharing concern over it.

However, the read-out issued by the White House did not mention the issues.

Bashundhara Group chairman

FROM PAGE 2

sub-registrar, a journalist of Ekattor Television and 150 unnamed individuals.

Samiul Alim, organising secretary of Shibganj Upazila unit of Jubo Dal, filed this case with the court of Bogura Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Shukanta Saha yesterday.

Shibganj Police Station OC Abdur Rouf said they were yet to register the case. "We've heard about the case, but nobody has come to the police station to file it."

According to the case statement, the first eight accused ordered the others to attack a procession of students and protesters in Shibganj on August 5, the day the Awami League government was ousted in the face of the uprising.

The perpetrators used rods, bamboo sticks, crude bombs and firearms in a bid to kill the protesters, according to the charges.

Shahnewaj Bipul, one of the key accused and former vice chairman of Shibganj Upazila Council, opened fire at the protesters to kill Mushfiqur Rahman, who was wounded with 100-150 pellets in his chest, the case statement said.

ACC to start special drive

FROM PAGE 12

A member of the newly formed ACC team, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "Since Sunday, we have received numerous complaints from across the country against many individuals. Many have communicated with us with evidence about the money some people have in their homes.

"If our team is allowed to work independently, we will be able to prevent a significant amount of money from being laundered abroad. We will start working in full swing within a day or two," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

BENAZIR, MATIUR TO BE SUED

The ACC has taken a policy decision to file cases next week against former inspector general of police Benazir Ahmed and former National Board of Revenue member Matiur Rahman over amassing illegal wealth, said officials.

Since April, the ACC has been investigating the illegal assets of Benazir, his wife Jissan Mirza, and their daughters Farheen Rishta Binte Benazir and Tahseen Raisa Binte Benazir. The commission found significant evidence against them.

Benazir and his family members were summoned twice to appear before the ACC, but they did not show up or submit statements about their wealth.

The commission is now preparing two cases against them -- one for amassing illegal wealth and another for failing to submit the wealth statements, officials said.

If convicted of possessing illegal wealth charges, Benazir, his wife and their daughters will face a maximum 10-year prison sentence. The highest punishment for the charges of not submitting wealth statement is three year's jail term.

The ACC is also preparing similar cases against Matiur, his two wives, and three children.

After receiving notices from the ACC, Matiur and his family members requested the graft watchdog to extend the time for filing their wealth statements. The ACC granted their request, but they failed to submit the asset statements.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan said they found evidence of acquiring illegal wealth by Benazir, Matiur and their family members. "They will be sued once the commission decides on this."

Fakhrul calls for UN-led investigation

FROM PAGE 12

"It is also encouraging that for the first time in Bangladesh, a UN team has arrived to take steps against the misdeeds committed during the [Sheikh Hasina's] autocratic regime."

He urged the government to engage with the UN Human Rights Commission to investigate all the crimes against humanity, killings, and enforced disappearances that occurred over the last 15 years. "If the interim government makes this request, the UN will certainly do it."

The BNP leader thanked the interim government for forming a five-member commission to find out forcibly disappeared people by the law enforcement agencies.

Justifying his call for providing allowances to the families of the victims of enforced disappearance, Fakhrul said many of those families are enduring significant hardship and struggling to support themselves and raise their children.

He said the state must restore the rights of the families of those who have been subjected to enforced disappearances and ensure justice for them.

"We know the identities of those responsible for enforced disappearances. We need to find and hold accountable those who were in positions of authority, and ensure they are punished."

He expressed optimism that the perpetrators of enforced disappearances will be arrested and punished soon.

In observance of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, the solidarity meeting was held in front of the BNP's central office in the capital's Nayapaltan.

Family members of the victims of enforced disappearance also spoke at the meeting.

Pakistan PM calls Yunus

FROM PAGE 12

Sharif expressed his willingness to provide support to the people affected by the floods in southern and southeastern parts of Bangladesh.

The Pakistan PM emphasised the need to revitalise relations between the two countries, saying there remains immense potential in expanding bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

The prime minister underscored the necessity to resume mechanisms like foreign secretary-level consultations and the Joint Economic Commission between Dhaka and Islamabad. He also stressed the need to reinvigorate the SAARC process.

Prof Yunus said he was committed to revitalising SAARC as a top regional forum to boost ties among the South Asian nations. He highlighted the necessity for holding regular SAARC summits and holding a brief meeting among the heads of state and governments of the SAARC states at the earliest.

Yunus also called for strengthening economic ties and people-to-people connections between the two nations.

After Prof Yunus was sworn in as the chief adviser, PM Sharif earlier congratulated him in a message.

1.83cr affected in Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12

The most affected districts are Noakhali, Cumilla, Laxmipur, Feni, Chattogram, and Moulvibazar. Rural roads, agricultural fields, and fishponds have been submerged, cutting off essential access and severely impacting livelihoods. Crops in over 3.39 lakh hectares have been completely damaged, it said.

The report said that over 7,000 schools are closed due to flooding, affecting 17.5 lakh primary students across the affected districts.

Displacement and overcrowded temporary shelters have heightened security concerns, including for women and girls. The flooding of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities across affected areas is of concern in terms of health and water-borne diseases, it said.

Meanwhile, over 20 lakh children in eastern Bangladesh are at risk as floods swept through homes, schools, and villages, Unicef said yesterday.

These floods are the worst in eastern Bangladesh in 34 years, said a press release from the UN agency.

Unicef said millions of children and families are stranded without food and emergency relief supplies. Government officials and volunteers are conducting rescue operations, although access remains difficult in some areas.

"The devastating floods in the eastern parts of Bangladesh are a tragic reminder of the relentless impact of extreme weather events and the climate crisis on children. Far too many children have lost loved ones, their homes, schools, and now are completely destitute," said Emma Brigham, deputy representative of Unicef Bangladesh.

UN to dispatch fact-finding team

FROM PAGE 1

human rights defenders, representatives of political parties, and minority and indigenous communities.

In its meetings, the team discussed the modalities of the investigation into the rights violations and abuses committed during the recent violence and unrest, as requested by the interim government.

It also discussed areas including civic space, the need for truth, justice, healing, reparation and reconciliation, and other human rights issues that can be included in the reform process.

The way the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) can provide sustained support to that process was also discussed.

Ravina said Turk warmly welcomed Bangladesh's decision to sign the instrument of accession to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the establishment of a five-member national inquiry commission to determine the whereabouts of individuals forcibly disappeared allegedly by law enforcement agencies.

"The issue of enforced disappearances has a long and painful history in Bangladesh, on which the UN Human Rights Office and UN human rights mechanisms have advocated robustly," she said.

"We stand ready to support the Commission in its work, which should be in close consultation with victims and their families and in line with international human rights standards," the spokesperson said.

The UN Human Rights Office looks forward to supporting the interim government and people of Bangladesh at this pivotal moment to revitalise democracy, seek accountability and reconciliation, and advance human rights for all the people in Bangladesh, she added.

WE NEED TIME TO HEAL: TOYA

SHARMIN JOYA

From being vocal on social media to taking to the streets near Central Shaheed Minar, actress Mumtaheena Chowdhury Toya stood firm with the students in their anti-discrimination movement with a one-demand point, and demanded justice for the unjust killings disguised as 'defense'.

Toya and her husband, Sayed Zaman Shawon, who is also an artiste, both joined the movement. They have also sent aid and volunteered to support flood victims.

We invited the actress for an exclusive photoshoot and a conversation over coffee.

When did it first hit you to take to the streets and join the protest?

On July 18, it deeply shook me when I came across a video of a bloodied college student, still in her uniform—a scene no one should ever witness. I couldn't remain silent and called for an end to the violence on social media.

Little did we know how the situation would escalate—internet servers were shut down, and horrifying reports of innocent children being killed on rooftops and inside their homes left me terrified. It was a now-or-never moment for me, and I had to stand up against it. By leaving all fear behind, I joined with the *Drishshyo Maddhyom Shilpi Shomaj,* formed by the artistes of our industry.

With the interim government under pressure to bring changes immediately, what are your thoughts on the high expectations people have?

I believe we need to be a bit more patient and give them time to settle in and understand before expecting changes. However, the anger and frustration accumulated over the past 15 years will take time to heal. Having regained our voices, we are often making things difficult for those in power.

It will take time for people to understand what true freedom of speech is—that it is not spreading hatred or misinformation, but allowing everyone to participate in constructive criticism.

Moreover, we must continue the practice of questioning to prevent any further abuse of power.

As the nation anticipates systemic change, what shifts have you already observed?

Regaining our lost unity, which came at a great cost, is a credit to the students, and we must preserve it. Despite the challenges, the nation's support for flood victims marks a significant move.

If the Chief Advisor secured Tk 1,000 crore in relief with just one meeting, I believe he can drive major changes over time.

Interestingly, someone recently shared an incident where a traffic police officer was depressed because he could no longer receive bribes and thus couldn't pay for land on which he had already put a down payment on. This change reflects a growing sense of conscience among people, who are no longer resorting to bribes. While it may be unfortunate for the officer, it's a sign that citizens are becoming morally stronger.

One major demand in the aftermath was the abolishment of the Cyber Security Act, which significantly impacted press freedom and freedom of speech. Do you support the cancellation of this act?

As a victim of cyberbullying myself, I advocate for reforming the law rather than repealing it.

The law should protect individuals rather than harass them. It's also crucial to prevent the spread of propaganda or rumours, especially since the next generation relies heavily on the internet for information rather than traditional textbooks.

Having said that, we should also consider how similar laws are implemented internationally.

On a lighter note, you and your husband both share the same profession. Do you see this as an advantage or a disadvantage?

It's both. The advantage is that you both understand each other's lifestyles and can manage expectations regarding socialising or family time. On the downside, working in the same field and sharing a common circle can limit personal space and conversations since you're already aware of each other's work and situations surrounding it. Life is more interesting with a few mysteries in it (laughs).

> **"I believe we need to be a bit more patient and give them time to settle in and understand before expecting changes. However, the anger and frustration accumulated over the past 15 years will take time to heal. Having regained our voices, we are often making things difficult for those in power.**

> **As a victim of cyberbullying myself, I advocate for reforming the Cyber Security Act rather than repealing it.**

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
The Perfect Couple

Prime Video
The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power Season 2

Hulu
Only Murders in the Building

Now a major murder picture

Apple TV+
Slow Horses

tv+
SLOW HORSES
OFFICIAL TRAILER

Hoichoi
Mohanagar

OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA

DHAKA ROCK CARNIVAL
FEATURING

Dhaka Rock Carnival- Swadhin Bangla Betar
September 6 | 12pm-10pm
GreenVill Outdoors

PSA: BEYOND THE GAZE
AN EXHIBITION
29 AUGUST – 2 SEPTEMBER 2024
OPENING CEREMONY

PSA: Beyond the Gaze
August 29-September 2 I 3pm-9pm
Alliance Française de Dhaka

RESURRECTION FEST CHAPTER-1
DATE: 6TH SEPTEMBER, 2024
VENUE: NATIONAL LIBRARY AUDITORIUM

Resurrection Fest: Chapter 1
September 6 | 3pm
National Library

WHAT'S PLAYING
Rilli

Rilli
ZAINUB KHAWAJA

Zainub J Khawaja's ***Rilli*** is a haunting exploration of perpetual rebirth and existential struggle. Opening with the line "mein tor jor ke," the song encapsulates the feeling of being trapped in a cycle.

The composition stands out for its deliberate pacing, allowing the melody to unfold with a meditative grace, unlike the hurried nature of many contemporary tracks. The instrumental solo, featuring a flute-like instrument, adds a hypnotic quality, drawing listeners into its introspective depths.

While 'rilli' technically means patchwork, the song's lyrics evoke the symbolism of the ouroboros, representing the anguish and struggle of enduring endless rebirth. ***Rilli*** is not just a song but a contemplation on whether one should continually reshape themselves to conform to the world.

WHAT'S ON THE GRAM

JIN

The oldest member of the famed K-pop group BTS, Jin recently graced the cover of Harper's Bazaar Korea for its September 2024 issue, exuding elegance in a coffee brown suit paired with maroon gloves that perfectly complemented his metallic necklace.

The singer thereby showcased the Men's New Fall/Winter 2024 Collection from Gucci, looking impeccably stylish.

Jin also made waves when it was announced that he would be appearing as a guest on Netflix's upcoming variety show, ***Dae Hwan Jang Kian Jang***. Fans are eagerly anticipating his Netflix debut as they are excited to see him in this new reality show.

1-MINUTE REVIEW

Marvel offers ample uncensored fervour in 'Deadpool & Wolverine'

In ***Deadpool & Wolverine***, when Deadpool (Ryan Reynolds) is left with no other option but to find a proper "anchor" for his world (Earth-10005) after the sacrificial death of Wolverine (Hugh Jackman) in the 2017 film ***Logan*** under the 20th Century Studios banner, he ends up finding the worst variant of Wolverine.

The Shawn Levy R-rated directorial movie, currently being screened across theatres worldwide, then becomes a perpetually crazy and unfiltered ride for Deadpool — hoping to save the earth from the clutches of Cassandra Nova (Emma Corrin), Charles Xavier's evil twin.

Fraught with fighting each other and then the actual villains, Deadpool and Wolverine also make appearances alongside several Marvel characters from their respective glory days under the 20th Century Studios' production.

The movie, in all its truth, pays homage to classic heroes from before the MCU era. With Disney's acquisition of 21st Century Fox, it seems that Feige is honouring these earlier films and characters, hinting at the possibility of future Marvel additions.

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Stop political capture of public sector

Reports on BNP-linked groups' activities deeply alarming

The culture of patronage politics that has devastated our nation over the past decades—fostering corruption, undermining meritocracy, and weakening institutions—begins at grassroots with the capture of public contracts and extortion by political thugs. And this is what seems to be happening again, with the regime change only replacing the thugs. Over the past two-three weeks, we've had a number of reports on how BNP-linked leaders, civil servants, and professional groups have been trying to establish control in various sectors. This suggests that patronage politics may continue to be around even after a political government returns to power, leading eventually to regulatory capture by vested interest groups, unless reforms are undertaken to prevent it.

The latest example has its setting in Nagar Bhaban, which houses the headquarters of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC). According to a report by Prothom Alo, BNP-affiliated activists and employees have been trying to establish their dominance through a mix of showdowns, intimidation, assaults, and even extortion, creating a tense atmosphere there. They have their eyes on proceeds and contracts/leasing from various public works, projects, and markets run under the DSCC. Recently, a contractor's representative was beaten over the submission of a tender. Five high-ranking officials were also harassed, and one even beaten publicly. Promotions and placements are also being controlled.

Prothom Alo has earlier reported how BNP-linked individuals forcibly took control of the Shimulia ferry terminal, fish market, and trawler docks in Munshiganj's Louhajanj upazila by allegedly threatening and assaulting legitimate leaseholders. They have established a lucrative extortion racket there, collecting hundreds of thousands of taka daily. We have heard of a similar capture of many other terminals and markets, transport hubs and associations, footpaths, slums, and such public spaces that were previously controlled by or leased out to Awami League-linked leaders.

The question is, what is BNP doing about it? Officially, the party remains committed to preventing such exploitations. Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman on Thursday issued a warning saying that there is no place for criminals and miscreants in the party. Another top leader has been more specific, vowing stern consequences for those indulging in extortion and illegal capture of the public sector. But hardly anything has come of these warnings yet. This means at least two things: either this message is not being delivered strongly enough to grassroots leaders and activities, through swift punitive actions to convey the seriousness of the message, or the party, beyond public condemnations, is still not serious enough about it.

Both scenarios are equally concerning. We urge the BNP leadership to take action matching its strong words. It must prevent its grassroots leaders, professional groups or anyone exploiting its name to establish dominance through exemplary punishment. As the leading party in the country now, BNP has a duty to not just support but also actively take part in the reforms being envisioned by the students and people that toppled the Awami League government. It must help do away with the political culture of yesteryears that has brought nothing but misery for the country. However, we also need institutional reforms to dismantle this entrenched culture, and for that, comprehensive actions from the interim government are essential.

Are we ignoring the dengue threat?

Proper action needed from city corporations, health authorities

After the student-led mass uprising toppled the Awami League government, there have been so many issues jostling for our attention that the danger of dengue during a rainy season got pushed to the background. Our dengue control measures have never been adequate. One additional challenge this time has been the leadership chaos within city corporations and municipalities making it difficult to do their jobs, including dengue control. According to the DGHS, 79 people have died and 12,343 have been infected from January 1 to August 29. Reportedly, hundreds of patients are getting admitted to hospitals across the country every day. This calls for proper interventions from the authorities.

The governance issues within the city corporations may complicate efforts, however. Although the administration has installed CEOs with full administrative and financial power to run the 12 city corporations, replacing the mayors, we have seen how the crisis of councillors is delaying or disrupting their activities. In Dhaka, where 66 out of 75 ward councillors in the south and 11 out of 54 councillors in the north have been reported absent or missing, the provision of 14 mandated services and important activities like sanitation and mosquito control are being hampered. Without effective coordination in the grassroots, any drive to prevent the spread of dengue may not be successful.

The dengue issue has acquired some urgency after heavy downpours and flooding in recent weeks. The flood has affected some 73 upazilas across 11 districts, including crowded municipal areas. Floodwaters have begun to recede now, leaving behind garbage scattered everywhere, which will require a clean-up. This along with waterlogging caused by continued rains in many parts of the country are reasons enough to worry about potential outbreaks of diseases, including mosquito-borne ones like dengue. This must not be taken lightly, especially after last year which went on to witness the deadliest dengue outbreak in the country's history. A total of 1,705 dengue-related deaths and 321,179 cases were reported in 2023. This was largely due to the inadequate and often unscientific measures taken by the authorities. We don't yet have a vector control policy; the insecticides sprayed are also of questionable quality. In addition, inclusive data, which can help in making targeted interventions, continues to elude us.

The political governments of the past two decades could not do much to control dengue, which only grew in intensity with each year. But people have a lot of expectations from the interim government, and they must not fail in this regard. For that, proper, scientifically driven, and centrally coordinated initiatives are a must. We urge the government to take the dengue threat seriously, taking proactive rather than reactive actions, so that it can be contained in time.

WHEN TEACHERS BECOME TARGETS

Lessons from Emperor Alamgir

BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Dr Shamsad Mortuza
is a professor of English at Dhaka University, and former pro-vice-chancellor of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB).

SHAMSAD MORTUZA

How do you process the nationwide humiliation of teachers? You don't need to be an educator to sympathise with the several hundreds of teachers-cum-administrators who have faced mob-induced resignations. There is no shortage of video clips in this digital age: a young girl, maybe 12 or 13, along with her friends, grabbing her teacher's wrist to force her to sign the resignation letter; a young boy gleefully gloating that it felt good to slap "Dipon sir," or a teacher falling sick in the midst of the hullaballoo of his resignation demand. We don't know why the students turned against their teachers with such resentment. The timeline provides a glimpse as to "how" the events occurred without probing the question of "why" they happened. These images, however, are enough to spur copycat attacks and spread fear among possible sympathisers. It's not surprising that the deposed teacher's colleagues and guardians are often seen standing silent nearby.

Suddenly, it is politically incorrect to speak against students who have liberated us from the years of oppression. The men and women, holding onto those "powerful" institutional chairs, are considered enemies of the state or representatives of a decadent class that corrupted the system. We are witnessing a carnival in which our educational system collapses, unleashing the hidden demons. The situation is a reminder of Pol Potism, which promoted a socialist campaign shielding its communal and fascist agenda. Are the teachers really the stooges of the previous regime? Or, are they scapegoats whose removals are necessary for the aspirant opportunists to sneak in through the backdoor carved by student rebels? What have the teachers done to deserve this?

As a teacher, I have my biases towards my peers. Those who know me well also know my sympathies are for my students. I do believe teachers pour their souls into their students, generate an intergenerational power to educate them, and transform their lives. If teachers do not feel that way, this profession is not for them. All of my teachers at school and in my family have moulded me into a better version of myself. I never regretted for a single moment choosing my ill-paid profession. I am starting to harbour second thoughts after observing the widespread disrespect and undermining of our colleagues. Where did we go wrong? Why are we so out of touch with our students?

Ideally, teachers are not just dispensers of knowledge. They are shapers of character and morality. The recent turn of events has either strained or severed the bond between teachers and students. On social media, many people are sharing an anecdote about veteran educator Abdullah Abu Sayeed, who resisted several pressures to admit a student from a powerful family. He steadfastly maintained his position, asserting that the student would never mature into a "proper human," as he had already lost all respect for his teachers.

Professor Sayeed's rare conviction and courage moved me when I first read the titbits. I was fortunate to have teachers like him, who instilled a deep sense of pride in my profession. However, after allowing the idea to thaw for some time, I realised that this is precisely why the student rebellion is happening. Our pedagogy remains entrenched in an ancient era, perpetuating the belief that students should behave similarly to the characters in Kazi Kader Newaz's poem "Teachers' Dignity," in which Emperor Alamgir reportedly chided his crown prince for simply pouring water without using his hands to wash his teacher's feet. The sanitised portrayal of the Mughal Emperor serves two purposes: to idolise the status of a teacher and idealise a system that promotes hierarchy.

But we get a different picture of Emperor Alamgir when, in 1628, his teacher Mullah Sahe came to him seeking a reward after his former student had secured the throne. Rather than meeting him, the Emperor penned a letter that Lincoln Schuster included in *A Treasury of Great Letters* (1940). Quite bluntly, the emperor rebuked his teacher for using flattery to highlight Hindustan, undermining the strength of various European nations. The "fine philosophy" with which his teacher "amused him" was "a multitude of barbarous and dark words, proper to bewilder, perplex, and tire out the best wits, and only invented the better to cover the vanity and ignorance of men like yourself." Alamgir goes on to add, "If you had taken care to give me the knowledge of what we are and what are the first principles of things and had assisted me in forming in my mind a fit idea of the greatness of the universe," he would have acted similar to Alexander, who revered his master Aristotle. Alamgir reminds Mullah Sahe that he never learned how to "besiege a town or set an army in motion," making his education unfit for the "duties of a sovereign to his subjects and those of subjects to their sovereigns." His parting words were, "Go, and return to the village whence you have come, and let nobody know who you are or what has become of you."

I notice a similar behaviour among our students who have turned the table. The students have tasted power at a time when they are transitioning from boyhood to adulthood. This is a time when normally they struggle for self-identity, desire independence, and harbour natural inclinations to challenge authority. To guide them to the next stage of their lives, now more than ever, we need mentors who have an understanding of the complex situation. We need academic leaders who will know how to stabilise the environment and positively channel rebellious impulses for a constructive overhaul of the system.

Teachers need to do soul-searching to understand why they are so disconnected from their students. The old format of a teacher acting like a sage on stage will not work. We must understand that our students can easily gather more information with just a single click than we offer in classroom lectures. We need to redesign the curriculum to focus on learning beyond classrooms and practicing real-life skills to make ourselves relevant. The media must help restore teachers' importance in classrooms. Currently, we use media, social media, and real-life events to normalise aggression and violence as a means of expressing discontent. They are promoting copycat syndromes, where students mimic violent behaviours they see around them, believing it to be an effective means of asserting power or gaining attention. In the shaky law and order situation, our students may internalise the belief that challenging and even humiliating authority is acceptable or justified.

Sadly, these isolated incidents of violence and humiliation are spreading fear and uncertainty across educational institutions. Teachers are demoralised. The educational system faces a potential breakdown. Immediate steps must be taken to support teachers, providing them with the right tools, respect, and protection. To paint all teachers with a single brushstroke will be suicidal.

ILLUSTRATION: **BIPLOB CHAKRABOTY**

Most teachers are quite dedicated to their profession. Some teachers may have even been unable to fulfil their role due to institutional flaws and overwhelming challenges. Several systemic issues, including politics, inadequate training, a lack of resources, and the growing complexities of student behaviour, exacerbate the situation. I can only hope the government will recognise the gravity of the situation and act to restore respect for teachers and authority figures. In the long term, we will need a national curriculum for comprehensive education. Right now, we need conflict resolution for students, better support systems for teachers, and a national dialogue on the importance of respect and discipline within educational institutions.

Is forcing our educators to resign the right way to go?

Zabin Tazrin Nashita
is an engineering student at Islamic University of Technology.

ZABIN TAZRIN NASHITA

Following the resignation of Sheikh Hasina, the dissolution of parliament, and the formation of the interim government, we've been witnessing a massive change in university administrations all around the country. Vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, proctors, registrars, provosts and other members of university administration bodies have stepped down from their positions, mostly citing personal reasons behind their resignation. However, it's quite evident that the decision was made under pressure, particularly from students and teachers.

The active participation of students in demanding the resignation of VCs and other admin body members comes as no surprise. The nine-point demands put forth by students during the quota reform movement called for the resignation of VCs and proctorial bodies of Dhaka, Rajshahi, and Jahangirnagar universities. As VCs of the universities, their response to violence on students by law enforcement and Bangladesh Chhatra League members was not only inadequate, but it actively placed the students in harm's way. The situation was similar in many public and private universities throughout the country, where members of the admin body endangered the lives of students by refusing accommodation and support.

Following universities, students of schools and colleges also called for a change in their respective governing bodies, urging the resignation of principals and teachers based on misconduct during and before the protests.

While peacefully demanding the resignation of faculties and teachers is a justifiable right, the mob mentality borne out of it crossed a line. Administrative personnel had to step down under duress, often leading to disruptions in the educational institutions. A video of high school students trying to physically force the principal of a school to sign her resignation surfaced on the internet, which garnered criticism online.

During the Awami League (AL) government regime, most members in high positions at educational institutions were often affiliated with the political party, which has served as an incentive for students and staff to demand their resignation. Cases emerged of governing body members misusing their position to accept bribes, embezzling research funds, being involved in corruption, etc. While demanding justice for those guilty of such wrongdoing is fair, being affiliated with a political party alone shouldn't warrant such claims.

Rather than jumping the gun on demanding resignations, we need to step back and re-evaluate whether those in administrative positions are qualified enough. Someone should not be banned simply for their ties to the AL without evidence of misconduct, considering the political climate before the protests.

The forced resignations have led to an administrative vacuum in universities, causing delays in the resuming of classes, payment of the staff's salaries etc. The University of Dhaka has appointed Professor Niaz Ahmed Khan as the new VC. Pro-VC and proctorial positions have also been filled, and the student opinion so far is rather optimistic. This isn't the case in many other universities, where academic activities are halted, setting students back.

The administrative body members' first and foremost duties should be creating a sound structure for academics and protecting the students' interests. The politicisation of these positions made way for corruption. Student politics and the violent nature of it were also overlooked. Combinedly, these caused the students' interests to take a backseat.

Recent events have created a shift in the teacher-student dynamic in general. Since childhood, we've viewed our teachers as role models not only in academics but also in principles. The teachers, in turn, were to treat students with affection and guide them towards the moral path. Self-serving politics and corruption from the teachers' ends have disrupted this relationship and altered the students' perceptions, dampening their respect for educators. It is this very shift in dynamic that has caused students to lay hands on their teachers and force them to resign. This damage needs to be repaired.

Many consider the resignation of administrative staff a necessary step in reformation as they believe having apolitical persons in charge will bring about progress. That being said, forced resignations can create unforeseen circumstances and make way for unqualified candidates to assume positions of power. Persecution of teachers and forceful resignation not only expels qualified individuals but also reflects badly on students.

Students have expressed dissatisfaction at the news of Khulna University's VC Mahmood Hossain's resignation after his bold stance in protecting the students during the movement. So, it's obvious that the general expectation is that our educators will have our best interests at heart. We want to see a positive change in administration where student welfare and education quality are prioritised, research scopes are expanded, and resources and facilities are modernised and made accessible for students.

Resignation of corrupt individuals is indeed a necessary step in building a better education system, but it is up to us—students—to not give into mob mentality and ensure justice is done towards our educators.

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'July victims are entitled to truth and justice'

Barrister Sara Hossain, *a Supreme Court lawyer and the honorary executive director of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST,) talks to* **Tamanna Khan** *of* **The Daily Star** *about how justice can be served to the victims of the July uprising.*

What is your take on the wave of murder cases being filed against Awami League leaders and activists for killing people during the uprising?

From July 15 onwards, a number of really serious human rights violations and crimes occurred. These included extrajudicial killings and indiscriminate use of force including live rounds resulting in the deaths and injuries of hundreds of largely peaceful protesters, including children; arbitrary arrests and detentions, many even from their homes; and torture and ill-treatment in custody. People across the country watched these horrific scenes on television or live on the streets. Under Bangladesh laws, these acts constitute serious crimes and rights violations. It is, therefore, imperative that those responsible for these crimes are held to account—either for their direct involvement in them, or for directing, planning or coordinating them.

That's the context of the few weeks from July 15 onwards. But prior to that, for many years, we've seen other kinds of repression as well, including enforced disappearances. It's good to see that one of the first acts of the interim government has been to set up a commission to inquire into the allegations of enforced disappearances over the last 15 years or so.

During this time, there have also been allegations of systemic judicial harassment of individuals exercising their right to freedom of expression through the arbitrary application of repressive laws such as the Digital Security Act (DSA). We have seen a trigger-happy approach to using all other criminal defamation laws. Alongside that, we have seen how the media engaged in orchestrated hate campaigns (sometimes with the complicity of civil society), including against human rights defenders, academics and others. There's a wide range of issues to take on in seeking justice for the victims of the pervasive abuse of the legal process as well as abuse of power that have taken place in recent years.

Currently, we're seeing a wave of cases, all related to the killings that took place since July 16. They all concern allegations of the murder of one or more individuals. Some seem to be framed in similar terms, and are being filed either before courts or the police by private individuals. According to media reports, the cases refer to the instigators of the killings and mention senior political figures and high officials of the previous government. While they characterise some of these persons as "instigators" and "abettors", it's not clear if they identify the person who directly caused the killings and whose actions resulted in the death or injury of a person. In some instances, the media reported on the challenges victim families have faced to actually file a case. All the cases relate to allegations of murder, which is a cognisable offence, i.e. the police have powers to arrest without needing to get a warrant from a magistrate. There does not seem to be any guideline in place to limit the exercise of these powers.

What can the interim government do in this context?

The government may consider setting up one or more designated contact points for people who were victims of violations, or their family members, to seek assistance, information and advice. There have been very positive pronouncements about the formation of a foundation to assist people and the families of those who've been killed, but it may take time for that to be set up. Similarly, the government has announced a significant initiative to provide free medical assistance to those injured in the protests.

Sara Hossain

PHOTO: COURTESY

There's a fact-finding mission which is starting its work. There's a commission on enforced disappearances. These two bodies will be able to find and record information, produce documents and reports about what happened, and give us a direction on how people can seek protection going forward. But other contact points are needed because arrests, detentions, and torture won't fall into the terms of reference of the inquiry commission. We don't yet know what will be the full scope of the United Nations investigations.

Would the victims and their families get justice from the plethora of murder cases police filed against AL members?

There are murder cases being filed all over the country. Whether cases framed in this way are really serving the needs of the victims is something we need to identify. Victims are entitled to truth, justice, and reparations for the loss of their family members. It will be a great disservice to the victims if the manner of filing or investigating or conducting these cases results in a denial of justice. Under our law, anyone may file a case. However, there could be a process of scrutiny and assessment before further measures are taken.

In contrast, there are reports that some families of the victims of July killings have faced challenges at police stations. Some have had to wait for eight to ten hours at the police station before their cases were lodged. I've seen a recent government order instructing police stations to record people's complaints and FIRs. It would be helpful if more public information is disseminated about the options available for people to seek justice.

What is your take on the police's culture of implicating opposition members by writing fictitious FIRS, as we have seen in connection to some of the cases?

I think the government should look into how these policing practices are being conducted.

After the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government, there were no police on the ground for several days. There was a concern with security, and we all realised that a functional police force is essential. But police malpractices, unfortunately, are very well entrenched in the system. It's not just about the last two months or the last 15 years. For 50 years, we have seen these practices of writing fictitious FIRs, prosecuting so-called *gayebi mamla*. Sometimes, 1,000 unknown names were put into an FIR.

Now what you're describing, an FIR is written with one set of "cut and paste" sort of formula and it's being applied in a completely different context where everything has changed, but people maybe are just filling in the blanks on what they wrote. That can't be the way to reach a just outcome.

Now what you're describing, an FIR is written with one set of "cut and paste" sort of formula and it's being applied in a completely different context where everything has changed, but people maybe are just filling in the blanks on what they wrote. That can't be the way to reach a just outcome.

We have to investigate the facts as they are. We have to allow people to speak. With regard to the July killings, for the first time, we have a situation where we have extraordinary amounts of evidence available—huge numbers of eyewitnesses as well as huge quantities of open source material, including videos, captured in mobile phones, or uploaded online. Our laws were changed recently, and video content, if verified, is now admissible as evidence in courts to prove crimes. When we have so much evidence available, we need to gather and preserve it, instead of making up stories.

If the UN is going to investigate the killings of July and early August, then why are these murder cases going forward?

I presume one issue here is that people accused of violations need to be taken into custody, for investigations and inquiries. It's important for the government to use lawful means of taking people into custody.

When General Ershad fell after a popular movement in the 1990s, many people, who were to be brought to account, were detained using the Special Powers Act of 1974, which allows for orders of preventive detention. In 2007-2008, the emergency powers rules were used.

We don't have emergency powers rules now, as there's no state of emergency, but we do have the Special Powers Act. Many of us have spoken for many years about the problems with the Special Powers Act. While we would not like to have it on the books, the Special Powers Act does exist, and it does provide a lawful means of detaining a person. Although it can be challenged and the person will have recourse before the High Court, it gives you a lawful means of detaining somebody. Several lawyers have already commented on this.

With regard to the July killings, for the first time, we have a situation where we have extraordinary amounts of evidence available—huge numbers of eyewitnesses as well as huge quantities of open source material, including videos, captured in mobile phones, or uploaded online.

There's also Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure that allows you to arrest someone on suspicion of committing an offence. There again, the Supreme Court has very strict guidelines on what needs to be done on making an arrest under Section 54, and those guidelines include informing the arrested person about the reason for their arrest, where they're being taken, and who is arresting them. So long as those guidelines are strictly followed, then a Section 54 arrest could perhaps be made.

So the question is whether it would be better to detain somebody under Special Powers Act or under Section 54, or other available processes, or just following the current process. I think the last thing we want is for the process of justice to be derailed, or in some way tainted, because that would be the worst disservice we could do as a people to the victims of these violations: denying them the opportunity of getting justice.

It is time to reform the publishing sector

Mahrukh Mohiuddin
is managing director of The University Press Limited (UPL).

MAHRUKH MOHIUDDIN

We have lost decades in our existential quest as a nation to build a knowledge-based society. Governments came and went, offering only lip-service and no unified vision or roadmap towards building a society where all everyday life decisions, whether personal or state-level, are based on some form of evidence-based knowledge. In other words, a society where expertise in any subject matter is valued, and where the creation and dissemination of local knowledge on a variety of subject matters is prioritised in the knowledge ecosystem.

The publishing industry is situated in the middle of making knowledge materials available to general readers, students, professionals, and public and private institutions alike. The publishing sector in any robust state plays a crucial role in reflecting the vibrancy of knowledge production and the creative output of a country. It mirrors the state of freedom of thought and expression that prevails in the country.

During the past regime, there was investment in books that only served a certain coterie, championing a certain narrative. Publications were part and parcel of the patronage system. Most government book acquisitions were primarily made to favour certain writers, bureaucrats and their family members who became best-selling writers overnight as their books were chosen for large government purchases.

It will not be an exaggeration to say that for the entire lifetime of the country, this sector has suffered negligence in terms of its development, and access to being able to construct policies. This is despite the fact that to compete in the global economy these days, knowledge is the most important asset and should receive due attention in terms of how best it can be produced and delivered in the most professional and internationally accepted ways. Here is where the educational institutions and research organisations of the country also need to play a strong partnership role.

During the past regime, there was investment in books that only served a certain coterie, championing a certain narrative. Publications were part and parcel of the patronage system. Most government book acquisitions were primarily made to favour certain writers, bureaucrats and their family members who became best-selling writers overnight as their books were chosen for large government purchases. The merit of the books or the audience for whom the books were being purchased were hardly ever considered. There was no transparency in the process of project formulation, book selection and payments. We are aware of scams including the one about the Department of Primary Education's expenditure of Tk 150 crores in 2020 to purchase books for setting up Bangabandhu Corners in 65,700 schools. Out of this amount, over Tk 20 crores went to buying copies of only three books by someone named Najmul Hossain. The books were published by two entities owned by him. This is just one example among many such projects. An investigation ought to be conducted to unearth the extent of corruption and misappropriation of government funds in the name of projects for purchasing low quality, inappropriate books, or materials that only portray biased narratives about the country.

Under the current circumstances, despite the unprecedented challenges ahead, we are hopeful that this sector will receive renewed priority in forming a long-term unified and coordinated national vision. Therefore, I would like to place some recommendations that have emerged from my study of the existing literature on the sectoral development of the publishing industry and recent consultations with young and promising publishers who aspire for an environment conducive to nurturing their potential.

VISUAL: ALIZA RAHMAN

It is a matter of great privilege that a well-drafted National Book Policy is already in existence, and it only requires updating and review given the current context. The policy was first drafted and adopted by the cabinet in 1994. A revised and expanded policy was brought to the table for review and discussion in 2011.

An updated version based on a series of consultations with sectoral experts was drafted and submitted again to the cabinet. This attempt failed, and it has never seen the light of day. However, the draft is well-prepared, forward-looking, with detailed plans for implementation. Moreover, most of its propositions are applicable even today. Just by reviewing the National Book Policy, it is possible to bring about some beneficial and necessary long-term reforms in the sector. In addition to what is covered in the policy, the interim government could consider immediate, medium-term and long-term reforms along with a crisis mitigation agenda for this sector.

For the medium and long-term, one of the changes to consider would be placing the publishing sector under the purview of the Ministry of Commerce instead of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. Strong interactivity with the education and cultural ministries could be maintained. The National Book Centre could be empowered as the apex body in charge of all matters relating to the knowledge sector; this can enable effective interministerial coordination. A detailed recommendation and implementation plan for transforming this institution into the National Book Development Council is provided in the draft National Book Policy.

In addition, we will require training facilities for enhancing the skills and building the capacities of aspiring publishing professionals. Grant programs may be created in all private and public universities for merit-based research and publications. We should create opportunities for international exposure to publishing practices elsewhere to improve our understanding and align our practices with international standards. Additionally, we should create opportunities for publishers to showcase their work at various international book fairs.

Furthermore, support should be provided for conducting reliable research and market analysis of the industry, enabling better decision-making at both the state and business levels. It is also important to support the creation of a strong sales and distribution network and to promote books throughout the country all year. Special provisions should be considered for promoting books through print, TV, and digital mediums.

Accompanying such reforms, existing copyright law should be reviewed and updated to better support the local publishing industry. Policies should be established to ensure fair and transparent purchasing by government and private institutions.

In the matter of immediate reforms and crisis mitigation efforts, we should turn our attention to the increased prices of paper and other input material following Covid. With the current economic downturn already impeding recovery, we may want to consider offering publishers loans to revitalise the sector.

Additionally, two or more separate pressure groups and trade bodies representing publishers and booksellers should be formed within a permissible legal framework. The existing trade body, i.e. the Bangladesh Pustok Prokashok O Bikreta Somiti (BAPUS) includes both booksellers and publishers. The result, is a latent and existential defect, as it is a mix of two separate interest groups that are supposed to be on negotiating terms with one another

We hope that the current interim government will take the necessary steps towards rebuilding the foundation of a reformed state that will place excellence in knowledge production and dissemination at the centre of its state-reform agenda. The best way to attain this would be by reforming the publishing sector from the ground up. Rest assured, they can count on the youthful and patriotic energy of the well-intentioned and talented individuals in this trade to catalyse this essential and much-needed change.

SEO
DONATION

ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

How the youth is contributing to flood relief in unique ways

From doing charity livestreams to selling SEO backlinks, the Bangladeshi youth is finding interesting avenues to generate funds for flood victims

AYAAN SHAMS SIDDIQUEE

If the month of July taught us anything, it was unity. Likewise, within a matter of days, it was as if the entirety of Bangladesh came together to stand beside those affected by the recent floods. Young people, especially, have once again been at the forefront, raising BDT 5.23 crore for flood relief at the TSC area of Dhaka University alone as of August 25.

And that isn't all. Besides being vocal about the crisis on social media and going door-to-door to collect donations for flood relief, the youth have also figured out unique ways to contribute from their own positions.

Sarika Saiyara, an A level graduate from Academia who has been tutoring students for the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) for a while now, took the initiative to raise funds for sanitary napkins that would be included in flood relief packs. Alongside Azneef Ahammed Chowdhury, an A level student from Chittagong Grammar School who is also an SAT tutor, the two plan to host an SAT masterclass with a small registration fee of BDT 200.

"The masterclass will cover a 360-degree overview of the Digital SAT, including, but not limited to, a timeline for taking the test, resources to ace the test, and section-wise strategies," says Sarika. "I am pleased to say that we've already raised Tk 11,000."

A similar initiative was taken by Edbridge Scholars, an education consulting agency specialising in helping students get into US colleges. The agency has offered a series of ten different workshops covering topics like SAT preparation, profile building, essay writing, etc. at a cost of just BDT 2000.

Tanvir Thamid, CEO of Edbridge Scholars and a junior at Bates College, says, "We have ten instructors from some of the best institutions in the world aboard for this project and they are the ones who should be thanked for making this initiative a success. The Edbridge Scholars team is just extending its hand in a collective cause."

Thamid further projected that the fundraising project will likely attract around 50 participants, thus raising approximately BDT 100,000. Afterwards, all the funds will be forwarded to credible organisations working towards providing relief materials in flood-affected areas.

Gamers have also been raising funds for flood relief from their positions, notably in the form of charity game livestreams. Arghya Joseph Das, a student of BRAC University (BRACU) and CEO of Dead3ye Esports, an esports and gaming organisation, shared how his team was doing their part through gaming, expecting to reach an overall donation sum of BDT 25,000.

"We've done charity livestreams in the past to raise funds for Palestine. So, when we saw the entire nation coming together to support the ones affected by the floods, we decided to engage our content creators to show support from our end," he said.

To maximise the donations, they have also planned out certain steps. In that regard, Arghya said, "Our primary focus will be streaming *Valorant*, where we'll invite viewers to join custom matches. Involving viewers in the stream increases the likelihood that they'll share it, helping to attract more donations. Additionally, we have plans for collaborative streams with various streamers from other organisations, which will automatically boost the viewership and engagement. And lastly, along with the donations we receive, Dead3ye Esports will contribute BDT 5 for every reaction on the streams."

Iftekhar Ahmed, 20, also a student of BRACU, took another unique approach to raising funds from his side. Being in the search engine optimisation (SEO) industry for a while, Iftekhar decided to sell SEO backlinks to clients, with all the proceedings going towards flood relief.

Sharing the idea behind this initiative, he said, "There are a lot of people in my friend list who share a similar background in SEO and software as a service (SaaS). Therefore, I decided to offer backlinks at different price points and domain ratings, and I will donate the entire amount sold from here to flood relief funds. As of now, I am aiming to raise approximately $1,000 through this initiative."

Even in the face of one of the most overwhelming calamities in recent memory, the unity and creativity demonstrated by the youth have been nothing short of inspiring. From educational initiatives to gaming fundraisers and professional services, they have proven that this new Bangladesh is one marked by collective effort and impartiality.

Reference:
The Daily Star (August 25, 2024). *Over Tk 5.23 crore collected over four days at TSC*

Ayaan *immerses himself in dinosaur comics and poorly-written manga. Recommend your least favourite reads at ayaan.shams@gmail.com*

"The masterclass will cover a 360-degree overview of the Digital SAT, including, but not limited to, a timeline for taking the test, resources to ace the test, and section-wise strategies,"

Doing household chores is the secret to adulting

ALLIN MOHANA BISWAS

Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of responsibility you have as a young adult? Paying bills, cooking, cleaning – it's a lot to handle. Nonetheless, there's a secret weapon to conquering the entire adulting conundrum: doing household chores.

It might sound counterintuitive but doing dishes, sweeping the floor, and taking out the trash isn't just about keeping your living space clean. It's actually a crucial part of becoming a self-sufficient and responsible young adult.

Beyond the practical benefits, there's evidence that chores can help protect the health of your brain. A study published in Neurology in 2022 found a link between ordinary household chores and a lower risk of dementia. Researchers followed over half a million adults for an average of 10 years and discovered that those who regularly did housework were 21% less likely to develop dementia.

When you're responsible for keeping your room clean or helping with preparing meals for your family, you're learning to take ownership of your actions. By completing chores, you understand that your choices have consequences which help you develop a strong sense of responsibility. In addition, chores can help you become a better time manager. Ever noticed how so many of us are able binge-watch an entire series but struggle to find time to do laundry? Chores can help you balance your time more effectively. By breaking down tasks into smaller steps and setting deadlines, you'll improve your ability to manage your schedule. By doing household chores, you're building the essential skills that you need to survive independently or otherwise. With every chore you complete, you get one step closer to becoming more self-sufficient.

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

Problem-solving skills are another key benefit. Ever faced a clogged drain or burnt-out lightbulb? These challenges, while frustrating, are opportunities to learn how to find solutions. Over time, you'll become better at thinking critically and finding creative ways to overcome obstacles.

A clean and organised living space isn't just aesthetically pleasing, it's also essential for mental and emotional well-being. Studies have shown that clutter can contribute to stress and anxiety. By pitching in with chores, you're creating a healthier environment for yourself and everyone who shares your space.

Additionally, working together as a family or with roommates to maintain a clean home builds a sense of teamwork and cooperation. Everyone benefits from a shared effort, and it can strengthen relationships.

The skills you learn from doing chores are directly transferable to the adult world. Whether you're heading off to university, joining the workforce or living on your own, you'll be grateful for the ability to cook, clean, and manage a household. And let's face it, being able to take care of yourself saves you money in the long run.

While chores might not be the most exciting part of your life, they're definitely an investment on yourself. So, the next time you think of skipping chores, pick up that mop, dust that shelf, or load the washing machine.

Should young commuters get a metro pass?

MEHRAB JAMEE

The country's first-ever overhead metro line, MRT line 6, was opened to the public in December 2022 and all stations became operational from December 2023. The line spans 21 kilometers and has 16 stations. The public was jubilant at the inauguration and soon MRT-6 was hauling thousands of people every day across this north-south corridor of Dhaka.

The superior speed and service of the metro put the old and worn-out bus services running along this route in a passenger crisis. People were choosing to take the metro even if they had to walk a certain distance from a station to reach their destination. Perhaps the company operating the metro lines, Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) expected popular demand. But they couldn't have anticipated the pressure MRT-6 was about to face.

After the metro became fully functional, the floodgates opened. People started to cram onto the trains during rush hour. But to get on the train you first need a ticket. The way to get a ticket is the same for all stations. There is a manned counter and about two or three automated machines. Yet both manned counters and automated machines are inundated, with lines twisting and turning three or four times over. The machines being out of service is not uncommon. People are left waiting for hours on end. The frustration of passengers in key stations of Motijheel, Secretariat, Mirpur-10, and Uttara North which face the heaviest congestion is palpable.

Saima, a student of Dhaka University (DU) shared her experience saying, "When the metro was new, I used the single-use tickets a couple of times. The wait time wasn't so long. However after the DU station opened, the wait time gradually increased. One time it took me one and a half hours to get a ticket from Uttara North Station. I had a friend with me. So, we both stood in different lines. I stood in line for the automatic machines and my friend stood in line for the manned counter. The mental math required was so stressful. My friend made it to the counter first and bought the tickets for us. We missed two lectures that day. From then on, I always suffered from anxiety about using the metro. I used to go to the station with time in hand to wait in line to get a one-time-use ticket. Then I got the Rapid Pass and it has made my life so much easier. I don't have to stand in line anymore nor do I have to suffer from the anxiety that I will miss class. I put some money into my card and just forget about it for the rest of the week."

Another University student Shimanto* said, "I take the 7.10 AM or 7.20 AM train to get to my morning classes. These trips are only accessible for MRT pass holders. Besides, during exam season, I don't have to worry if I'll get to reach the exam hall in time or not which is a tremendous help in exam season. After classes all day, I used to stand in line at the overcrowded Motijheel station for 20-30 minutes to get a ticket. With the pass, I zoom right in"

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

According to a statement given to The Dhaka Tribune by MAN Siddique, the Managing Director of DMTCL, "The Metro now carries some 250 thousand passengers every day, 52 percent of them use personal passes and the remaining 48 percent use one-time tickets."

The MRT pass and Rapid Pass are the two reusable personal passes on offer for passengers. The cards themselves cost BDT 200. But the MRT pass retails for BDT 500 and the Rapid Pass for BDT 400. The passengers can use the remaining balance to ride the metro. The MRT pass is issued by DMTCL themselves and the Rapid pass is sold by Dutch Bangla Bank. Although actual paper money has to be loaded into both and mobile banking services have not been initiated yet, the passes have become very popular among students.

Abeer, a student who uses the metro almost every day said, "Attending classes at Mugda Medical College from Uttara was a challenge. The metro rail was a blessing for me, allowing me to bypass the congestion on the roads. But without the MRT pass, even the metro became a source of frustration. Long queues at ticket counters and vending machines were nearly unbearable. My pass is a lifesaver. It saves me a significant amount of time on a daily basis. Many people prefer single-use passes as the MRT pass has an issuing fee. But this is one of the best investments I've made. I can use it for getting BRTC bus tickets as well. And it saves me 10 percent on every trip. I can't even put a price tag on the time it saves me."

When asked if the metro pass substantially changed his metro experience, Prottyush*, a university student said, "It seems to me the MRT pass is rather a necessity than a convenience for daily commuters using the Dhaka Metro. At this point, I can't imagine using the metro without it. One of the drawbacks of the ticketing system was the long wait time to get a single-use ticket. This would basically waste the same amount of time if I took the bus."

Because of the hassle-free experience and peace of mind it offers, metro passes have become essential to commuters, especially students. Access to early and late trains enables students to attend their classes on time and the 10 percent discount adds up for students on a budget. The adoption rate should go up if new features are added and the current features are advertised more by DMTCL and Dutch Bangla Bank. The addition of mobile banking services would make these cards truly cashless. As other metro lines open up in the future and the congestion expected to increase further, personal passes like MRT pass and Rapid pass are only set to grow more popular.

**Names have been changed upon request*

Mehrab Jamee *is an activist at Sandhani, a student of Mugda Medical College, and writes to keep himself sane. Reach him at mehrabjamee@gmail.com*

Star SPORT
DHAKA SATURDAY AUGUST 31, 2024, BHADRA 16, 1431 BS

What to WATCH

SONY SPORTS 2
US Open
Live from 6:15 am

T SPORTS AND GTV
Pakistan vs Bangladesh
Second Test, Day 2
Live from 11:00 am

SONY SPORTS 5
England vs Sri Lanka
Second Test, Day 3
Live from 4:00 pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
Premier League
Arsenal vs Brighton
Live from 5:30 pm
Leicester City vs Aston Villa
Live from 8:00 pm
West Ham vs Manchester City
Live from 10:30 pm

'A' team lose one-day series in Pakistan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh 'A' team lost the three-match one-day series against Pakistan Shaheens 1-0 after the third and final match was abandoned due to persistent rain and wet outfield at the Islamabad County Club Oval on Friday.

Earlier, the second one-day between the sides on Wednesday also ended as a no result after the hosts won the first match of the series by eight wickets on August 26.

The Bangladeshi side were slated to play two four-day matches and three one-day games but most of the fixtures were impacted by rain.

"We are really disappointed that we did not get enough chances to play here due to rain," Bangladesh 'A' head coach Mizanur Rahman Babul told The Daily Star on Friday.

"We couldn't complete our two batting innings in both four-day games. .

"We had nothing to do during the rain. We had to sit idle most of the time as there was no indoor facility here," he concluded.

Afghan wins Paralympic medal for refugee team

REUTERS, *Paris*

Afghan Zakia Khudadadi completed a remarkable journey to become the first athlete from the refugee team to win a medal at the Paralympics when she clinched a taekwondo bronze on Thursday.

Khudadadi, who made her Paralympics debut in Tokyo days after being exfiltrated from Taliban-controlled Kabul, secured her place on the podium when her opponent withdrew before their bronze medal bout in the K44-47kg category.

The 25-year-old, who was granted asylum by France, was cheered on like a local throughout the day by the Grand Palais crowd and by her coach, Haby Niare, who took a taekwondo silver medal at the Rio Olympics in 2016.

"This medal is fantastic for me but also for all the women in Afghanistan and all the refugees," she said in impeccable French.

"We're not giving up for equality and freedom in my country."

Khudadadi delivered a message of freedom.

"I want to give this medal to the whole world. I hope that one day there will be freedom in my country, for all the world, for all the girls, for all the women, for all the refugees in the world," Khudadadi, who was born with an atrophied arm, said.

"And that all of us work towards that, for liberty and equality."

Persistent rain and wet outfield forced the opening day's play of the second Test between Bangladesh and Pakistan to be called off without toss at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday. However, weather forecasts suggest that Rawalpindi will enjoy bright sinshine today. The tourists are leading the two-match series 1-0 following their 10-wicket win in the first Test at the same venue last week.
PHOTO: **AFP**

Big-spending Brighton to trouble Arsenal?

City look to continue dominance at West Ham

AGENCIES

Two of the four sides still with a perfect record meet at the Emirates as Arsenal host Brighton on Saturday.

The Seagulls have become accustomed to having their best talents picked off by richer rivals in recent years but this time it is Brighton who have been one of the biggest spenders in the division.

New boss Fabian Hurzeler has been backed with nearly a £200 million spending spree on eight new signings.

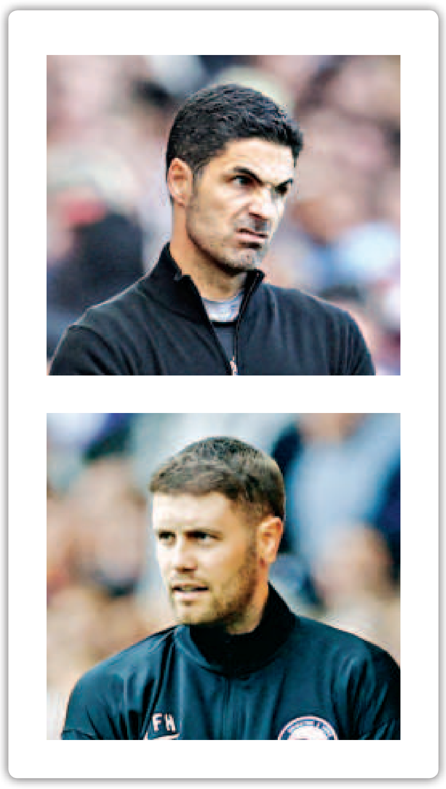
That investment has been met with an immediate reward in wins over Everton and United, but 31-year-old Hurzeler is aware of the step up in class his side face at the Emirates Stadium.

"They're one of the best teams in the world at the moment," said the youngest manager in Premier League history.

"They don't have a lot of weaknesses, they have quality and solutions for all phases.

"We're going to need a really good day. We'll need individual performances, a great togetherness. We go there to win because my squad has the potential."

Arsenal's long-awaited midfield boost came midweek when the Gunners signed Spaniard Mikel Merino from Rael Sociedad for a fee of 31 million pounds but an expected debut will have to wait as the 28-year-old suffered a shoulder injury in his first training session which has sidelined him for weeks.



"It's very unfortunate. Yesterday he had a collision and got a shoulder injury. He's going to be out for a few weeks. It's really bad luck and we were all very excited. He was looking very good, but he landed on the floor; Gabi went on top of him and it looks like he's got a small fracture probably. He was in so much pain, so we have to wait and see with the staff to do some more tests to have more conclusive answers," Arteta said.

Meanwhile, in the capital, West Ham host reigning champions Manchester City who also have won their opening two fixtures. Pep Guardiola's side followed up a 2-0 win at Chelsea with a 4-1 thumping of newly-promoted Ipswich Town which starred Erling Haaland's 23rd career hattrick, 10th for City.

West Ham have hardly been able to trouble City in the past decade as they have failed to win any of their last 17 Premier League meetings with the Citizens since a 2-1 away victory in September 2015 under former boss Slaven Bilic.

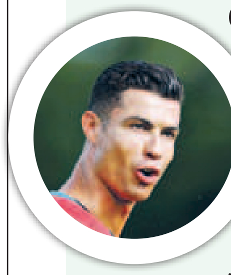
City have scored more away goals against West Ham than they have against any other Premier League side (42), while their 25 goals at the London Stadium is the most an away side has scored at a venue since its opening in 2016-17.

The Citizens also have sweet memories of their last visit to the London Stadium as a 3-1 win on the final day of the last season sealed an unprecedented fourth successive league title.

For City, star midfielder Rodri still remains a doubt as Mateo Kovacic continues to get the nod and Phil Foden who missed the win over Ipswich through illness is expected to return to the lineup.

SHORT CORNER

Ronaldo in Portugal squad for Nations League games



Cristiano Ronaldo has kept his place in the Portugal squad for next month's UEFA Nations games against Croatia and Scotland despite an ineffective display at Euro 2024. The 39-year-old failed to score as he appeared at a record sixth European Championship, with Portugal exiting in the quarterfinals, but he retains the backing of coach Roberto Martinez.

Ancellotti says there is no excuse for Real's slow start

Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti said on Thursday there was no excuse for his side's slow start to the La Liga season after the team fought back to rescue a 1-1 draw at lowly Las Palmas thanks to a Vinicius Jr goal late in the second half. Ancelotti said he expected his team to play better together and blamed himself, saying that he needs to work harder and do a better job. "It is clear that we are struggling to find the soundness of last season. But we must not look for excuses," Ancelotti told a news conference.

United to face Mourinho's Fenerbahce

Manchester United will travel to Turkish giants Fenerbahce, now coached by Jose Mourinho, among their eight games in the league phase of the new-look Europa League, the draw for which took place in Monaco on Friday. The Old Trafford club won the Europa League with Mourinho as coach in 2017. He recently became coach of Fenerbahce, who were knocked out of the Champions League in the third qualifying round.

De Bruyne in, Lukaku out in Belgium's Nations League squad

Kevin De Bruyne was included in Belgium's squad for next week's Nations League matches but Romelu Lukaku was omitted after asking for time off to concentrate on getting fit after his move to Napoli, coach Domenico Tedesco announced on Friday. There had been much speculation about the international future of the 33-year-old De Bruyne, who had complained about a potentially exhausting season with multiple commitments ahead for both his club Manchester City and the Belgian side.

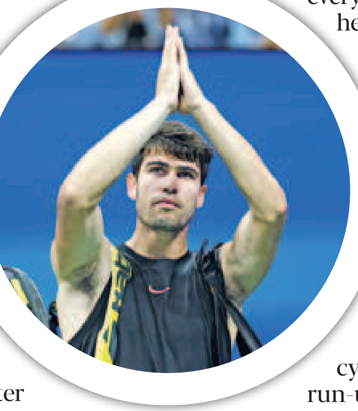
**Read full stories on The Daily Star's website*

Gus Atkinson cemented his love affair with Lord's by scoring a maiden century on Friday, with his 118 powering England to an imposing first-innings 427 all out against Sri Lanka on the second day of the second Test. The 26-year-old had taken 12 wickets on his debut at the same venue against the West Indies last month. The lanky pacer later took a wicket as England reduced the visitors to 129 for seven at tea.
PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Alcaraz makes 'no excuse' after shock defeat

REUTERS, *New York*

Carlos Alcaraz made no excuses for his shock second-round exit at the US Open on Thursday after the former champion crumbled to a 6-1, 7-5, 6-4 defeat at the hands of Dutchman Botic van de Zandschulp.



Unseeded Van de Zandschulp was a huge underdog against a player who was on a 15-match winning streak at the majors, and fans inside Arthur Ashe Stadium could scarcely believe their eyes as Alcaraz dished out error after error in the shock loss.

"I think my level stayed at the same point all the match, and it wasn't enough to win the match or to give myself the chance to get into the match or trying to give myself chances," he said.

"So, you know, what can I say? I didn't feel well hitting the ball. I think I made a lot of mistakes. When I wanted to come back or I think I wanted to come back, it was too late."

Alcaraz, winner of the last two Grand Slams at Roland Garros and Wimbledon, had made it to at least the quarterfinal stage at every major in which he has competed since winning the US Open two years ago.

But there were warning signs the 21-year-old, who won silver at the Paris Olympics, was not firing on all cylinders in the run-up to Flushing Meadows, losing to Gael Monfils in the second round of the Cincinnati tune-up tournament.

"I came here with not as much energy as I thought that I was going to come. But, I mean, I don't want to put that as excuse," he told reporters.

Meanwhile, Van de Zandschulp, who will next face Britain's Jack Draper, had contemplated retiring from the game by the end of the year due to foot injuries. However, the 28-year-old world number 74 might think differently now as he romped to his biggest win of his career.

"Maybe I'm still processing it," Van de Zandschulp said shortly after his stunning win over the 2022 champion.

"Maybe in a couple of hours or tomorrow, I feel a little bit more emotional with what happened tonight."

Van de Zandschulp bruised a bone in his left foot last year and later tore ankle ligaments, before dealing with an infection on his right foot. He began questioning his future in the sport after a first-round defeat at the French Open in May.

"At the time I said it [about retiring], I was thinking about it. It was just more the way things were going. Of course, I would give myself to the end of the year and see how everything was progressing. Yeah, of course, there was a serious thought," said Van de Zandschulp, who was ranked 115th in April.

Bangladesh national football team players and officials pose for a group photograph at the Paro International Airport after reaching Bhutan yesterday morning. The charges of Javier Cabrera will play two FIFA friendly matches against the hosts at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu on September 5 and 8.
PHOTO: **BFF**

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NATURAL DISASTERS

1.83cr affected in Bangladesh over last four months

Says UN agency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

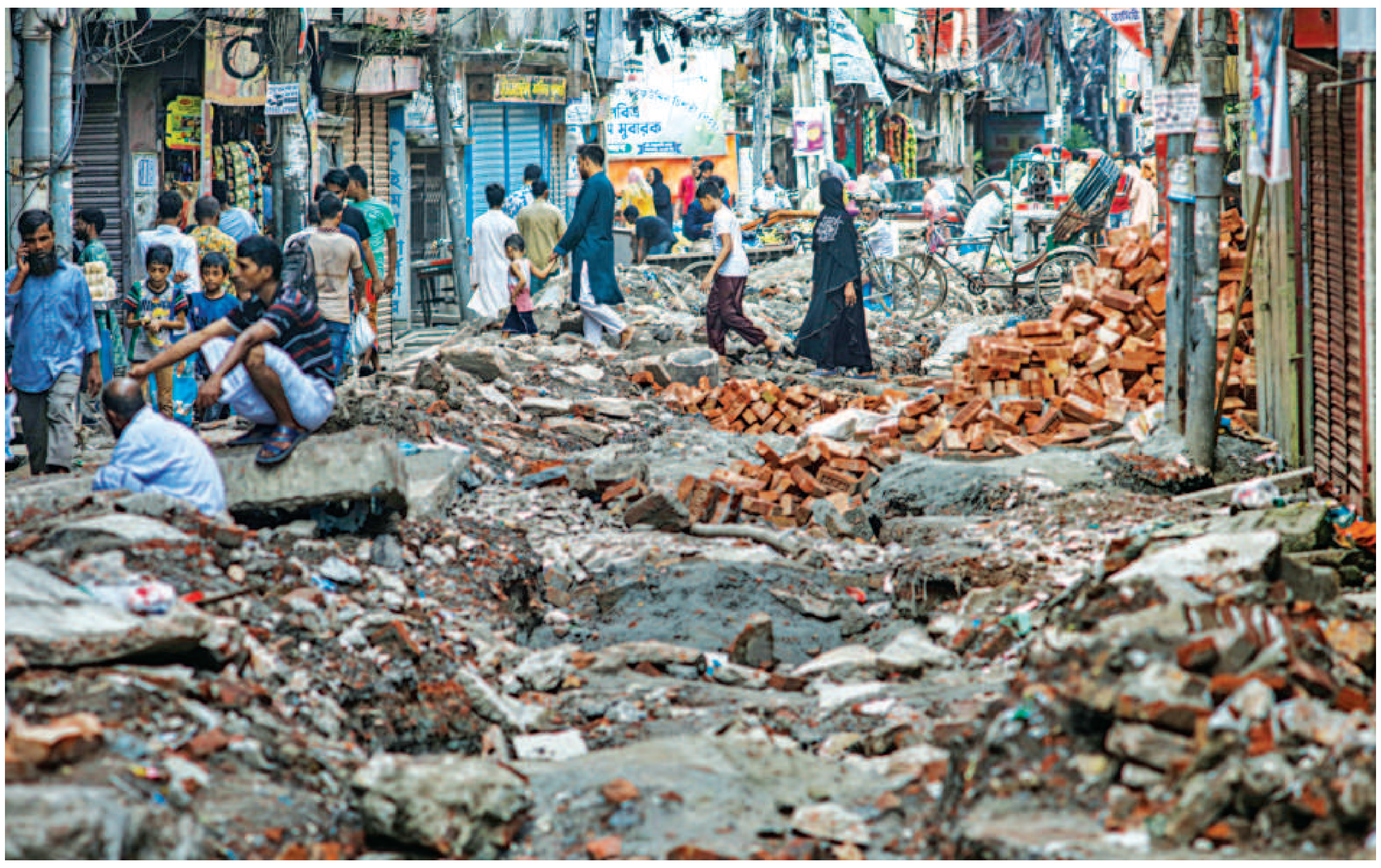
A total of 1.83 crore people in the country have been affected by natural disasters, including cyclones and floods, over the four months from May to August, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The recent floods in the southeastern and northeastern regions had the most significant impact, affecting 59 lakh people, as reported by OCHA on Thursday.

These floods have been the most severe disaster of the year so far. Earlier this year, cyclone Rimal, which struck the coast on May 26, affected 46 lakh people.

The UN reported that recent flash floods in Bangladesh have devastated communities across 11 eastern districts. Over 5 lakh people are displaced in 3,403 evacuation shelters, the report mentioned.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



The authorities have dug up Nazimuddin Road in Old Dhaka to carry out drainage work, which has been going on for over six months. Slow progress of the work is causing difficulties for the road users. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Fakhrul calls for UN-led investigation

UNB, *Dhaka*

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday urged the interim government to open an investigation under the United Nations into the enforced disappearances that occurred over the last 15 years.

Speaking at a solidarity meeting, he also called upon the government to take steps to provide allowances to the families of the victims of enforced disappearance.

"I have been in politics for a long time... I knew about arrests and killings, but I was not aware of enforced disappearances. Since the Awami League came to power [in 2009], the law enforcement agencies used state power to commit such heinous crimes against humanity," the BNP leader said.

Fakhrul lauded the interim government for signing the UN convention against enforced disappearances.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

MITIGATING FLOOD RISK

India appears positive about new mechanism

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Delhi*

India yesterday appeared to respond positively to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus' suggestion of a new mechanism to share the data on water flow in cross-border rivers and help mitigate the threat of future floods.

Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for India's Ministry of External Affairs, told the weekly media briefing in New Delhi that established joint procedures and mechanisms between the two countries are already in place.

"We have been exchanging timely data with Bangladesh. We have conveyed to them that this year's flood [in Tripura] was caused by excessive rains and not by any dam," he said while responding to a question on Yunus' suggestion.

However, if there is a suggestion for a new mechanism to mitigate the flood problem, "I think we can consider how we can take it forward," said Jaiswal.

Asked about a CNN report on the flood in northeastern Bangladesh, the MEA spokesperson said, "We have seen the CNN report. Its narrative is misleading and suggests that India is responsible for the floods. It is actually not correct and ignores the facts mentioned in the press release issued by the government of India clarifying the situation."

"They also have ignored [in the report] that we regularly and timely exchange data and critical information through existing joint mechanisms for water resources management."

Jaiswal said the Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh, during his meeting with the chief adviser some days back, discussed several issues about the bilateral relationship including the flood.

According to Jaiswal, the Indian high commissioner told Prof Yunus that India would like to continue to work with Bangladesh to fulfill the shared aspirations of the peoples of both countries for prosperity, security and development.

"We are committed to taking forward the bilateral relationship in line with our national priorities," he added.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Pakistan PM calls Yunus, seeks to deepen ties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pakistan Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus over the phone yesterday, congratulating him on his assumption of the leadership of the interim government of Bangladesh.

The Pakistan PM offered his best wishes and hoped the goodwill between the two South Asian countries would translate into substantial cooperation for the benefit of their peoples, according to the chief adviser's press wing.

Prof Yunus thanked PM Sharif for the phone call and his earlier message conveying sympathy for the flood victims of Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Israel raids West Bank for third day

Three killed; Kamala Harris says Washington's policy of supplying weapons to Israel to continue if she is elected

AFP, JENIN

Israel said it killed three Hamas militants in an air strike in the occupied West Bank yesterday, taking the death toll from a large-scale military operation now in its third day to at least 19.

A top UN aid official meanwhile questioned "what has become of our basic humanity", as the war raged on in Gaza where humanitarian operations struggled to respond.

In the United States, Vice President Kamala Harris pledged she will not change Washington's policy of supplying weapons to Israel if elected to the top job in November. But she stressed it was time to "end this war" in Gaza.

Israel has described its raids on towns and refugee camps across the northern West Bank as "counter-terrorism" operations.

They have killed at least 19 Palestinians since Wednesday, the military and the Palestinian health ministry said.

Palestinian militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad have said at least 13 of those killed were their fighters.

The military said it killed three Hamas militants in an air strike near the northern city of Jenin yesterday.

Witnesses told AFP the strike hit a car in the town of Zababdeh, southeast of the city.

Israeli troops pulled back from other West Bank towns late Thursday but fighting raged on around Jenin, long a hub of militant activity.

An AFP journalist reported loud explosions from the city's refugee camp and thick plumes of smoke rising from the area.

In Gaza, Israeli artillery pounded western areas of Gaza City early yesterday, an AFP journalist said, while a medical source at the southern Nasser Hospital said an Israeli strike killed three people near the southern city of Khan Yunis.

The World Health Organization said Israel had agreed to at least three days of "humanitarian pauses" in parts of Gaza, starting Sunday, to facilitate a vaccination drive after the territory recorded its first case of polio in a quarter of a century.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the measures were "not a ceasefire" in the nearly 11-month war.

The Israeli assault on the West Bank has caused significant destruction, especially in Tulkarem, whose governor Mustafa Taqatqa described the raids as "unprecedented" and a "dangerous signal".

- Israel army says ends month-long operation in south, central Gaza
- UK voices concerns at Israel's 'methods' in West Bank raid
- WHO said Israel agrees to three days of "humanitarian pauses" in parts of Gaza

Judiciary sees major reshuffle

81 lower court judges transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has made a major reshuffle in the judiciary by transferring 81 lower court judges, including district and additional district judges, metropolitan and chief judicial magistrates.

Among the judges, 80 have been asked to join their new workplaces on September 3.

The law ministry issued four notifications to this effect on Thursday, mentioning that transfers of lower court judges were done in consultation with the Supreme Court.

Among the transferred judges, 80 have been asked to join their new workplaces on September 3 and another has been asked to join the new office on September 1 after vesting their responsibilities in their higher authorities.

The Daily Star tried to get comments from Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul, but he neither picked up our phone calls nor responded to text messages.

SEIZING BLACK MONEY

ACC to start special drive next week

DIPAN NANDY

The Anti-Corruption Commission is set to launch a special drive next week against corrupt individuals and black money.

The graft watchdog is also working on forming several teams, led by ACC directors, to conduct the drive. One such team has already been assembled.

"The six-member team would assist the law enforcement agencies with seizing evidence and legal support during the special drive," reads an office order issued last Sunday by ACC Director General Golam Shahriar Chowdhury.

The commission will deploy its personnel nationwide for these operations, several senior ACC officials told The Daily Star.

Following the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government on August 5, the ACC seems to have become active as it started investigating some former AL ministers and lawmakers.

The commission is also probing some former influential bureaucrats and senior police officials.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

This handout picture released by the Israeli army yesterday reportedly shows Israeli soldiers operating in Jenin in the occupied West Bank.

PHOTO: AFP

Death toll from floods rises to 54 in nine districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 54 people, including six women and seven children, died in the ongoing floods in nine districts until yesterday, the disaster management and relief ministry said in its latest release.

Nineteen people died in Feni, 14 in Cumilla, eight in Noakhlai, six in Chattogram, three in Cox's Bazar, and one each in Moulvibazar, Lakshmipur, Brahmanbaria and Khagrachhari.

Besides, one person in Moulvibazar remained missing.

The release said the overall flood situation in Sylhet, Habiganj and Chattogram districts improved yesterday.

As part of its relief efforts, the ministry as of yesterday disbursed Tk 4.52 crore in cash, 20,650 tonnes of rice, 15,000 packs or sacks of dry and other foods, Tk 35 lakh for children food, and another Tk 35 lakh for cattle feed.

Also, 1,15,105 packs of relief materials, including dry food, clothes and drinking water collected by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement were sent to the flood-hit areas through the Department of Disaster Management.

The recent floods affected more than 54 lakh people in 11 districts in Chattogram and Sylhet divisions and 10.09 lakh families became stranded.

Areas in 64 upazilas were inundated during the floods, with 486 unions and municipalities affected.

The authorities have opened 3,269 shelter centres for the flood victims. Besides, 567 medical teams are providing treatment to them.

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When floods came, students rose to challenge

“Relief materials barely entered the remote areas of Silonia, Poshugram and Fulgazi. Those who stayed behind and somehow escaped death, were without food and pure water for days. When we first entered these areas, people broke down in tears seeing us. They were desperate for just a sip of pure water, some wanted medicine. People were crying for just a handful of puffed rice,” said Faysal.

MASHFIQ MIZAN *and*
NAIMUR RAHMAN

Hundreds of students from Dhaka, Chattogram and districts in between were seen marching towards Feni on August 22. They travelled in trucks, with speedboats and life jackets, on a mission to rescue those stranded by the unprecedented floods that swept through the region.

This was no organised operation -- this was a spontaneous, student-led mobilisation, born from the heart of a country still vibrating with the energy of a historic uprising.

Only weeks earlier, on August 5, these same students had toppled a government they believed had failed them.

In the streets, the slogan “Desh ta karo baaper naa” (The country does not belong to anyone’s father) echoed.

Another slogan, “Tumi ke? Ami ke? Bikolpo, Bikolpo, Bikolpo!” (Who are you? Who am I? We are the alternatives!) served as a rebuttal to the narrative that there was no alternative to the old regime.

So, the floodwaters came like a test, and the youth of Bangladesh rose to meet it.

Within hours of the disaster, these students had arranged trucks and speedboats and set off to help the flood-hit people.

They didn’t wait for orders, didn’t pause for bureaucracy; they simply acted. In their hands, the nation found its first responders.

People from all walks of life chipped in. Some joined the rescue operations, while others collected and sent relief materials to those in need.

It was not driven by any political agenda but by the simple desire to save lives.

The risks were enormous. These were students, many of whom had never seen a flood like this, and never handled a rescue operation.

At least one student lost his life when a speedboat overturned during a rescue mission.

The students knew the risks, but they also knew the stakes -- they were saving lives, taking responsibility for their country in a way that no one had asked them to, but that everyone needed them to.

This was patriotism in action, a continuation of the uprising that had shaken the country just weeks before. The floods revealed the true character of a generation that had already proved its mettle in the streets. They showed that the slogans were not just words, but a promise they were determined to keep.

THE RESCUE EFFORTS

“Is there anyone who needs help?” The students’ voices pierced the darkness as their speedboats cut through the floodwaters. Lights from their torches scanned for any sign of life. The current was strong, but they pressed on.

In Silonia, one of the worst-hit areas alongside Poshugram and Fulgazi, they saw tin-shed houses submerged, with only rooftops occasionally visible through the water.

Despite the danger, a rescue team led by Faysal Showdagar, a student from the University of Asia Pacific, braved these waters.

The water had already reached the second floor of buildings, forcing many to seek refuge on rooftops.

Two journalists from this newspaper were with them as they rescued around 100 people in batches, prioritising women, children, and the elderly.

The rescued were taken to areas where the water was lower and then transferred to tractors, which brought them to shelter centres near Feni town.

In Silonia, the correspondents saw a two-storied school building, intended as a flood shelter, completely submerged. The water had risen to the stairs and even reached the second floor, forcing everyone to seek refuge on the roof.

Faysal’s teams had to conduct rescues from these very shelter centres, as even designated safe havens went under water.

Earlier, Mashrafee, a student from Ahsanullah University and a member of Faysal’s team, heard the cries of a family trapped in a partially submerged tin house.

With water up to their chests, the 10 family members were desperate.

“I managed to cut through the tin roof, pulling each one to safety,” Mashrafee recounted.

Among those saved by students in Siilonia was Shahinur Akhter, a 24-year-old pregnant woman, who had been stranded on a roof without food for nearly two days.

Her labour pains had already begun, and she had nearly lost hope when Faysal’s team arrived.

They quickly evacuated her and brought her to a local clinic, where she gave birth a few hours later. Both mother and child are safe now.

“The students saved me and my baby. I have no words to express my gratitude. I want them to name my newborn,” Shahinur said.

The rescue efforts were fraught with challenges -- communication blackouts, no electricity, and the constant fear of losing team members in the chaos.

Yet, the students, different groups of volunteers -- like Nasimul Alam from Tongi, Md Rafat Hossen from Dhaka, Md Rakbul Islam from Dhaka University, and Md Rezaul Islam, a madrasa student, continued their mission.

In areas where even trained forces hesitated to enter due to the risks, these young heroes pressed on, saving lives against all odds.

Hundreds, seeing the rescue boats, scrambled to board, but with limited space, not everyone could be saved. The decision to take some aboard while leaving others behind was a difficult one to make, they said.

STUDENT-LED RELIEF ENDEAVOUR

An elderly disabled beggar was seen contributing a portion of his meagre earnings to the students collecting funds and relief for flood victims.

Children as young as five brought their piggy banks to university students, eager to help those affected by the floods. Rickshaw pullers, too, donated a part of their income.

People from all walks of life responded to the students’ call.

Universities like Dhaka, Jagannath, and Jahangirnagar became hubs for these student-led relief efforts, uniting the nation in a powerful display of solidarity and compassion.

“I wanted to help the flood-affected people. I wish everyone would come forward to help,” said 12-year-old Raisa Mehjabin, a sixth grader.

Marina Akhter, a homemaker who came from Mirpur to Dhaka University, said, “Since students of the anti-discrimination movement are collecting funds, I have decided to donate from a place of trust.”

At DU, the ground floor of the TSC building overflowed with relief materials, so much so that supplies were also stored at the DU Central Field, Ducsu Bhaban, and the Social Science Building. Hundreds of volunteers tirelessly collected, sorted, and packaged these goods, which were then loaded onto trucks and dispatched to the flood-affected areas.

“For the past 16 years, we have seen these kinds of initiatives be limited to the government’s student organisations. But before that, during any crisis, we used to see collective participation from everyone. It seems that we have returned to that place,” said Prof Tanzim Uddin Khan of the Department of International Relations at DU.

The Daily Star and other media outlets have published multiple reports based on the relief efforts in DU.

However, there were concerns about a lack of coordination and delays in relief distribution. Some relief materials did not reach the most affected victims due to inaccessible conditions.

But the students against discrimination platform, who were in charge of the relief operation at DU, was transparent by announcing how much money they collected every day.

On Wednesday, they gave a detailed account on how much money was spent on which sectors and how many relief materials were distributed.

The platform’s leaders claimed they have addressed the allegations and ensured that relief efforts are being coordinated effectively.

Meanwhile, left-leaning student bodies organised a concert to collect relief in DU, from where they collected cash worth Tk 21,78,757.

They also received a large amount of dry food, salines, clothes, and water from the concert. The organisers also provided a detailed account of their expenditures and the current status of the relief distribution.

Meanwhile in Feni, this newspaper spoke with the student volunteers who are still working to send relief materials to remote areas. They shared how they encountered people who had been without food for days.

“Relief materials barely entered the remote areas of Silonia, Poshugram and Fulgazi. Those who stayed behind and somehow escaped death, were without food and pure water for days. When we first entered these areas, people broke down in tears seeing us. They were desperate for just a sip of pure water, some wanted medicine. People were crying for just a handful of puffed rice,” said Faysal.

Others shared similar accounts.

As the trucks and boats moved through the floodwaters, as students worked through sleepless nights, a new Bangladesh was being born -- a nation where the people, not the politicians, were in charge.

Sure, there were some lack of coordination, instances of infighting and isolated occurrences of mismanagement, but the younger generation stepped up in a time of crisis, and in doing so, they have saved countless lives.

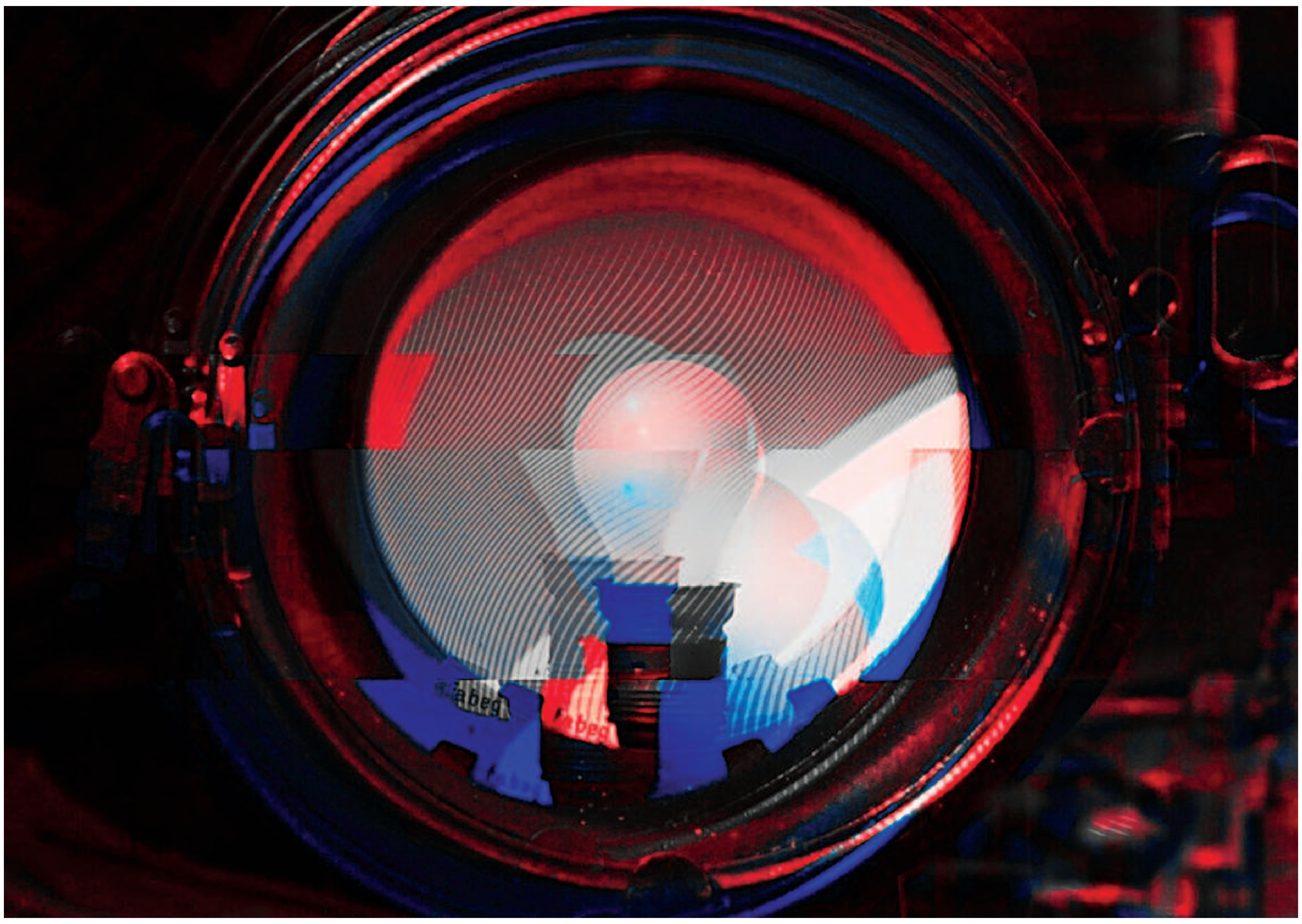

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

FICTION

The floodlights

The cub was overwhelmed with anger, exhaustion, and agony—a destructive amalgamation. The other tigers shared his wounds; they growled furiously.

AFIFA ALAM RAISA

Chaos. More chaos.

The cub, still half-strapped with the stretcher in the middle of the vast cricket stadium, tried to shift to a more comfortable position. He let out a sigh, his eyes still shut tight. The poor thing could feel his fellow tigers munching ceaselessly at the straps—tigers bigger and stronger than him. For that, he was grateful. More grateful than he had ever been in the past. They had already pulled out, not with little effort, the dirty cloth that was stuffed into his mouth. He licked the inside of his mouth, as if to taste his newfound freedom.

He slowly opened his eyes. From the wrinkles around them, it was certain that the floodlights were not on the cub's side.

Then he saw them: blue shadows looming over him. He had seen them before, and he knew he would see them again. Most of them were harmless; some among them even stroked his fur from time to time. Their collective presence nevertheless gave rise to an odd blend of excitement and unpleasantness in his mind. It always did.

The cub finally spoke, his voice almost a whisper. "The floodlights."

"What about them?" someone asked.

"They are unfairly bright. My eyes hurt."

"The floodlights?"

"Yes, the floodlights."

Then he saw them coming: dark shadows looming over the blue ones. Most of the latter disappeared at once. A few remained. The cub could not see their allies, the mice, but he could hear them screeching irritably at a distance.

Chaos. More chaos.

"You talk too much," said a dark one.

"The floodlights are hurting my eyes."

"You talk too much! The floodlights? We shall open the gates and take the lights away."

"Don't..."

"We have done this before. We shall do it again."

The miserable creature had a lot to say, and not just about the floodlights. But he said nothing. He knew it would happen, perhaps seconds, minutes, hours, or days later; it did not really matter.

And it did happen. They opened the gates, taking the lights away. Floodlights did hurt, but without the lights, they were worse.

Chaos. More chaos.

The cub was overwhelmed with anger, exhaustion, and agony—a destructive amalgamation. The other tigers shared his wounds; they growled furiously.

He knew the dark shadows. He knew the mice. They would not stop.

But he also knew the tigers—tigers bigger and stronger than him, than the shadows, than the mice. They would not stop either.

Chaos. More chaos?

Afifa Alam Raisa *is a book reviewer and an undergraduate student pursuing Bachelor's of English at East West University. Apart from being a cricket freak, she is a voracious reader and a passionate writer. She knows very little about herself.*

POETRY

Two poems by Kazi Nazrul Islam

Jabar bela fele jeo ekti khopar phul

Leave a flower from your bun
when you depart, my love.
Lay your eyes on mine,
behold a little delusion, my love.
With a flash of smile in a corner of your lips,
dispel away all the gloom deep within my mind—
don't part away swaying your diamond hoops.
Emit a word or an expression of love
I wish to sing in tune time and again—
consider me a friend, my love, and hold my hands.
Leave a flower from your bun,
when you depart, my love.

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

Swapane eshechilo mridubhashini

In a dream came the soft-spoken sylph,
the soft-spoken and sweet-smiling sylph.
To soothe a devotee, she came as a celestial beauty,
the imagined damsel dwelling in my inner territory.
In an assignation came the indifferent sylph,
the paragon of beauty limned in my heart.
In a dream came the soft-spoken sylph...

ILLUSTRATION: **AMREETA LETHE**

Translated by Mohammad Shafiqul Islam

Mohammad Shafiqul Islam, *poet, translator, and academic, is Professor at the Department of English at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet.*

POETRY

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

Survival tactics for "peaceful" protests

FAIZA RAMIM

Stay in a group, never in alleyways
Chaos is your best friend; your voice, a weapon.
Your power is in your numbers.
Let people know where you are whenever you get the chance,
So they know the starting point of where to look for you.
Don't get killed
But just in case,
Use your name and emergency contact as your lock screen.
Wear your institution's badge as one of honour
You're a student
You're learning,
Practicals on human anatomy, or the complex structure of bones
And how to wrap the copies across your chest to protect them
Because you're also learning to be frugal, makeshift gears to make use of everything.
Practicals on the refractive indices of lens
Followed by the ones in your eyes.
When hit with tear gas, try not to focus on the burning in your lungs
Or the swelling of your chest,
the blinding pain, or the gasps for clean air
Toothpaste doesn't help, but put it on as a warpaint, a placating placebo
Until your student instincts kick in.
Moxifloxacin for seven days if you live that long
Artificial tears, because unfortunately the real ones won't suffice,
For 15 days (if you live that long)
And Ce vit for a month
if you live that long.
Cover your ears at the sight of a sound grenade
And open your mouth to neutralise the pressure.
Don't run away. The ringing in your ears will stop eventually
Don't run away. Unless you see the bullets firing (and hope it's just the rubber ones)
Unless you see.
Flash bangs, smoke grenades
When hit with tear shells, try to trade one burning in your lungs with another
And light up a cigarette.

Faiza Ramim *is a final year student of BBA at the University of Dhaka. She likes to watch sad films and write sad poems.*

FICTION

Dual faces of an unseen predator

NAFISA AFREEN MEGHA

In a world spun from the threads of chaos, we are born into a tapestry of shadows. We are shimmering maidens in the night, nurturing within us a fire both subtle and strong. Yet, the air around us is heavy with whispers–danger and desire intertwined.

We walk the streets with anklets that jingle like wind chimes, but each step is taken with caution. The shadows stretch long, even at noon, as if to remind us of the fiends lurking in every corner, their eyes tracing our silhouettes like hunters stalking prey. The streets twist into dark corridors, and each step seems to be followed by a shadow that isn't ours, beating with the unknown threat that chases us by day and haunts us by night.

Our voices craft a tune that could awaken the sleeping gods, yet they are swallowed by the chaos of a world that cherishes only the thunder of a patriarch's roar. Our thoughts, so vivid and chaotic like a monsoon storm, are dismissed as mere drizzles, insignificant against the flood of recognition that parches our souls. We are the Goddess of Sagacity in a world that only worships power, our wisdom lost in the ocean of oblivion. No matter how high we fly, the sky remains beyond our grip, tethered by invisible strings, held tight by the hands of those who are threatened by our potential.

ILLUSTRATION: **MAISHA SYEDA**

The predator wears many masks, each face a vow of something unspeakable. It is the ghost of old fears, its eyes are mirrors that reflect our own insecurities, a shadow hidden in the mundanities of everyday life. We feel it in the fleeting touch of an unknown hand, in the hollow echoes of a whispered promise, in the niceties of insincere gestures. Like the young girl who trusted the warmth of a father figure, her innocence shattered by the unseen face of that predator, her trust forever lost in betrayal. Or the lady in white coat who craved sanctuary in a place of learning, only to watch that shelter become a theater of treachery. Or the child who put faith in a guiding hand, only to have her expectations destroyed by deceit masked as support.

In the eternal darkness of our lives, we fight with a never ending truth etched into the depth of our existence. Safe streets, safe homes, safe haven are only but an elusive dream in a world where danger lurks in every shadow, every corner, every man. No matter how deeply we love or how boldly we confront the darkness, they are persistent, their faces constantly changing, their intentions hidden in the curves of our everyday struggles. In a world so drenched in endless threat, will we ever find solace or a way to mend? It's a question that will forever haunt us, like a predator we can't quite fend.

Nafisa Afreen Megha *is an aspiring writer from Dhaka, Bangladesh. Her work consists of her individual thoughts, carefully put into words and turned to poetry. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in English at North South University.*

Overlanding in Africa

Touring 10 countries in 93 days

Julia Parvin and Shemon Alam, a Bangladeshi couple now living in UAE and Kenya, love adventure travelling. They are now busy planning their next adventure: touring the world on wheels in 2 years.

Want to share your travel experiences with us? Please send your stories to **holiday@thedailystar.net**

JULIA PARVIN

"Overlanding", might be more familiar to Westerners, but it's a concept anyone can embrace. It isn't a typical vacation or guided tour. It's a self-sufficient adventure travel style where one can conquer long distances, exploring for weeks, months, or even years.

Where did our overlanding obsession begin? It wasn't just about pushing our comfort zones; it was a yearning to experience the world on our own terms and to master new skills along the way. Overlanding's greatest allure lies in the freedom – freedom to choose our path, set our pace, and truly connect with the world around us. We believe it's the perfect way to test our limits and discover a deeper sense of self.

Our meticulous planning began with crafting the perfect itinerary, drawing inspiration from must-see destinations and independently researching routes to match our ideal travel style and timeframe. The first hurdle was obtaining visas for East and Southern Africa, a task that tested the limit of our -- two Bangladeshi passport holders – patience.

Transforming our Lexus 450h into a camper was the next challenge. We spent countless nights measuring and re-measuring, arguing over the best layout. We wanted our vehicle to be both a home and a fortress -- something that could carry us through the harshest terrains while offering a sliver of comfort at the end of a long day. The final design, with its lower storage compartment and upper sleeping platform, felt like an extension of ourselves: practical, resilient, and ready for anything.

January 2nd, 2024. The day we finally set out from Mombasa, Kenya for a journey that lasted 87 days in which we covered over 20,000 kilometres crossing ten borders. Starting in Kenya, we traversed Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Burundi and Tanzania before returning to Kenya.

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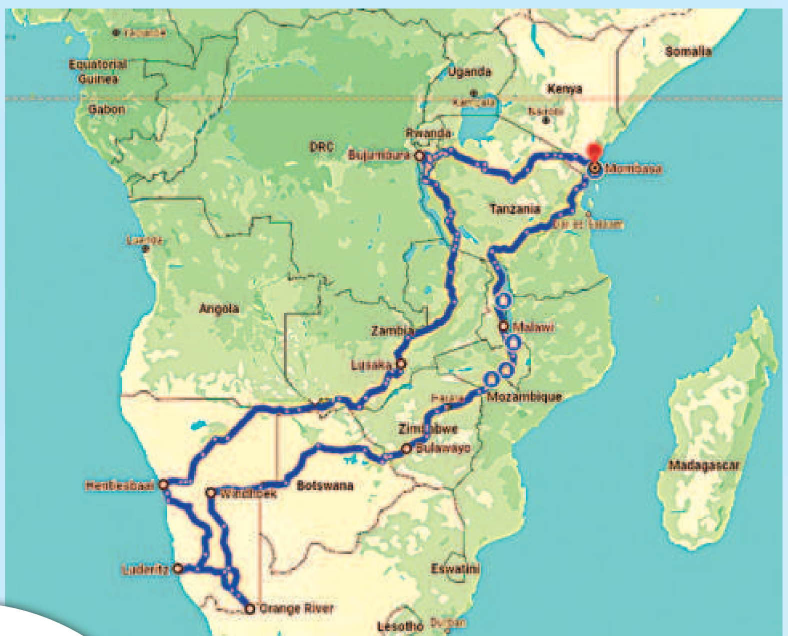
We had been to Tanzania before, but this time was different. Instead of tourist spots and guided tours, we sought out the paths less travelled. The roads were rough, the landscapes unforgiving, but there was a beauty in the challenge.

If Tanzania was the start of our journey, Malawi was where it began to take shape. The country is called the "Warm Heart of Africa," for its friendly people. This narrow, landlocked country is home to the magnificent Lake Malawi, stretching two-thirds of its length. At 474 meters above sea level, the 580-kilometre-long lake is also called the "Lake of Stars" for the twinkling lights of fishing boats at night and the mesmerising reflection of stars on its calm waters.



Entering Mozambique, our first stop was the impressive Cahora Bassa Dam. The dam's sheer size and the breathtaking views that surround it leave visitors in awe.

Our journey then took a dramatic turn in Zimbabwe, where pothole-ridden roads tested our endurance. Near Harare, tyre damage led to a potential robbery, reminding us of the risks of overland travel. A local helped us change the tyres at midnight and escorted us to safety. This experience highlighted the serious threat posed by Zimbabwe's roads, underscoring the importance of carrying multiple spare wheels.

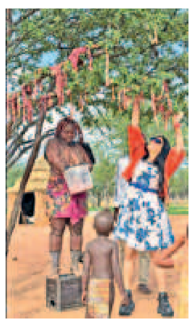
But then came Victoria Falls, like a gift from the gods. The sight of the mighty Zambezi River cascading over the edge, sending up a roar that could be heard for miles, was enough to make us forget all our troubles. Standing at twice the height of Niagara Falls, Victoria Falls, with over 5 million cubic meters of water cascading over its edge every minute, is a truly breathtaking sight. Standing there, amidst the rising mists and the ground shaking beneath our feet, we felt truly alive. It was a reminder of the raw power of nature and our place within it—small, insignificant, but still a part of the whole.

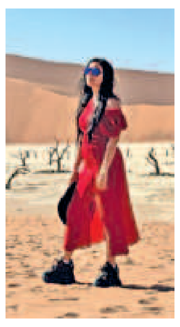
Our next destination was Botswana. From the arid Kalahari Desert to the lush Okavango Delta, this is a land of contrasts. Here, we embarked on safaris and saw elephants, lions, and other magnificent wildlife in their natural habitat. Exploring the Okavango Delta in a mokoro, yacht through its intricate waterways is an immersive experience.

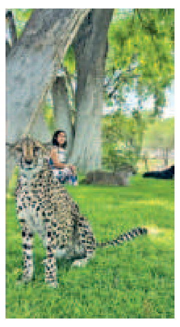
Exploring Namibia was like wandering in an alien world. From landscapes to people, this country is full of surprises. From the bustling capital, Windhoek, you can explore the otherworldly Skeleton Coast and the vast Etosha Pan, the world's largest salt pan. Namibia's vast landscape has the world's oldest desert, the Namib, and the hauntingly beautiful Deadvlei, a white clay pan with ancient tree remnants. You can also see the Hoba Meteorite, the largest known on Earth. With only 2.6 million people, Namibia's sparse population contrasts with its rich diversity of indigenous tribes. This country has so much to offer to someone who wants to explore.

Zambia offered both the highs and lows of our journey. A highlight of this country is undoubtedly a visit to Kariba Dam. This engineering marvel generates power for the region. It also created Lake Kariba, the world's largest man-made lake by volume. The surrounding Kariba Gorge captivates with dramatic landscapes, rugged cliffs, and lush vegetation.

However, our journey took a heartbreaking turn at the Nc'wala ceremony in Chipata, a cultural celebration of the Ngoni people. The theft of our belongings -- an iPhone 15 Pro Max, backup hard drives, memory cards, and more -- cast a shadow over the experience. Despite relentless efforts to recover them, we returned empty-handed. Though the precious visual records of the journey were lost, the memories are still fresh in our minds.







After setbacks in Zambia, we lifted our spirits by discovering the Isimila Stone Age site near Iringa, Tanzania. Estimated to be 60,000 to 100,000 years old, Isimila's ancient stone tools and towering natural pillars offer a glimpse into early human history in East Africa. Walking through the canyon, we marvelled at nature's incredible creations.

In northern Tanzania, the Ngorongoro Crater, the world's largest intact caldera, shelters one of the most stunning wildlife havens. Once higher than Mt. Kilimanjaro, this ancient volcano collapsed, forming a natural wonder home to diverse wildlife. It is often described as a "natural 7 wonders of the world". In addition to its wildlife, the Ngorongoro Crater is also significant for its cultural heritage. The famous Maasai tribe lives here, keeping alive their cattle grazing tradition for centuries.

As we crossed into Burundi from Tanzania, the weather turned bad. An eerie fog rolled in, shrouding the road to Bujumbura, Burundi's capital. Rain lashed down, and thunder rumbled in the distance, making the treacherous mountain road nearly impossible to navigate. Visibility dropped to near zero, forcing us to slow down and search for a safe place to stay.

After navigating several steep hills, we spotted a hotel perched above the highway, about 35 kilometres from Bujumbura. As Shemon went to check us in, a sudden jolt rocked our car. Before I could react, the vehicle lurched backwards, careening down the dark mountainside. I was still strapped in the driver's seat, the car teetering on the edge of a deep abyss. The realization hit me like a punch – we were one wrong move away from disaster. Shemon's screams brought me back to reality, and he pulled me out through the window. The car hung at a sickening 60-degree angle, threatening to plunge into the forest below.

In minutes, help appeared, but so did looters. The next three days were hectic. Somehow, we managed to call in a crane to pull our car from the precipice and transport it to Bujumbura. Despite all these, we refused to give up. The next 26 days were filled with anxiety and uncertainty, as sourcing parts from overseas became a major challenge. But our determination never wavered, and we finally got our car back on the road.

On April 5th, 2024, after 93 days on the road, we returned to Mombasa. The journey has ended, yet the transformation it sparked within us still motivates us. The path had uncovered our fears, our strengths, and our weaknesses. It tested our resolve, forcing us to confront the realities of life in a way we never had before. But it had also given us something invaluable: a deeper understanding of ourselves, and the world around us.

This, truly, is the essence of overlanding.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

How life is like when prices go through the roof

As many as 70 percent of households in Bangladesh changed their food habits involuntarily to cope with the high prices of essentials, according to a survey by think tank South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem)

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN *and* MD ABU TALHA SARKER

Fatima Khatun, dressed in a washed-out kameez, came to Muslim Bazar in Mirpur 12 to shop with her four-year-old son on August 16.

After roaming around the entire kitchen market, she stood in front of a shop that fish traders had decorated with pre-cut pieces of pangas and other fishes.

After bargaining with the seller, she purchased 500 grammes of fish for Tk 125.

Fatima, in her thirties, is part of a five-member family, the breadwinner of which is her husband, a rickshaw puller. Her children are aged four, six and eight.

"We had a tough time recently because few people were out in the streets seeking rickshaw rides due to the students' protests," she told this newspaper.

"Basically, my family depends on my husband. If his income falls, we struggle to make ends meet," she added.

The mother of three opined that the initiative to sell portions of a fish instead of the usual practice of selling the whole fish by weight had made the source of protein more accessible for daily wage earners.

She said they usually avoid purchasing high-priced fish or meat and the portions were more affordable, enabling them to often have fish in their meals.

Fatima's story lays bare the extent of low-income people's struggles to meet their basic requirements for protein in the wake of unprecedented price hike of essential food commodities over the last couple of years.

In July, food inflation hit 14.10 percent, a 13-year high, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

In fact, since May 2023, food inflation has hovered above 9 percent, crossing 9.5 percent every month of fiscal year 2023-24 except February.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

The overall consumer price index, which includes food and non-food inflation, rose 1.94 basis points to 11.66 percent in July from the month prior.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Idris Ali, a fish trader at Muslim Bazar, said he is selling pieces of pangas at Tk 300 per kilogramme and tilapia at Tk 250.

Middle and low-income families are key customers. It is extremely beneficial for the poor and ultra-poor because they do not have the means to buy a kilogramme of beef for Tk 750 or a whole hilsa fish for Tk 800-900, he said.

"But when it comes to pieces of meat or fish, they can choose whatever they can afford," he said.

Amjad Hussain, another fishmonger, said the culture of selling pieces of fish or meat has only recently gained popularity.

"We hardly saw this culture in our country but we saw it on Facebook and YouTube. Initially, it was really tough to sell all the pieces of fish. But it has gradually become a normal practice," he said.

"Now, all types of people, especially low-income people, come to purchase these pieces," he said.

Aminul Islam, a middle-aged employee at a private company in Khilgaon, was buying pre-cut pieces of chicken from a shop in Khilgaon Railgate.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Chicken breasts were selling for Tk 350 per kilogramme whereas thighs, wings and drums were fetching anywhere from Tk 150 to Tk 300.

Islam said he usually purchases groceries in amounts that last one week but it had become very difficult for him to make ends meet as wages are failing to keep pace with rising prices.

Wage growth in Bangladesh has lagged behind the inflation rate for the past two and a half years, according to the Wage Rate Index (WRI) of the BBS.

In July, the gap between inflation and wage growth hit 3.73 percentage points, a record in at least the last decade.

This widening gap is forcing low-income and unskilled workers to cut down on consumption amid falling real incomes.

"The price of everything has gone up. Everyone has had to buy everything, from daily essentials to commodities, at higher prices for the last few years," he lamented.

"That pushed up family expenses. Alongside that, house rent has increased. Children's educational expenses have also edged up," he said.

Unable to contend with the incessant pressure, Islam was forced to send his family to his ancestral home and move into shared accommodations.

He added that he had been cutting out some food items from his diet due to the high prices.

"I have been unable to deposit money in the bank for my children's future. Instead, I had to give up my DPS (deposit pension scheme)," he said.

"I don't know when I can save some money," he said, forlornly adding that he has not been able to provide as much money as he would have liked to his parents in recent times.

According to a survey by think tank South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem), as many as 70 percent of households in Bangladesh changed their food habits involuntarily to cope with the high prices.

The survey, which interviewed 9,065 households across the country between April and November last year, measured food insecurity following the Food and Agriculture Organization guidelines on a Food Insecurity Experience Scale.

SM Nazer Hossain, vice-president of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh, said inflation started to rise gradually as the Covid-19 pandemic receded.

"Faced with elevated inflation, people were trying to cope by eating less food or cutting down on sources of nutritious food," he said.

"Many have had to borrow to cope with the extra pressure. The situation won't end soon. Consumers are still seeking some relief," he said.

On top of that, the recent floods in the eastern part of the country have emerged as a new challenge. It has a huge economic impact as many people had to abruptly flee to higher ground, leaving behind their residences, agricultural land and businesses.

Mustafa K Mujeri, executive director of the Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM), expressed concern over the low wage growth.

"Higher inflation and slowing wage growth have jointly cornered low and limited-income groups," he said, adding that when high inflation persists for a long time, it definitely has an impact on the poverty rate and food intake habits.

High inflation, especially high food inflation, reduces coping strategies and gradually narrows opportunities for low-income and low-skilled people, he said.

Echoing those sentiments, Prof Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said living standards have declined due to the heightened food inflation.

"Informal sector workers, especially those in urban areas, are the biggest victims," he said.

About the persisting inflation, Mujeri said, "Adopting a contractionary monetary policy can't fight inflation alone. There is a need to integrate multiple policies."

"The previous government could not take the right policy decisions at the right time and place," he said.

Monzur Hossain, research director at the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said the interim government would have to send a signal to the markets as well as businessmen.

The government can restore the supply chain by warning stakeholders to refrain from market manipulation, he said.

"There is also the issue of dwindling confidence among businesses," Hossain said.

After Sheikh Hasina resigned from her post as prime minister and fled the country following a 15-year tenure in the face of a mass uprising, many factories were vandalised and set ablaze.

The interim government should ensure good governance to stabilise the market and take short and mid-term initiatives soon, Mustafizur suggested.

Bangladesh Bank is also taking steps to curb inflation.

Recently, the central bank hiked the policy rate or repo rate, at which commercial banks borrow from the central bank, by 50 basis points to 9 percent.

The policy rate was last increased by 50 basis points to 8.5 percent on May 8.

However, Monzur of the BIDS believes the conventional method of hiking the repo rate is not enough by itself.

"Policy rates have already been increased from about 5.5 percent to 9 percent in one year or so, but we did not see any positive impact on inflation," he said.

"My understanding is that supplementary measures were not taken properly. As the new governor hinted, he will raise the policy rate up to 10 percent in the next two months. Now, we have to observe its impact," he said.

Monzur also cautioned that there was a risk of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) being disproportionately affected by the rate hike.

"We need to be careful to ensure that the agriculture and SME sectors are not affected by the interest increase," he said.

"Also, it is necessary to review the channels through which the policy rate hike works. A policy rate of more than 10 percent is not desirable for Bangladesh's economy," he said.

Instead of being overly reliant on policy rate hikes, an accommodative monetary policy with supportive fiscal policy is needed to contain inflation, Monzur added.

Is govt action enough to curb inflation?

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

Persistent inflationary pressure, particularly in terms of food inflation, has been taking a toll on low- and fixed-income people in Bangladesh, forcing them to spend most of their income on nutrition.

The recently ousted Awami League government had taken steps to cushion this blow, especially by introducing food distribution programmes.

And though such measures remain in place, the question is whether these alone are enough to tackle inflation.

A record 32.61 lakh tonnes of food grains were sold at subsidised rates through public distribution systems like the Open Market Sale (OMS) and Vulnerable Group Development programmes in FY24.

The OMS alone distributed about 32 percent of the total grains, mostly rice and wheat, to increase market supply and maintain a price equilibrium.

Essential commodities, including oil and sugar, are also being sold at subsidised rates to around one crore family cardholders under a Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) programme.

Professor Bazlul Haque Khondker, chairman of the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem), welcomed these moves but urged authorities to monitor distribution properly.

"We often receive allegations of corruption in the distribution process. At times, the support does not reach the intended beneficiaries," he said.

Towfiqul Islam Khan, a senior research fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said it is critical to plug these leaks in public food distribution programmes, including the TCB's family card initiative.

"The list of beneficiaries should be revisited to stop both inclusion and exclusion errors," he added.

Khan also emphasised the need to increase budgetary allocations for public food distribution initiatives.

"The last budget did not include adequate support to reduce the production cost of essential commodities. Even energy and fuel prices were kept high."

He suggested the interim government facilitate the import and distribution of essential commodities so that more players can enter the market.

Sanem's Bazlul Haque Khondker said the focus should now shift to framing non-monetary policies to control inflation.

He added that proper market management by removing the scope for extortion should be prioritised.

"The country may witness significant change in the next six months if the interim government can play a remarkable role with a tight monetary policy," he added.

The CPD's Towfiqul Islam Khan said recent changes in the monetary policy, including policy rate hikes and allowing banks more flexibility to fix interest rates, were taken with a view to addressing demand-pull issues.

However, conventional economic theories and past global experiences suggest that these measures need time to have an effect.

"The government policies have not adequately addressed the issue of cost-push inflation areas. The pressure on the exchange rate will be there for some time in the foreseeable future," Khan said.

He also mentioned that the official data does not adequately reflect ground realities and somewhat underestimates the inflation rate.

"The policies are taken with low-quality data year after year. It is high time we took immediate steps to improve this situation."